Many times when you are restoring a classic Chevy you will find that the original wiper system doesn't function properly or is missing altogether. Instead of trying to find NOS or remanufactured wiper transmissions, or replacement cables to rebuild your originals, why not upgrade to a modern style wiper system that uses solid shafts and never requires adjustment? Follow along as we install one of the Raingear systems in our 1956 test car (1955 installations are identical, 1957 installations are very similar). It's really not that hard and you will love the results.

Parts you will need…

Danchuk # 12825 Raingear Wiper System with Intermittent Switch
Danchuk # 12828 Raingear Universal Washer Kit
Danchuk # 913 Wiper Switch Tool
Danchuk # 912 Wiper Escutcheon Nut Tool (included in kit)

Tools you will need…

3/16” and 1/4” Clutch head screwdrivers or drivers
Phillips and Flat blade screwdrivers
7/8”-1/2 drive socket
1/2” and 9/16”-3/8 drive deep sockets
3/4”-3/8 drive deep socket or box-end wrench
5/16” nut driver or open-end wrench
1/4” open-end wrench
3/8” open-end or box-end wrench
Crescent wrench
Plastic or wood mallet
Steering wheel puller
3/8” drill
9/32” drill bit

Before you start, go to the Danchuk Website and download the Raingear instruction sheet. You will find it posted under part number 12825. It will be easier to follow the article if you have the instructions handy. Also, you may find it easier to do this install if you remove the steering wheel from your vehicle, just to get it out of the way.

1. Disconnect your battery.

2. Remove the glove box insert and radio. We also removed the glove box door using our Phillips screwdriver and the ashtray for better access. Pic 1

3. Remove the Phillips screws that hold the instrument cluster in place and at least pull it away from the dash far enough to get in behind it. (We removed ours to make it easier to install the drivers side wiper drive unit.) Once it is loose, reach in and un clip the wiring harness. Clear the wiring away making room for the new wiper unit. Pic 2
Note: You may find it easier to loosen the column and pull it down a bit to gain access to the lower 2 Philips screws on the cluster. To do this, remove the lower column cover with your 3/16” clutch head driver. Loosen the lower column support bolts with your 1/2” deep socket and 3/8-drive ratchet to drop the column down enough to gain easier access to the lower cluster screws. Pics 3-5

4. Remove the wiper control knob and cable from the dash with your wiper switch tool. Save the knob and wiper bezel for use with the new electric switch. Pic 5A
5. Remove the wiper arms and blades and set aside. A flat blade screwdriver may be needed to help unclasp the tabs. Pic 6

6. Dismantle the original wiper system. Start by removing the wiper escutcheon nuts with the supplied wiper escutcheon nut tool. Remove the wiper escutcheons. Remove the original pivot shafts. Remove the wiper motor and center drive unit from the firewall. Pic 7

7. There are two 3/8" rods under the dash that support the column. With your 1/2" socket and 3/8-drive ratchet remove the upper bolt. Remove the lower bolt with your 9/6" socket and 3/8-drive ratchet. The rod will not be reinstalled. If you have a manual transmission remove the clutch pedal return spring for better access. (We installed a 3/8-16 X 3/4" bolt in the lower rod hole in the dash so the column would remain supported.) Pics 8-9
Now we will begin to install the Raingear system.

8. On the drivers side wiper drive assembly there is a “locator tab” that will need to be bent to line up with the body. Bend it forward about 30 degrees or enough to have as little gap as possible. (Refer to figure 2 in the instructions.) This tab mounts where the support rod we removed bolted to the firewall. Pic 10

9. Plug the wire harness to the wiper motor drive assembly. Pic 11
10. Raise the wiper drive assembly up under the dash to the left of the steering column and guide the pivot shaft through the wiper hole in the cowl. It helps to clear the wires out of the way with one hand and move the drive assembly into place with the other.

11. From the outside of the car place the rubber washer, aluminum spacer and nut on to the pivot shaft. With your 3/4” deep socket and 3/8-drive ratchet or 3/4” box-end wrench, tighten the nut up snug…not tight.

Pics 12-14
12. With your 1/2” socket and 3/8-drive ratchet, secure the wiper drive assembly to the firewall with the supplied 5/16-18 x 1/2” bolt. The assembly bolts into the hole where we removed the dash support rod. If there is a gap between the locator tab and the firewall remove the unit and bend the tab a little farther. Pic 15

13. Assemble the two link halves together using the longer of the two sets of holes. Secure them together with the supplied hardware with your 5/16” nut driver and 3/8” wrench. Pics 16-17
14. Install the molded plastic bushings into the link ends. Install the one with the flanged end first with the flanged end towards the pivot shaft. They will be very tight and you may need to use your plastic mallet, do not smash them. Install the outer plastic ring next to complete the assembly. If you need to use your mallet be gentle. Pics 18-20

15. Assemble the extended end of the long link to the pivot fitting on the passenger side pivot shaft. Make sure it moves freely on the shaft. Install the supplied washer and then secure the link to the shaft with the supplied J-clip. Use your 1/4” open-end wrench to push down on the clip and work it into place. Refer to the wiper instructions figures 5 and 6 for more information. Pics 21-22
16. Place the left end link close to point “D” on the drivers side wiper drive unit and pass the passenger side pivot shaft thru the cowl. Refer to figures 3 and 5 in the instruction sheet. Install the rubber washer, aluminum spacer and nut on the passenger side pivot shaft like you did in step 11. Pic 23

17. Attach the long link to the driver side wiper drive at point “D” and attach it as you did the passenger side in step 15. Refer to figure 3 in the instruction sheet. Pics 24-25

Note: It is very important that the lever on the passenger side pivot shaft ends up in the 10 o’clock to 2 o’clock position. Refer to figure 5 in the instruction sheet. If the lever ends up in the 6 o’clock position the wipers will run backwards and you will remove the paint from your hood. Ours ended up at 10 o’clock.
18. Secure the gauge cluster wires and any other under dash wiring well out of the way of the moving parts we just installed with tie straps.

Now it is time to install and wire the intermittent wiper switch. The intermittent switch MUST have the black wire grounded and it will not function if the car body is not grounded. You CANNOT use a battery charger to test the system.

19. Install the new wiper switch in the original location using your original bezel and knob. (If your car was originally equipped with a washer system you can retain the original washer button with just a little bit of additional work. Just cut the rod off the push button and slide the push button back into the knob.) Thread the jam nut onto the switch shaft approximately 7/16" from the bottom. Install the star washer with the teeth pointing towards the back of the dash. Slide the switch in from the back of the dash, thread the wiper nut onto the shaft and tighten with your wiper switch tool. Push the knob on the switch and stand the knob off enough to allow movement for the washer function. Tighten the knob with a small flat blade screwdriver. Pics 26-30
20. Ground the black wire from the switch to a good body ground. Connect the RED wire to a 5 amp fused power source controlled by the ignition switch. Wire the rest of the switch according to the wiring diagram supplied in the kit. (If you are installing a washer system you can wire the washer at this time as outlined in the wiring diagram, we did not.) Route the wiring harness using the supplied clamps and attach to the hole in the lower portion of the drive assembly. Refer to figure 3 of the wiper instruction sheet. Make sure all wires are clear of the moving parts under the dash.

If you are installing the washer kit proceed to step 26. If not proceed to step 21.

21. Install the wiper escutcheons and nuts in the reverse order of removal and install the nuts with your wiper escutcheon nut tool. Pic 30A

22. Test the electrical operation. DO NOT install the wiper arms and blades yet, we need to confirm and possibly adjust the park position for the system.

23. Turn the motor on, and then off to park the motor. Using masking tape or wire ties make a “Flag” on the pivot shafts in the approximate wiper position so you can see the operation of the system. Pic 31

Every attempt has been made to adjust the drive arm on the motor so the unit will park correctly at the end of the stroke. If the wipers park early or late then adjustment will be necessary. Our kit required no adjustment. Refer to figure 3 in the instruction sheet to see the proper “Park” alignment. If adjustment is necessary adjust as outlined in the instruction sheet.
24. Put the dashboard back together. You may need to leave the rear support off the original radio to clear the long link.

You can reinstall the original wiper motor on your firewall to retain the original look or you can install the supplied plate to cover the hole. Congratulations! You’re Done. Pic 33

25. Install your wiper arms and blades, spray some water on your windshield and try out your new wipers!! Pic 32

Installation of the windshield washer assembly, Danchuk # 12828.

26. Mount the bracket for the washer bottle/pump in the location of your choice. We used existing holes on the core support filler panel. Slide the washer unit into place on the bracket. Pic 34
27. Assemble the provided wire connectors for the washer pump to the brown and black wires. Push the wires into the white plastic connector. Pic 35-36

28. Connect the white plastic connector to the pump and run the brown wire through the firewall wire grommet. Connect the brown wire you just ran to the brown wire on the switch and connect the black wire from the pump to a good ground source. Pics 37-40
29. Attach the larger diameter washer hose to the bottom of the pump and run it up to the cowl area. Install the tee and the smaller washer hoses. If necessary, as it was on our vehicle, use your drill and 9/32" drill bit to drill holes in the cowl for the small wiper hoses. Finish the holes off with a rubber grommet. Pics 41-42

30. Hook the small hoses up to the tubes in the wiper escutcheons and install the escutcheons as described in step 21 and install your wiper arms and blades. Pic 43

That's it! Fill your water bottle and give it a try.

Note: We followed the directions put out by Raingear per their recommendation for this article. If you feel you need to modify parts to make the kit fit your car you are doing something wrong. It is recommended that you re-read the instructions or call Raingear at the number on the instruction sheet.