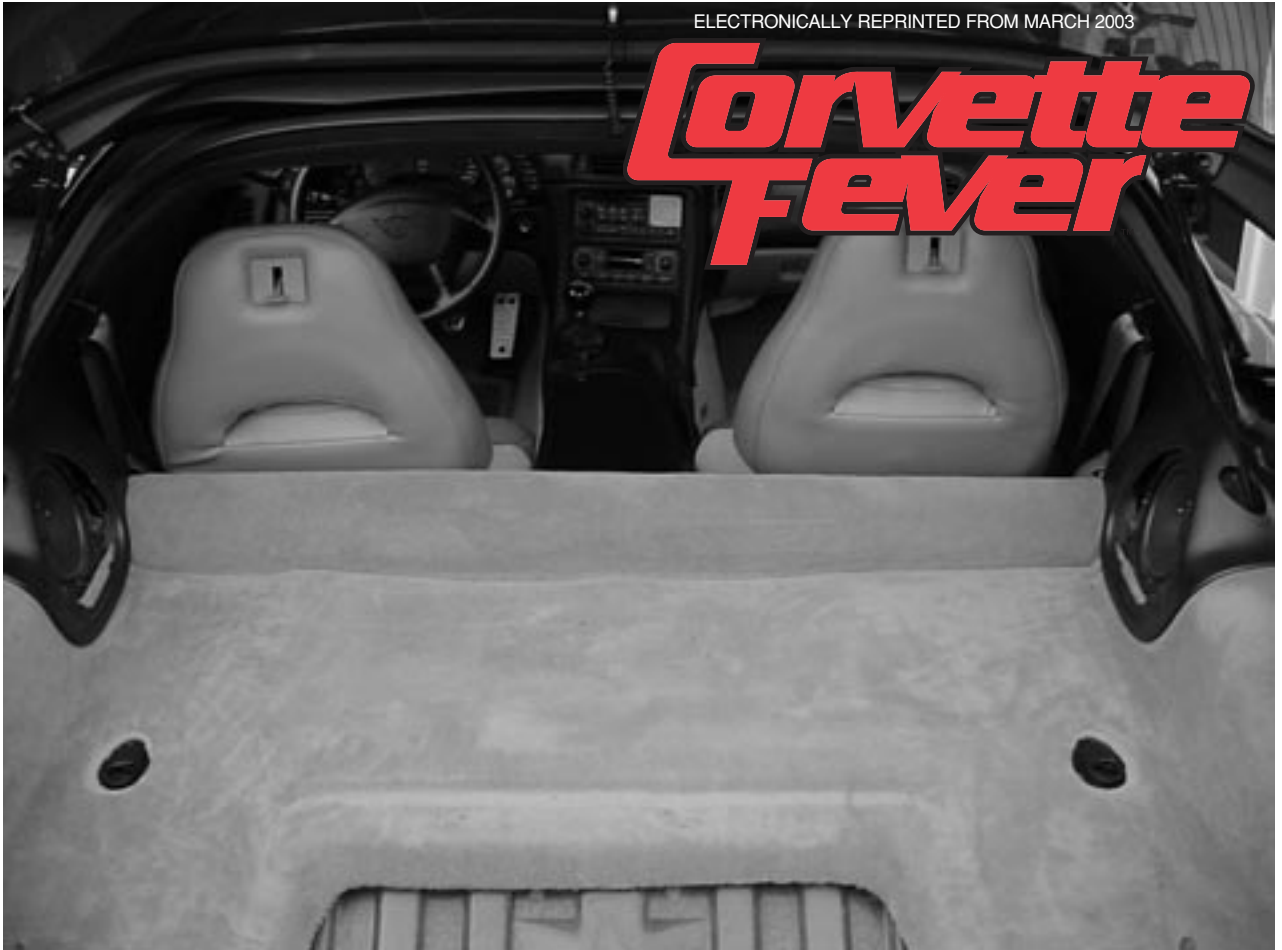


Corvette Fever



A Cooler, Quieter Compartment

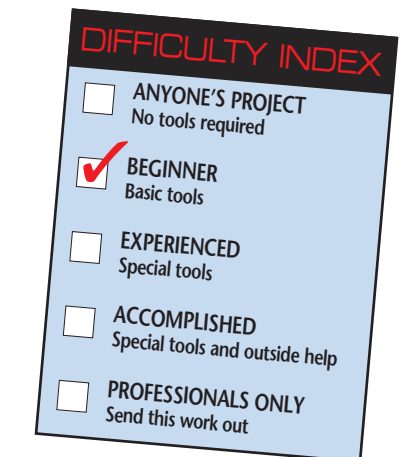
*Dropping the temp
and sound levels in
a C5 with a KoolMat*

by Andy Bolig
photography by Aubrey Vaughn

One of the first modifications that many C5 owners perform is installing a new exhaust system. They want a robust sound for their car that exudes performance. This is easily attainable with the different sys-

tems that are on the market. Problem is, that throaty sound you hear through the pipes, as well as the heat from those pipes, also comes up through the floorboards and into the passenger compartment.

Our C5 had a set of high-flow Random Technology cats, long-tube headers, and a Corsa Touring system. We knew it could get a little loud at times and so did P.A. Grinnell Co. That's why the company designed KoolMat, a pre-cut, high-temperature composite insulation, consisting of dense silicone,



cured directly into the surface and weave of a fiberglass mat. Because it's fiberglass, wearing long sleeves and pants is a good idea, but the comfort level inside your Corvette with KoolMat makes this temporary inconvenience well worth it. The sheets of KoolMat come pre-cut with only minor trimming or holes necessary. Follow along and we'll show you how you can make your C5 even cooler.



1 The first step is to remove the covers for the compartments and the rear interior panels. Remove the side panels first and then the main center panel.



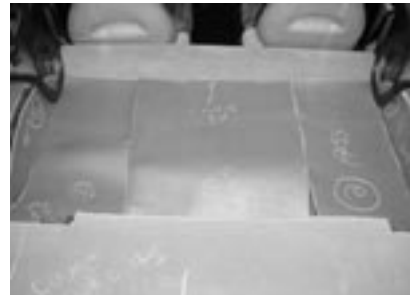
2 Next, remove the interior flooring panel. This is a good time to remove the speaker grilles and speakers. Doing so will keep them from getting damaged and will provide access for trimming.



3 First, we laid down the KoolMat to fit everything into position. Don't even think about gluing anything yet.



4 We did things a little differently. KoolMat designed the material to go over only the top of the openings in the floor of the car; but there is plenty of material left over, so we cut it to fit down into the three compartments. This isn't hard to do, it just takes some trimming to make it work. Also, do not put the KoolMat over any of the emergency cables for items such as the hatch/trunk or gas door.



5 The floor pieces go up to the bulkhead behind the seats, effectively sealing the interior from the road noise under the floor.



6 A good, solid seal around the compartment is necessary to make the most of the installation. To do that, make sure to use the small pieces between the wheelwell and rear panel.



7 Once we started gluing the material with 3M's Spray Adhesive, we could cut the holes for the compartment-cover latches, speakers, and hold-downs for the storage net.

A Cooler, Quieter Compartment



8 After you're sure the KoolMat goes under the carpet for the bulkhead, you can install the speakers and grilles.



9 While you're putting the interior pieces back into the car, make sure there are no tabs of KoolMat that will make the interior panels bulge or misalign. This is the time to address any issues. The KoolMat should form as close as possible to the inside of the trunk. That's why it's a good idea to spray the entire back of the KoolMat panel before installing it. Make sure it sticks to all of the contours.



11 Notice that the liners for the compartments fit just a tad tighter because of the KoolMat under them. This won't cause any problems.



10 Be sure to connect all of the wires for the interior lights, and remember when installing the interior panels that someday you may need those emergency cables.



12 With all of the panels back in place, the only way you'll know the KoolMat is there is to drive the car. The exhaust system still sounds great, and you won't have to raise your voice to speak over it. ►

When it leaves the factory, the fifth-generation Corvette is an excellent balance between performance and comfort. Once owners start adding items that boost performance level, the balance is often compromised, giving up some of the comfort in the name of performance. KoolMat helps the Corvette owner keep the performance/comfort scale more in balance. Those kinds of mods make a great C5 even better.

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Here's what our photographer Aubrey had to say after driving the car.

"I was very impressed with the sound and heat-insulating results of this kit.

KoolMat claims a 23-decibel reduction in interior noise. You can hear the engine again, not just the exhaust. I can hold a conversation with the passenger without yelling, use a cell phone, or listen to the sound system without a lot of extra noise."

KOOLMAT
Insulation