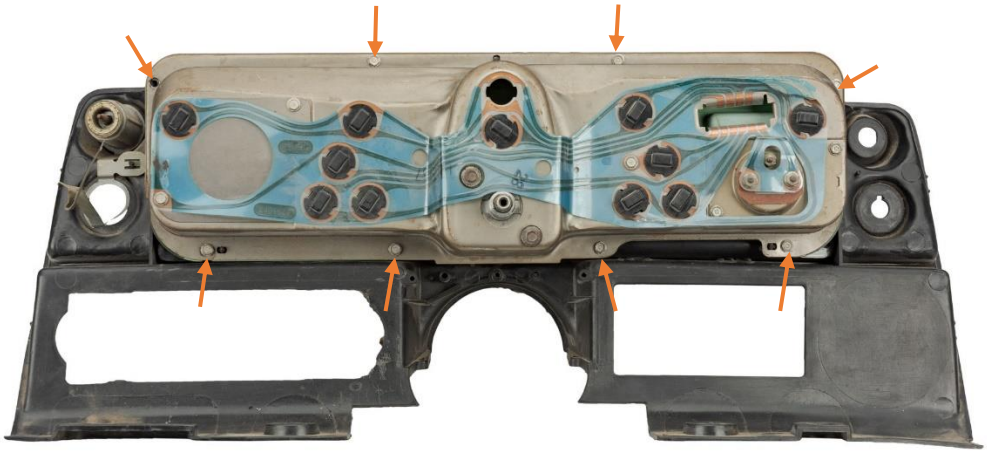
Retro-Fitting the Dakota Digital 1969- 76 Chevy Nova gauges into your 1968 Chevy Nova.

The last of the Chevy II the 1968 Chevy Nova offered a unique dash all to its own, with the lens flush to the dash face for a clean sleek look. Due to this design, the 1969- 76 Nova gauges are not a direct replacement, however with minor changes to the stock dashboard/ facia, you can make this package fit. This manual will provide you with 2 separate ways to convert a Dakota Digital 1969- 76 Nova instrument system into your 1968 Nova dash, both with their own benefits and drawbacks. Alternatively, Dakota Digital also offers a Custom option which requires you to send your stock gauge cluster in to us for an exceptional fit and finished look through our Custom Shop.

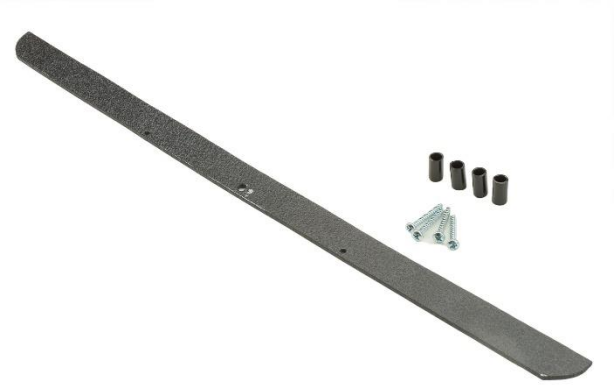


With the gauge and bezel removed from the vehicle and wiring disconnected, you can remove the gauge cluster from the bezel by unbolting the 8 outer 1/4” hex head screws and setting them aside along with the stock gauges, tin insert and clear lens.



For VHX, HDX and RTX series Instrument Systems

The mounting of your new gauges will require that you source 4x 1” coarse thread screws and 4x rigid tubing (optional) cut to size, fitting between the stock dash and your new gauges. You will also need 1/8” or thinner ABS or scrap sheet metal measuring 17” x 1” that will be trimmed down to fill in a gap along the top edge of the gauges, similar to the spacer in the image at right.



With the stock gauges and lens removed, you will need to remove the top right and left mounting screw locations on your dash to allow the new gauges to fully insert into the stock bezel. The design of the top left corner may require that you grind further into the dash up to the front of the bezel. Being notched from the factory, you may end up grinding thru the dash the further forward you grind (shown in picture). This will not be visible once the new gauges are installed or reduce the integrity of the dash structure. Black silicone or another thin filler strip can be used to disguise any gap if desired.



*Corner mounting points removed

Once corner mounting points have been removed, you will be able to insert the gauges into the bezel with the new gauge bezel/cowl butting up to the back side of the stock bezel.



Once installed, you will want to align the bottom mounting holes to the gauge bezel which leaves you with a gap along the top edge of the gauges.



To help hide this gap you can use ABS or scrap metal to make a spacer to be installed between the new gauges and the bezel. For this we inserted a 1/8" ABS between the stock bezel and the top of the gauges, traced the stock bezel contour to the ABS and trimmed to fit. Because the new gauge and bezel/cowl is designed for the 1969- 76 Nova, the new gauges will sit about ½" further back from the mounting points of the bezel, requiring you to use longer screws. Due to fitment variances, you may only be able to use 2 mounting points on top and 2 on bottom.



For added support of the mounting tabs we opted to use some semi-rigid tubing to add structure. With this option, it is likely that you may need to remove the 2 top outside mounting tabs to allow the gauge cluster to be inserted into your dash.

Optional installation for VHX-69C-NOV Series only

This method will not work with the HDX or RTX series.

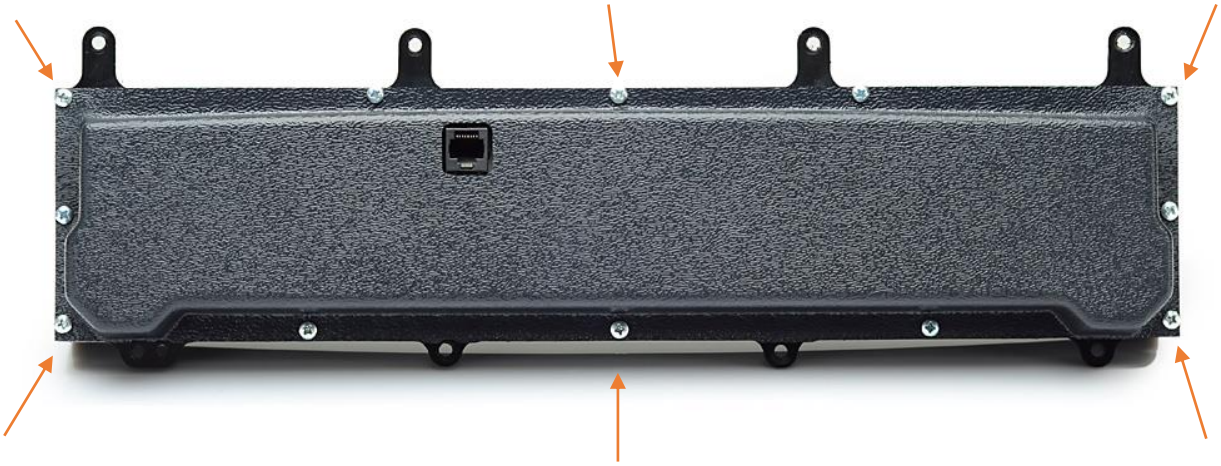
This option allows you to use the stock clear gauge lens that is flush with the dash bezel, keeping a more stock looking installation. For this method you will need 4x #4 nuts and 1/8” or thinner ABS or scrap sheet metal measuring 17” x 1” that will be trimmed down to fill in a gap along the top edge of the gauges.



Due to the age and lack of reproduction front clear lenses, we buffed the stock lens with a plastic polish such as Novus Plastic Polish to remove some of the scratches and discoloration. With the lens out, you will need to remove the top right screw mounting hole on the stock bezel which is easily done with a burr grinder to allow the gauge cluster to fit.



Next, the metal bezel/cowl will need to be removed from your new VHX gauge kit by unscrewing the 6 silver screws on the perimeter of the back of the new gauge kit; Top and Bottom corners and center screws.



Note that the bezel sandwiches the clear lens of the new gauges to the gauge cluster, so caution will need to be used to prevent damage to the lens as it will be reused.



Four of the silver screws that were removed will need to have the heads painted black, as these will be visible once the gauges are installed. You will not use all 6 of the original screws due to the 2 center screws interfering with the stock lens once installed. Once the paint has dried on the screws you will insert 1 into each of the 4 corners from the front and use the 4x #4 nuts on the back of the gauges to hold the lens to the gauges. Take special care to only finger tighten (no tools used for our installation), over tightening can cause the lens to crack or break. Most tools will mar the painted screws. Loctite or a lock nut may be used if you are concerned that the nuts will work themselves loose.



With the stock lens installed you can insert the gauges into the stock opening using the bottom mounting points to align with the dash.





You will see that there is a gap along the top end of the gauges, this is where you will use the ABS or sheet metal to cover this gap. To create a template, we inserted the ABS between the top mounting tabs and the dash, traced the outline of the dash from underneath and marked the alignment pin on the dash and 2 center mounting holes on the new gauges.



After trimming to size you will reuse the stock ¼" hex bolts to hold the new gauges in, using 2 on the top 2 middle tabs and 3 along the bottom. At this point your gauges are ready to go back into your dash.



This installation on the VHX gauges sits closer to the stock bezel and gives a better overall stock appearance. Please note that you may need to trim the top of the mounting tabs that stick above the gauge bezel if they prevent the gauges from fitting in the dash.





This installation is not applicable to the HDX and RTX gauges due to the manufacturing of the bezel/ cowl on these assemblies.