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*for do-self repairs*

# SCREEN REPLACEMENT

Replacing screen (using screen fabric) is a simple repair, but requires some care. Screen is attached to a wood frame in a different fashion than with a metal frame, so the technique for replacing damaged screening will depend on the frame type.

Before replacing screen in a wood frame, examine the condition of the frame itself. The wood should be strong, solid, and not rotted. Porch screens, especially, are vulnerable to damage from weather exposure, lack of paint, improper porch drainage at the bottom of the screens, and storage of material stored against them. If you determine the frames are in good shape, remove the old screening and the **screen bead** running around the edges.

Cut the piece of replacement screen 6 to 8 inches larger than the “opening” dimension. Start by attaching the screening fabric with staples or tacks at the center of the top and bottom. Stretch the fabric in opposite directions and staple at the center of each side. Then, continue stretching the fabric in opposite directions, back and forth, toward the corners *(see Illustration 1),* tacking it to the frame as you go. (Position the staples or tacks about 1/2” from the inner edge of the frame, about 1 to 1-1/2” apart.) The final stretch will be at the corners.

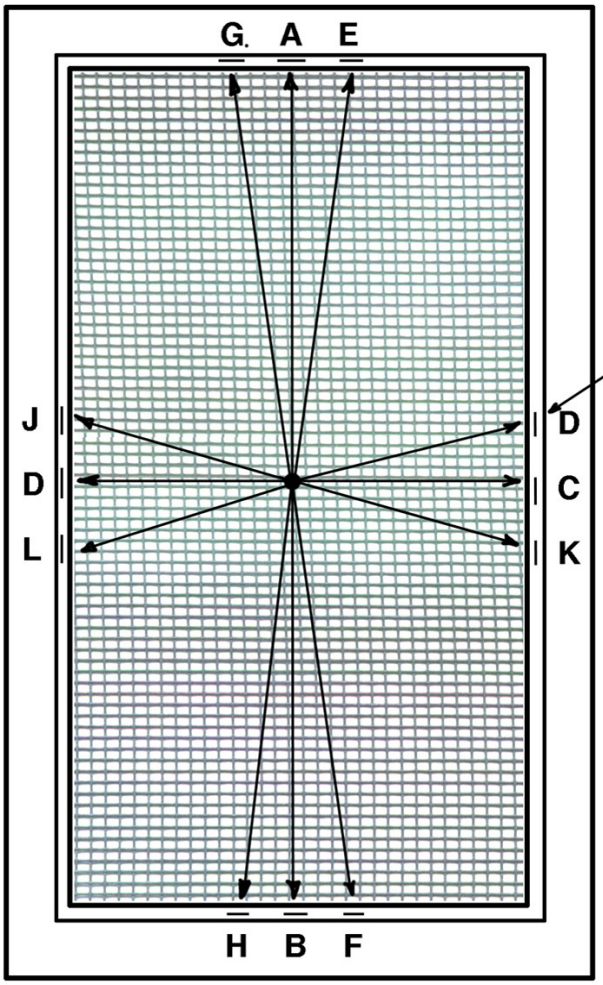


***Illustration 1***

*(continued)*

Once the screen is attached all around, apply new screen bead to the joint between the screen and the frame. (It's unlikely you'll be able to re-use old screen bead, unless extreme care is used in its removal.) The screen bead should be painted on all sides before it is applied to the screen. Trim the excess screening with a sharp utility knife. Make sure the screen bead is solid and tight into the corners.

If you have metal-framed screens, you'll need a "splining tool" to attach the screen to the frame. The screen and the **splining** (a flexible rubber or plastic strip) need to be wedged into a narrow channel around the perimeter of the frame. The splining tool helps you insert the screen and splining into that channel.

Using an old screwdriver, dig up one corner of the old splining out of the channel, and gently remove it without tearing or stretching. (If it is damaged or stiff, buy a roll of splining at the hardware store, and cut a piece of new spline a bit longer than the told one.) If the window is long and narrow, cut the spline so you can install the two short sides first; for square windows, the spline can be installed in one piece.

Cut a piece of new screening about two inches larger than the opening, and center it over the frame. Cut diagonally across the corners of the screening so they will fit neatly into the channel. If the replacement screen is metal, crease the screen and push it into the channel on all four sides *(see Illustration 2),* using the convex wheel of the splining tool (the one with the edge that bulges out). (For fiberglass screen, you can skip this step.) Then, using the concave wheel of the splining tool (the one with the edge that curves inward), force the spline into the channel along with the screening *(see Illustration 3).* Make sure the screening is pulled taut as you go. Cut off excess spline and screening with a utility knife *(Illustration 4).*

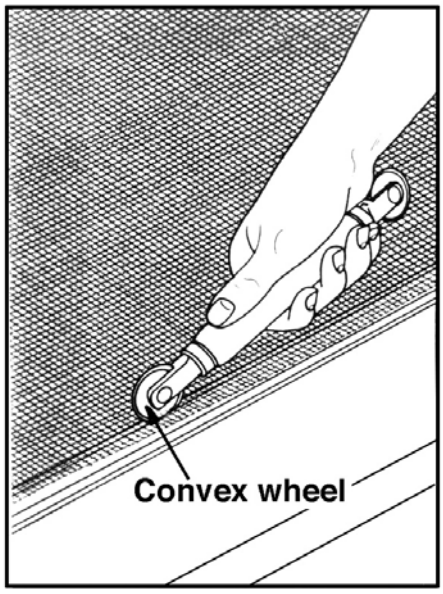


***Illustration 2***

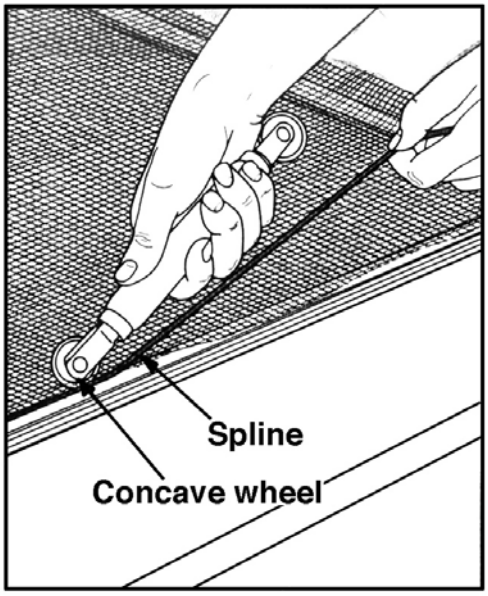


***Illustration 3***

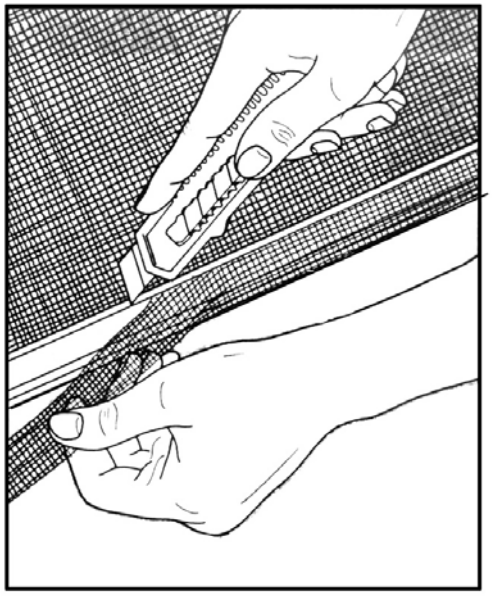

***Illustration 4***