



# Tech Articles

## Pop Goes the Trunk

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Some Fiero enthusiasts prefer to keep their cars stock, while others enjoy adding custom touches. In between are those who want to add genuine GM accessories or options that were not originally on their cars. The power trunk release was installed as original equipment on about half of production Fieros but the harness wiring was actually built into all Fieros. This makes retrofitting a trunk release very easy. If your Fiero does not have the power release and you wanted to open the trunk with the engine running or when your trunk lock cylinder failed, you know how handy this option can be. Installation is quite common and is well documented on the Internet but this article will try to condense and detail the procedures.

The 1984 models are different than later years. This is because they don't use a relay. Power comes directly from the dash switch to the trunk solenoid. The design did not require either the parking brake to be on or the shifter to be in Park/Neutral for the trunk to open. As long as the ignition switch is on and the switch pushed, the trunk opener would pop. The only parts you need for a 1984 are:

Dash switch GM # 10026609 ('84 black) or #10036559 ('85-'88 gray), Fiero Store # 66559 (gray only)  
Or a good used one (check it - the plastic tabs inside that the move contacts often break).

Dash bezel Used one either with or without rear defogger; best if it includes switch and screws.

Trunk solenoid GM # 20052845, AC Delco D6055A, Airtex 2N1092, Standard RS2, Car Quest 53-9501  
or a good used one. These are the same on all Fieros but also came on many other GM cars  
from 1978 to 1992 including some Chevrolets, Oldsmobiles, Buicks, Pontiacs and Cadillacs.

Wire w/plugs Pull this from inside the deck lid with attached end connectors if possible. One end unplugs at the solenoid and the other by the driver's side deck lid hinge. The front connector I have never been able to find new, so at least get this. You can make your own wire from a new, single four foot piece if necessary (Image 1).

Remove the T15 Torx screws attaching the right side switch bezel to the instrument cluster. Look inside the opening for the unused switch plug. You may need a hook or coat hanger to pull the connector out. Plug it into the back of the trunk switch and install the bezel. Remove the two bolts attaching the trunk latch and remove the latch. Now for the hardest, or at least, the most frustrating part of the job; fishing the wire through the inside of the deck lid. This can be done with the deck lid on the car but you'll have less grief if the deck lid is removed. First, mark the position of the four hinge bolt heads to aid reinstallation. You can use a coat hanger but thick welding wire or piano wire works better. Fish the piano wire in through the hole in the left front corner of the deck lid by the hinge holes. Push it back through the inner deck lid webbing until the wire is visible in the latch opening. You can also remove the lock cylinder retainer plate by removing the two Phillips screws to get better access, but it is not necessary to do so.

When the piano wire comes through, bend a hook into the end and attach the proper end of the electrical wire to it, taping the attachment to make it pass smoothly through the deck lid. Pull on the piano wire until the electrical plug appears. This can work slick on the first try or it can fight you for hours. Be patient. The connector on the car's harness should be hanging down by the left deck lid hinge mount. Since it has been unplugged for years and is not a weatherproof type, try to clean it as much as possible before plugging it onto the deck lid wire.

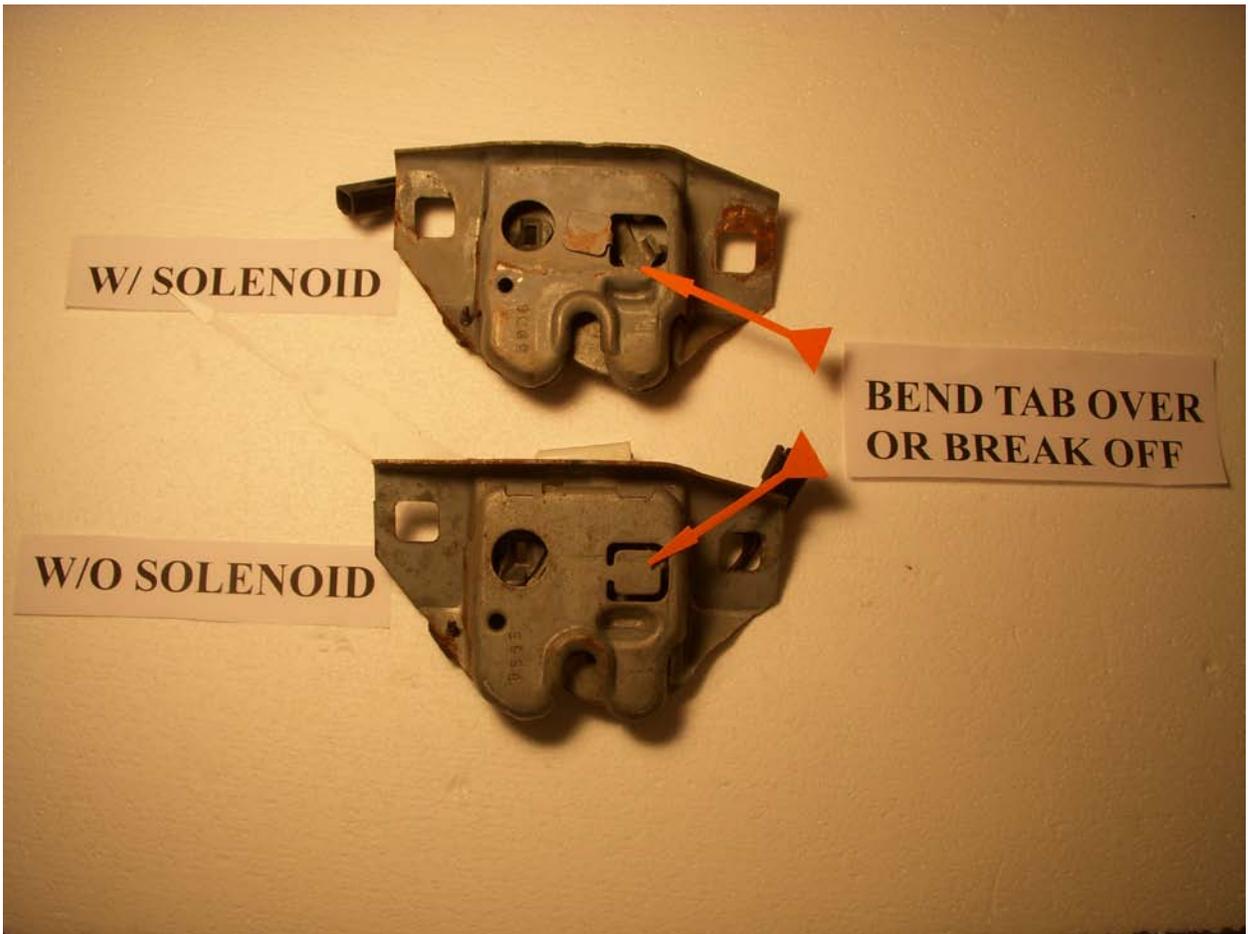
If you bought a used latch with the solenoid on it, just bolt the assembly to the deck lid and connect the electrical plug. If attaching a new or used solenoid to your original latch you will need to bend back or remove a square knockout plug in the latch (Image 2). Now, attach the solenoid by placing the hook on the end of the solenoid over the attachment point on the left side of the latch and securing the solenoid with a 10mm self-tapping bolt. Plug in the connector to the solenoid. You now have a remote trunk release, but does it work? Test it BEFORE you close the deck lid! The solenoid will not activate with the deck lid open since the solenoid grounds through the latch to the

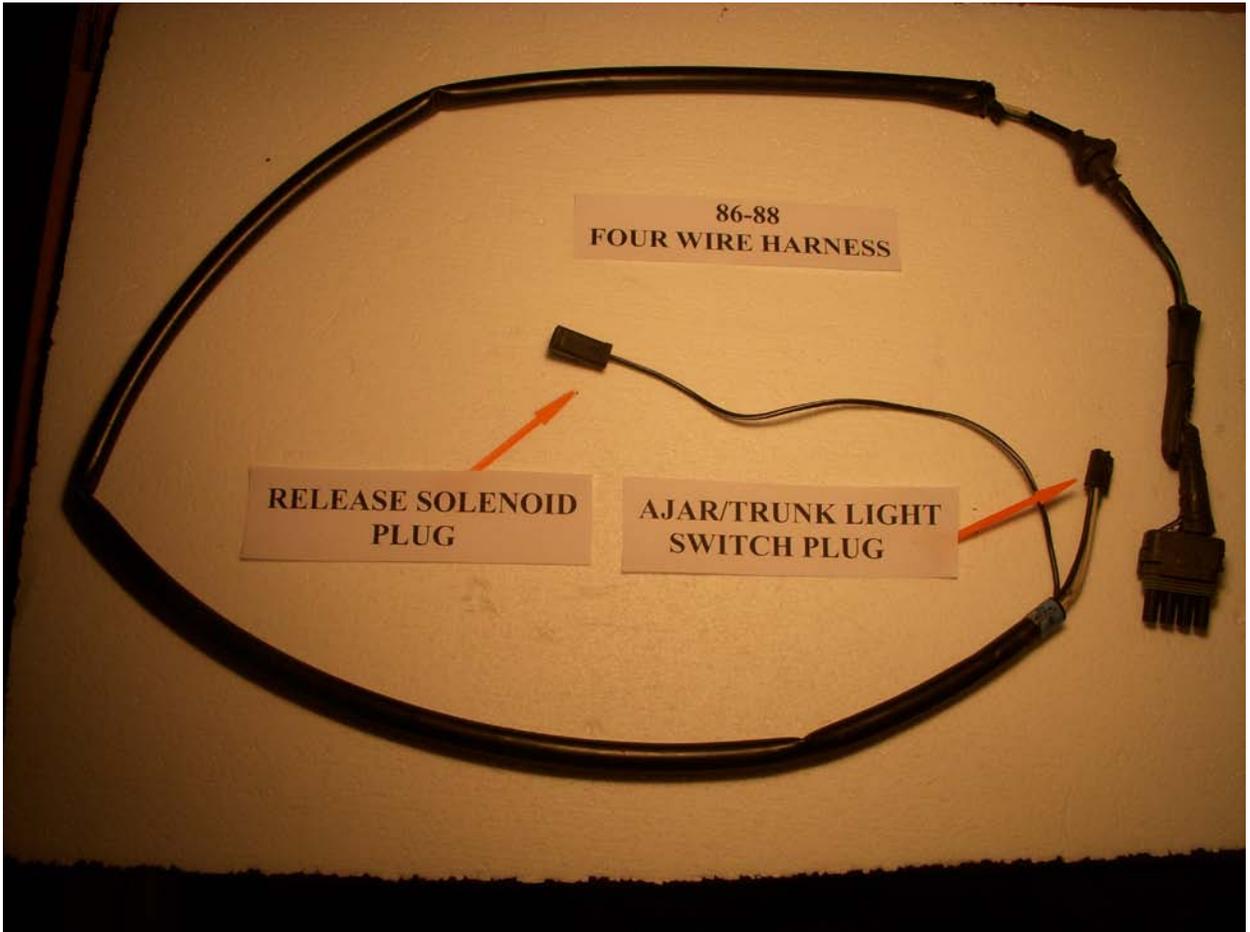
body. Attach a jumper test wire from the solenoid body to the latch hook on the trunk opening (this is a good time to make sure the latch hook is clean and free of paint, rust etc.). Turn the key on and push the trunk release switch. The solenoid should click. Close the latch arm with a screw driver and try it again to be sure it actually unlocks though. Make sure the trunk key lock works (just in case) and close the deck lid. The latch may have to be adjusted if it was removed; try to adjust it at least close before fully closing. Now press the switch again as a final test.

For 1985, the wiring was changed to allow the trunk solenoid to activate only with the parking brake engaged for manual transmission cars or with the shifter in Park or Neutral in automatic transmission cars. Adding a relay allowed for this. A used one is OK, but new ones are cheap (GM # 25523703, AC Delco D1776, Airtex 1R1726). It is the same as a horn relay (Image 3). Again, the wiring and plug is there in all cars, just the relay and the retainer bracket for it are missing. Remove the steering column lower cover and look along the right steering column brace to the left of radio. Tucked back and sometimes taped to the harness should be an unused plug with two relay retainer clips sticking out. The three wire colors will vary by year. Plug in a new or used relay and just tuck it up into the wire harness area before reattaching the lower cover. The retainer installed on cars produced with power release isn't really needed. Everything in the rear is the same as described above in the previous section for 1984. When testing, remember the parking brake must be engaged for manuals or the shifter in Park or Neutral with automatics.

For 1986-1988 the only change was moving the deck lid wiring from the left to the right side, along with the incorporation of the deck lid ajar/trunk light into a switch attached to the latch and the use of a weatherproof plug to accommodate the now multiple wire harness inside the deck lid (three wires without power release and four with power release). These changes actually made adding the power release easier (Image 4). Everything is the same as 1985 except the wire harness in the deck lid. Since there is already a harness inside the deck lid of every car for the ajar/trunk light, you don't have to first blindly fish a stiff pull wire through. Also, the wiring hole in the deck lid that is now on the right front side is a bit bigger and easier to get to, making the deck lid removal not as necessary. The four plug flat connector is attached to the right deck lid hinge bracket by the battery. It should swivel on a pin stuck in a hole but this is often broken. Release the connector retainer clip and unplug the harness. Unplug the wire connector from the ajar switch. The three wires are enclosed in a plastic sleeve. From the end by the front flat plug, pull the wires until the plug is at the rear end of the sleeve. Attach a pullback wire or strong string at least five feet long. Wrap the wire/string and plug in electrical tape to the black sleeve. Slowly pull the old 3-wire harness forward out of the deck lid. When the tape appears, switch the wire/string to the two plugs and the 4-wire harness and pull it back through. Since the one unused plug in the 4-wire connector has been exposed for years, try to clean it before plugging in the 4-wire plug. There is a rubber harness grommet that pushes into the deck lid but it seldom stays in. Plug in the ajar switch and solenoid connectors. Attach the latch and solenoid assembly. Test and adjust as per the previous instructions listed. You now have a factory appearing power trunk release.







86-88  
FOUR WIRE HARNESS

RELEASE SOLENOID  
PLUG

AJAR/TRUNK LIGHT  
SWITCH PLUG