

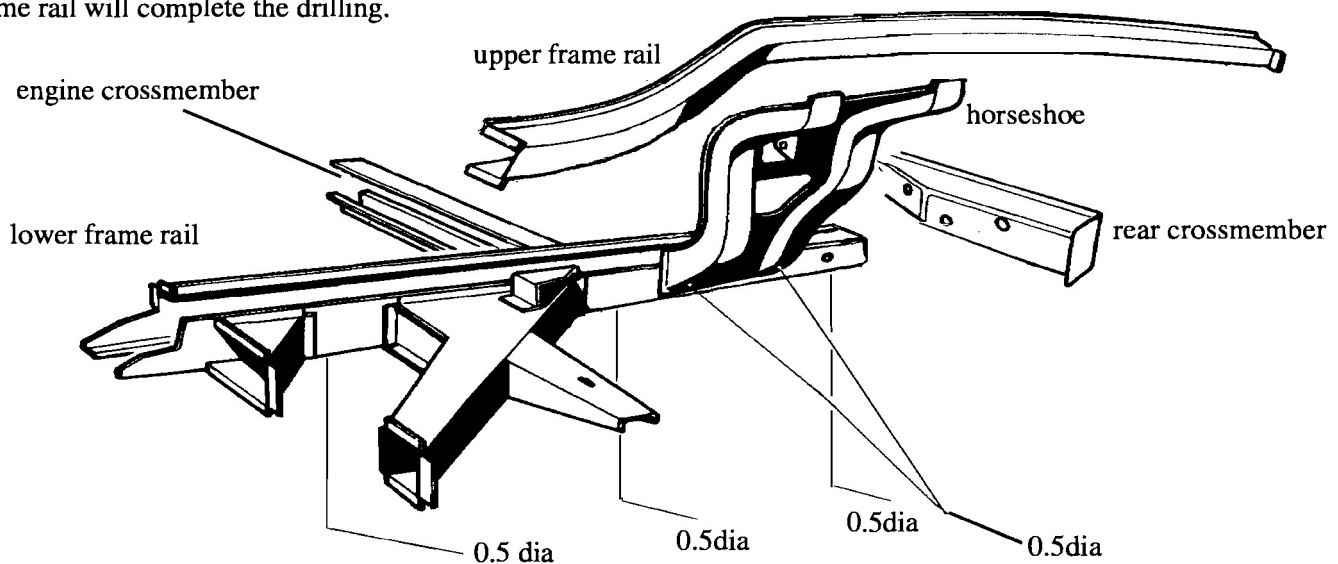
# JACK'S STAND

## DRILLING DRAIN HOLES IN YOUR PANTERA FRAME

This is a subject that has come up since the mid-70s. The Pantera's rear frame and rocker panels tend to collect moisture and thus rust on the inside. Some are structurally weakened to the point of needing repairs for safety reasons! By drilling a few drain holes in strategic locations, any condensation or water thrown up by the wheels, will drain out, causing no structural damage. Not a new idea, by any means.

However, in looking through the old write-ups on the subject, I realized that, while the locations are talked about in several articles, I could find no drawings nor sketches of the preferred locations for new owners to easily identify. So I made up a couple of illustrations.

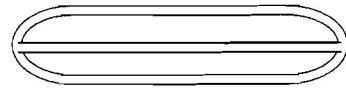
For clarity, only the left rear frame rail and rear suspension 'horseshoe' are shown. The drain hole drillings should be at least 3/8" dia & preferably 1/2", in both the extreme lower legs of the horseshoe, just above where it is welded to the lower frame rails. Three drillings equally spaced in the bottom of each lower frame rail will complete the drilling.



Don't be surprised when drilling these holes to discover rusty water or ultra-fine tan powder- rust or dirt- when your drill breaks through. The stuff has been rattling around inside the weldments so long, vibration has reduced it to the consistency of baby powder. This is a clue that you drilled in the right place. Some guys then stick an air compressor blow-gun in one hole and attempt to propel the dust out another hole. But simply driving the car will provide free air at pretty high speed past all the holes, and any dust or moisture will be pulled out more effectively.

Others plug their freshly drilled drains, then pour used oil into the frame rails from above. When the rails are full, they pull the plugs and let the old oil drip out, figuring this coats the inside of the rails, preventing any more damage. This practice does no harm but may be overkill, plus it makes a real mess until it's all out.

The rocker panels already have drain holes built into them. But road damage, unaware owners poking around etc, have closed up some of the factory drains to the detriment of this part of the Pantera's body/chassis. A sketch of the rocker drain holes are seen below, nearly life-sized:



Stock rocker panels are built in three sections: an inner panel, an outer panel and a center divider, all spot-welded together. It's pretty common to see cars with the center dividers smashed sideways in many of the

drains, possibly from a screwdriver bit in an effort to make a larger opening, or maybe as the result of road debris. This effectively closes off half the rocker at that point, allowing moisture to accumulate. I have also seen drain holes completely closed off by heavy paint drips, completely covering the openings.

By careful work with a small straight-blade screwdriver, the center divider can be again centered in the drain openings, restoring their full function.

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