



The tricky part was cutting the carpet into the right shapes," says Paul Gerten. His younger brother Ron shows off carpeted car in photo above.

SLICK AS A GOLF COURSE GREEN

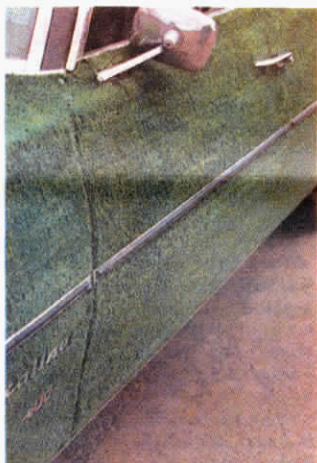
Rust No More! He Carpeted His Car!

Paul Gerten wasn't about to give up without a fight when he found rust on his 1970 Pontiac Catalina. So, he went out and bought a roll of artificial turf and proceeded to carpet the entire exterior of his rust-damaged car.

"The tricky part was cutting the carpet to fit," says Paul, a 1982 Farmington, Minn., high school graduate. "The worst part was the glue. It stuck to everything."

To cut the pieces to size, Paul first taped clear poly to the car and cut it for patterns. The cut-up carpet was fastened to the car with a waterproof tile cement — he used two gallons — and screwed down tightly around the edges. After a couple weeks of night work, he finally had it covered. The final touch was to refasten bumper guards and model insignias. Total cost for the project was around \$100.

After several months of use, Paul reports the carpet job has held up well without fading or noticeable wear. He washes it with a car wash high pressure washer. "It gets a little heavy when wet. Otherwise, the carpet hasn't adversely affected mileage or performance in any way. The project turned out better than I ever thought it would," he says. His carpeted Catalina, which has been driven close to 100,000 miles, is "the talk of the town". And, because there's nothing quite like it on the road, virtually every motorist he



Paul glued the carpet to the car, fastening edges with screws.

meets gives his eye-catching Catalina a second look.

Paul is willing to give other "car carpeters" a hand. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Paul Gerten, 600 Pine, Farmington, Minn. 55024 (ph 612 463-7422).



Bud Hoekstra says he cut an unpleasant job down to size by linking three lawn mowers together.

Amy Krebs photo

"LOOKS WEIRD BUT WORKS GREAT"

Three Lawn Mowers Linked Together

When Bud Hoekstra, of Cincinnati, Ohio, realized that the time he spent mowing the lawn with his 20-in. mower added up to a full week out of every seven month mowing season, he decided to do something about it. Rejecting riding mowers as too expensive and goats and sheep because they're not neat, he finally had the idea of building a gang "supermower" that would do the work of several power mowers and still fit into his budget.

"The first step in bringing my Supermower to life was to scout out repair shops in search of a set of matching lawnmower bodies. I looked for sturdy metal decks with perpendicular wheel wells that — with some of the wheels removed — could be bolted together in a staggered series. One dealer, who took used machines in trade, donated three junked 20-in. Craftsman mowers that were all made from a ribbed magnesium-aluminum alloy that would yield lightweight, crack-resistant supercarriages.

"I removed four wheels from the decks — one from the rear of the leading mower; a diagonal pair, front and rear, from the middle one; and the corresponding front wheel from the last in line. Then, I bolted the bodies together and mounted a length of galvanized pipe to the mowers in such a way that it straddled all three

decks. The strut adds some rigidity to the assembly and protects the bolted wheel wells from undue stress.

"With that done, I removed the handles from the end mowers, and made braces from them to support the middle unit's handle. The whopping 58 in. mower so far hadn't cost me a dime!

"However, phase 2 of my project, the engine, threatened to be expensive. I reasoned that one 8 hp. power plant would drive a three-deck rig, but I also figured I could mount three 3-hp. engines connected by belts and pulleys, for about the same cost. So that's what I did. I was lucky enough to find an inventory liquidating company that offered a line of brand-new, but discontinued, 3½ hp Craftsman engines for \$55 a piece.

"The final components necessary were the cutting blades. For each engine I bought two blades, a 2½ in. SAE bolt and lock washer, two cast-iron flanges, and two knurls for a snug fit. I decided to use a pair of blades for each mower, mounted at cross angles. The added weight functions to increase lugging power of the engine, allowing it to cut efficiently at slower speeds.

"The maiden run proved the invention to be a success. It leaves a satisfying 5-ft. swath of mown grass. I'd had apprehensions about the machine's weight of 140 lbs. but my qualms disappeared after I learned that a conventional 20-in. push mower with a full bag of grass clippings weighs at least 100 lbs. In any event, I found I could guide my Supermower quite easily across my lawn and I now get the work done in 1/3 the time."

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