



## XJ Rear Lower Quarter Panel Guards

by Haleyes

### **Preparing the Lower Quarter Panels:**

Prior to these wonderful things that JCR calls Lower quarter guards (LQG); my lower quarters experienced some slight persuasion from various trail hazards. In order for the JCR LQG's to set flush with the body, I needed to do some of my own persuasion in the form of a dead blow hammer and a crow bar. Your's may or may not need the same care. If there is any loose paint or rust make sure it's fixed before installing these guards.

**Special Note for 97-01':** The factory plastic covers are held on using metal clip brackets. You will need to remove these brackets and can easily be removed by simply drilling out the rivets that attach them to the Jeep.

**Preparing the Lower Quarter Guards:** The most important step is to put a good coat of primer on them. Self-etching primer is the best choice, however be sure to take caution and apply in a very well ventilated area. Follow up the primer coat with your choice of a top coat. I used Rustolum satin black. I also opted to paint the bolts to help prevent rusting. This is easily done with a piece of cardboard. (I used the cardboard that the LQG's shipped in.) Just push each bolt through the cardboard so all the heads are facing the same direction and spray-bomb away. Other finish types and processes are available, be sure to choose what's right for you!

**Special Note from JCR:** *All of our steel comes from the supplier with a liberal coating of oil used to keep the metal from rusting while it's on the shelf. You should wipe off your product with paint thinner or mineral spirits to make sure that this oil has been thoroughly removed from the bumper. Failure to do so, can cause flaws in your final finish.*

**Special Note for 84-96':** On 84-96' Jeep XJ's, the factory rear LQP can possibly have a glued on piece of trim. You will need to remove this trim before installing the JCR LQG and you may need to use a Goo-gone type spray to remove the remaining glue.

**Drivers side:** You'll first need to remove the spare tire rest. Once that's out of the way, you'll need to remove the drivers side cargo area panel. This is held in place by several Phillips head screws and one push-in plastic retainer. The push-in plastic retainer is at the

forward most point of the panel. You can't see it when it's all installed. I tried to pop mine out with a flathead screwdriver to no avail. Finally, I just took my trusty pocket knife to it and cut the head of it off.

Once the panel is removed, you'll need to remove the spare tire carrier inner support bracket. This is the bracket that beefs up the unibody in this particular location in order to mount the spare. There are four screws that will need a 10mm socket to remove them. On 97 and up XJ's this bracket is also spot welded in place. Here you have to make a choice, is not having to jam your arm in the tiny front hole worth drilling out those spot welds? Can I even reach the back bolt without the bracket removed? On my 96 I also chose to remove the drivers side taillight. It made it much easier due to the fact that I could stick my hand in one of the two oval openings that are behind the taillight. It was a tight squeeze for my hand but it worked. Try a few different methods and choose what's best for you. Be warned it's not fun!



Now, hold up the LQG to the Jeep good and tight and mark the upper center hole. Set the LQG down and drill a 5/16" hole. Apply a small bead of RTV or silicon to the back of the guard being sure to make it around each bolt hole and the perimeter of the guard. Mount the LQG using the hole you just drilled. This will be enough to hold the weight of the LQG while you drill the rest of the holes.

I chose to do one hole at a time. I drilled and then installed the bolt/nut/washer before I moved on to the next one. This insured that it didn't move on me. I used a shop-vac to suck up the shavings while I was drilling so they didn't have the chance to fall back behind the LQG. I didn't do the holes in any particular order. Once you get all 6 holes filled up with bolts, insure that they're good and tight. Now, all you have to do is put the driver side interior all back together.

As for the push-in plastic retainer? I didn't bother with it and just left it alone. If you feel that you need one, they are sold at just about every auto parts store very reasonably, normally under the "Help" section.



**Passenger side:** If you've already done the drivers side, the passenger side will be a walk in the park! Remove the cargo area panel on the passenger side, it will have the push-in

retainer just like the drivers side did. For the passenger side, I opted NOT to remove the taillight as there is plenty of room to work without doing so. Once the cargo area panel is removed just hold up the LQG to the Jeep and mark the upper center hole just like was done on the drivers side. Again, I just did one bolt at a time. I would install one bolt/nut/washer before I moved on to the next using a shop-vac to suck up any stray shavings.

The only thing that I ran into was on the upper/rear hole. I hit a big glob of that “unibody glue” It's a very dense caulking like material that the factory uses. You'll drill right through it with no difficulty. The problem is that the bolts are not long enough to go through the LQG, the quarter panel and the glue. A couple of good whacks with a screwdriver handle knocked my glob of glue right off. Granted, yours may not come off as easy but, that's all it took for me.



**Once you have all six bolts mounted.....put it back together and go wheel.**