

Flip-Up Honda Chrome Fuel Cap Gasket Replacement Procedures

Following are procedures that will greatly decrease the effort required to replace the fuel cap sealing gasket used on the ubiquitous Honda chrome flip-up fuel tank filler lids used on many Honda CB and CL 350, 360, 400, 450, 500, 550 and 750cc models throughout the 1970s.

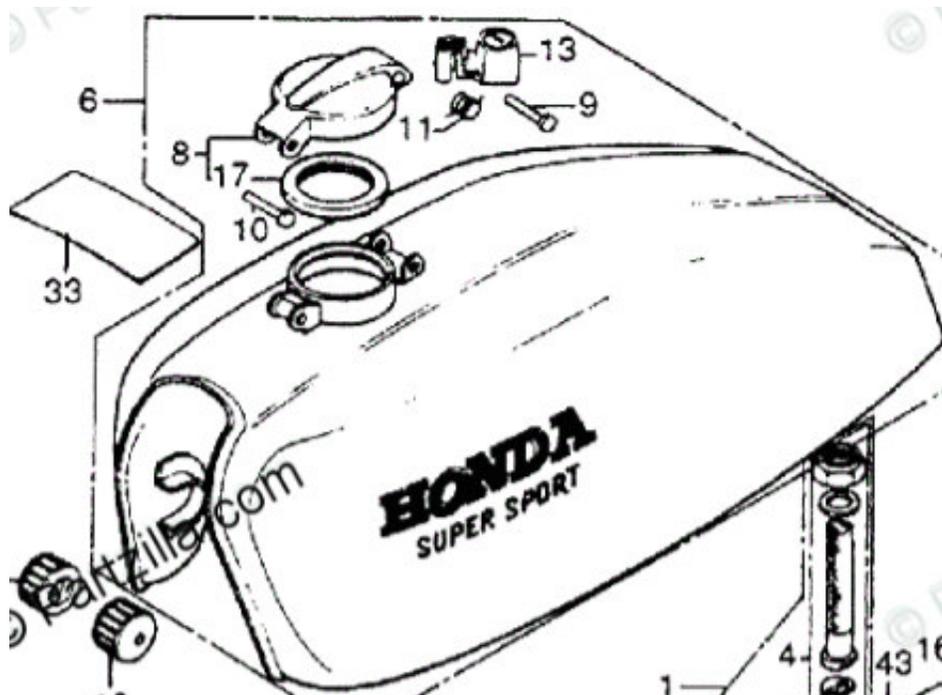
After 50 years of service or neglect, the sealing washers become brittle and cracked, no longer functioning to effectively seal the fuel tank from leaking gasoline out of the tank, or letting air/water into the tank.

Often the underside of the chrome flip cap can become rusted, stained and dirty and cleaning it in-situ is not an easy or completely effective operation.

Trying to replace the sealing gasket without knowing the following “secret procedures” (not published by Honda anywhere that I could find); can result in hours of unnecessary effort and strain.

Replacing the sealing gasket as detailed below is usually simple and quick.

The illustrations here picture filler caps from the 1975/1976 CB400F, but the cap part number 17510-323-310 and replacement gasket part number 17534-323-300 (shown as items 8 and 17 in the exploded parts diagram below), are identical on all of the smaller and larger displacement machines:



Step 1 – Remove the forward Filler Cap Hinge Pin

Shown as item number 10 in the diagram above, the official Honda part name is “Fuel Filler Cap Pin B”, part number 17514-323-300. I’ve not checked lately to see if Honda Canada still carries this part, but there are many eBay listings for genuine NOS pins, as well as aftermarket items that must be flared like the originals or secured with a small E-clip.

The E-clip type pin greatly reduces your chances of scratching or denting your tank while attempting to flare the original or replacement filler cap pin.

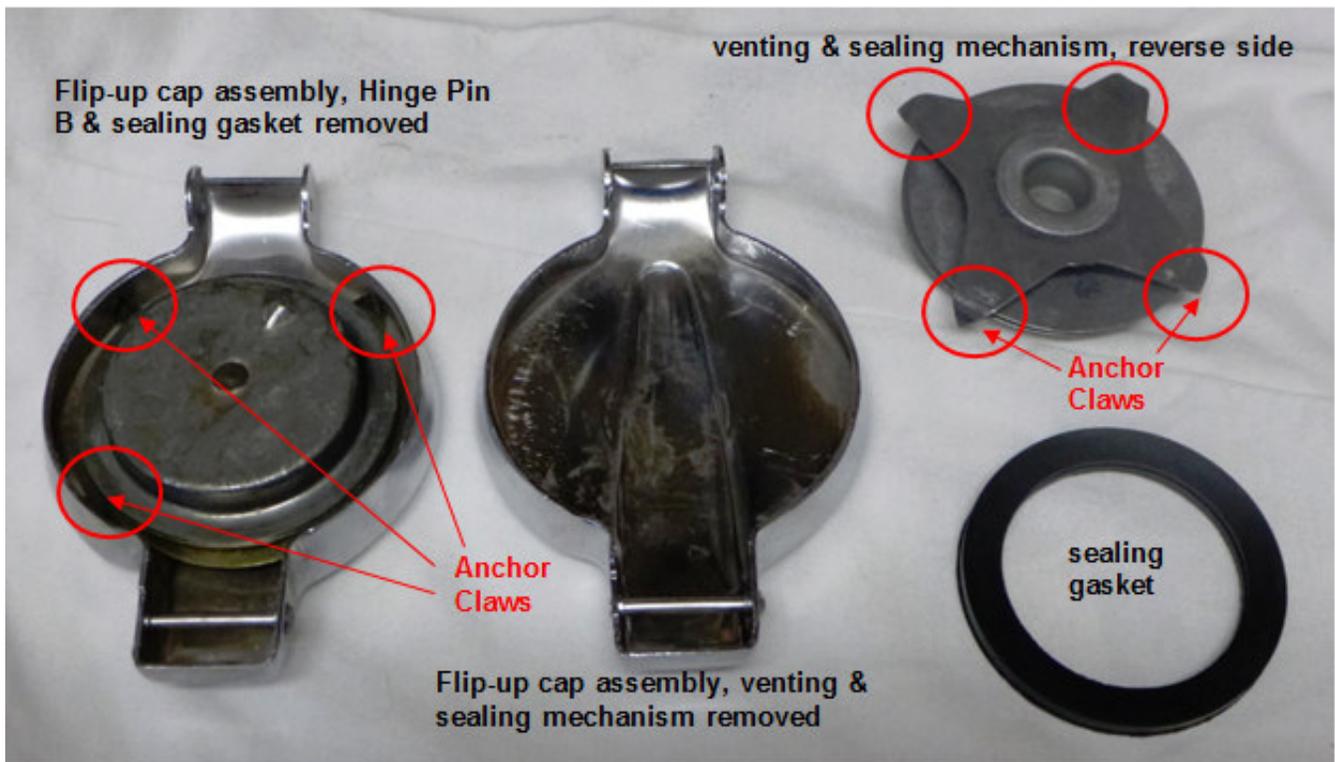
The pin is secured at the factory by slightly flaring the end of the pin opposite the head. If you are very patient and dexterous, it is possible to gently press the flare closed with a good set of needle-nose pliers or a very small punch and hammer. It is also sometimes possible to drill off the extreme end of the flare and gently punch the pin back through the bracket. Other times, there is no alternative other than drilling right through the flared portion with a tiny-width bit and resigning yourself to simply replace the pin. Perhaps it is possible to remove the venting and sealing mechanism from the underside of the flip-up cap without first removing the filler cap pin, thus leaving the cap attached to the tank, but I personally have not attempted a sealing gasket replacement in that manner and cannot comment as to whether this would be a viable approach.

Step 2 – Remove the internal Venting and Sealing Mechanism

Below are pictures of the chrome flip-up cap (sealing gasket removed to enhance clarity), the cap with the venting and sealing mechanism removed from it and the venting and sealing mechanism itself, shown from the bottom (fuel tank) side.



The following picture again shows the chrome flip-up cap, the cap with the venting and sealing mechanism removed, but this time the venting and sealing mechanism is shown from the reverse side. Please note the four spring-steel Anchor Claws that secure the venting and sealing mechanism inside the chrome flip-up cap at about the 2, 4, 8 and 10 o'clock positions (no apology here to the Millennials that never learned analog clock time positions).



To remove the venting and sealing mechanism from the flip-up cap assembly, gently but firmly lever one of the Anchor Claws out and away from the side of the cap assembly using a small flat-bladed screwdriver.

When you pry on the Anchor Claws, pay attention to the screwdriver blade to ensure it is not scratching or deforming the cap assembly in any way.

Once you have successfully lifted one Anchor Claw, repeat the procedure on a second claw.

I have found best success by levering the two claws on the same side of the venting and sealing mechanism (either the 2 and 4 or the 8 and 10 o'clock positions).

As you release the second claw, the venting and sealing mechanism will pop out, making it much easier to clean/polish the cap, remove the original sealing gasket and install a new replacement gasket.

Step 3 – Install the new Sealing Gasket

You'll notice that the inside circumference of the new sealing gasket is grooved and one side of the gasket is thicker above the groove than the other.

In fact, the entire replacement gasket is slightly thinner than the original.

When installing the new gasket on the venting and sealing mechanism, be sure to position the gasket so the thicker side will make contact with the tank filler neck when the flip-up lid is closed.

It is the thick side that you should see when the filler lid is flipped-up (see picture, on page 4, following).

Stretch the sealing gasket around the circumference of the edge of the venting and sealing mechanism and be sure to include the thin, loose metal washer that you didn't even know was there until you removed the old gasket.

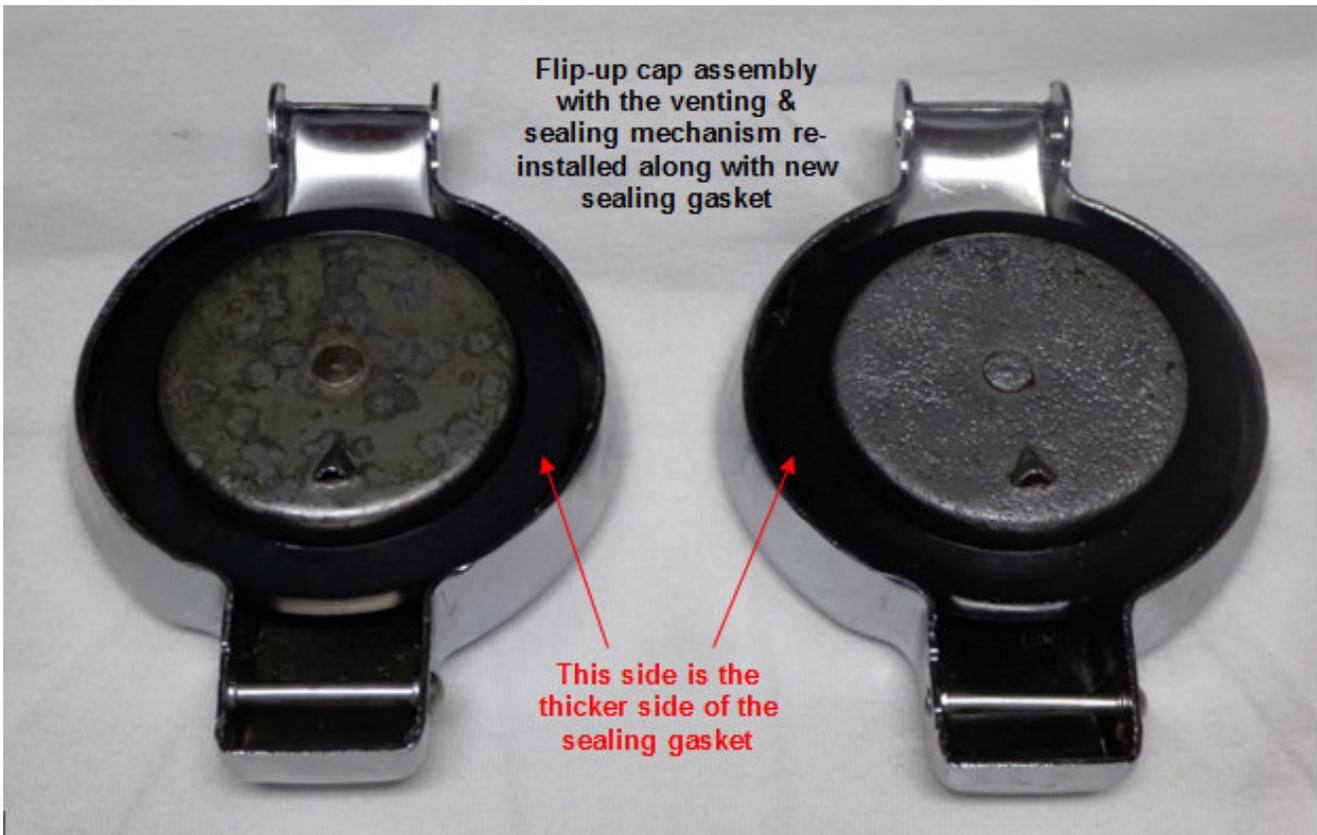
Once the entire gasket is installed and you are sure that the thick side will correctly face and contact the tank filler neck, prepare to reinstall the venting and sealing mechanism into the empty chrome flip-up cap, which has already been cleaned and polished as you see fit.

Step 4 – Re-install the Venting and Sealing Mechanism into the Filler Cap

Hold the venting and sealing mechanism on an angle, tilted into the chrome cap so that two of the Anchor Claws (at either the 2 and 4 or the 8 and 10 o'clock positions) are forced firmly against the inside edge of the filler cap.

Use your thumbs to press down firmly on the raised edge of the venting and sealing mechanism until the two remaining Anchor Claws snap smartly into place and the entire mechanism is set securely.

Once you've accomplished this, the flip-up filler cap and new sealing gasket should look just like those in the picture following:



Step 5 – Install or Re-install the Forward Filler Cap Hinge Pin

Prior to installing or re-installing the forward hinge pin, I strongly recommend that you take the precaution of covering the area surrounding the filler cap bracket with masking tape or affixing some flexible cardboard or a protective rag to guard the paint from any mishap that could scratch, damage or dent your tank during the pin installation process.

It only takes a minute and always guards you against the horrible names you'll no doubt call yourself should you choose NOT to invest a couple of moments for this cheap insurance.

If the pin that you removed is still of adequate length that the end clearly protrudes from the mounting bracket, or if you are replacing the pin with a new one, you can use an appropriately sized metal C-clamp to blunt the protruding end by simply positioning the clamp across the pin and tightening the clamp.

You can also clamp the head against the bracket and flare the open end with an awl or small pointed punch.

If you've purchased the pin type that uses the E-clip, simply push the pin through the bracket and filler cap and snap the E-clip on the slot on the opposite end to hold the pin securely.

That type of Filler Cap Replacement Pin is shown below:



So, that's it, that's all.

Replacing that cracked and brittle sealing gasket will solve the fuel you find periodically dripping down your tank, protect that beautiful paint, avoid allowing air, water and dust into your fuel tank and keeping that Honda running like a fine Japanese watch.

Good luck!

Barry