

## Fitting a cheaper sprayhood

By Bob and Jan Doe

Tridents can be a bit wet going to windward. And without full standing headroom, it's nice to be able to have the hatch open in all-weather when working in the galley. A hood makes a Trident far more comfortable. But hoods can be quite pricey as they usually entail one or two visits to the boat for fittings by the sailmaker.

We bought a semi-finished Martex hood, fitted it to the boat ourselves and saved a packet. The Martex method is that you select the right sized frame which they send to you first to fit to the boat. This enables you to choose how high and how sloping you want the hood to be. It must fit below the boom obviously. We wanted ours as sleek as possible so as not to spoil *Lottie's* nice lines but without having to limbo into the cabin.



Offering up the frame. The bottom bar rests on the handrails; telescopic stretchers enable you to set the height and pitch you want to end up with

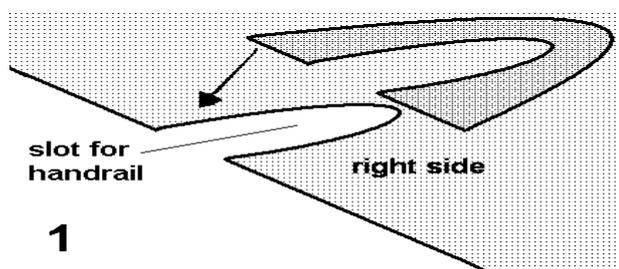
When you are happy with the framework, you send Martex two crucial measurements: the distance between the bars. These enable Martex to make a good quality cloth cover to fit your chosen frame pitch and height nice and snugly. It's all explained with pictures on their website.

Martex recommends a three bar frame. The lower frame sits 3-4" above the cabin roof and supports the hood over the main hatchway without a bridge. It also makes it unnecessary to have a track for the bottom of the hood on the roof (a continuous track is not possible anyway with the hand rails in the way). And it is said to make it easy to lead back any control ropes under the front of the hood – but we don't have any of these (yet).

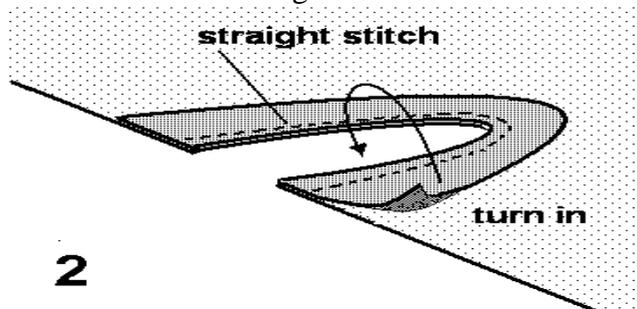
The bottom rail is provided with two little brackets to hold it off the roof though we have not found these to be necessary as the rail simply

rests on the handrails. The kit also includes two adjustable stainless telescopic bracers to fit between each of the frame bars(see photo). There was plenty of spare material round the bottom when it came to trimming and hemming to fit. We put the hood on the frame and marked where it touched the roof and cabin sides with dressmaker's chalk (our hood was a dark colour).

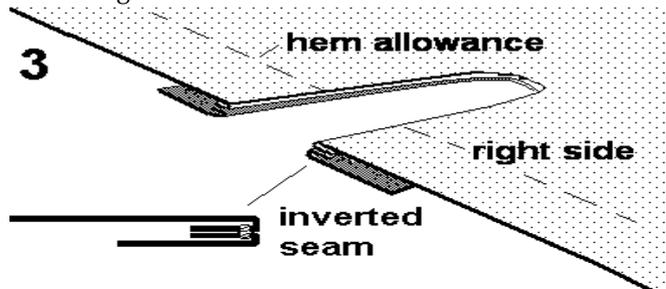
The cover attaches to all three rails with zipped or popped pockets and webbing loops. For a Trident you need to cut out two slots to clear the handrails. We used an offcut of the spare material here as reinforcement. As the diagrams are supposed to show, you cut a slot a bit narrower than the handrail and horsehoe shaped reinforcement panel with an identical slot in it.



This panel is placed on the right side – that is the outside of the hood - at the front and sewn onto the hood close to the slot to double up the material round it. Use a straight stitch because the next



thing you do is turn the reinforcement panel inside the hood through the slot to invert the sewn seam. It produces a nice neat finish though you may need to nick the edges a bit on the curve. When



trimming the hood remember to leave an allowance for the hem. We sewed ours with an ordinary domestic sewing machine. It coped perfectly well with the acrylic canvas that hoods

are made from – even three or four thicknesses at the seams. We used press studs to fix the front of the hood to the roof, ensuring there was one each side of the two handrails and next to the sliding hatch. We put lift-the-dot-fasteners where the hood overlaps the cabin sides but press studs would probably have worked here also. Adjustable webbing straps brace the hood aftwards to the side of the cockpit coamings. You have to experiment a bit to get the angle right for the strap attachment bridges. We also sewed a tape over the hem and above the main hatch to prevent the hatch wearing the hood material when it slides (see bottom picture).



**The hood before trimming and hemming to fit**

Judge for yourself, but we think the finished hood looks fine – it's low and rounded and does not spoil the classic Trident look too much. But Martex's smallest frame is quite wide for the narrow Trident dog-house and has to be sprung into the hinging brackets mounted on the roof.

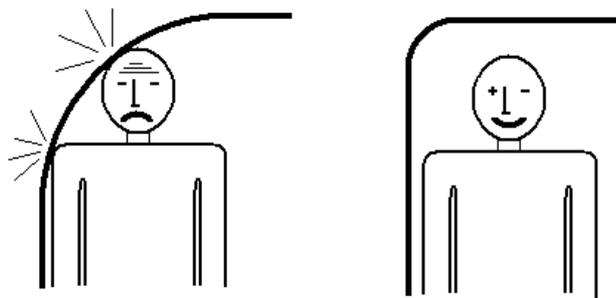


**Slots were cut for the handrail and tape sewn on to reduce wear over the hatch. Press studs were used to fix to roof. Ridgepole prevents puddles.**

Semi-circular stainless steel rails create a shapely compact hood. But if you set it low, it

can have limited head and shoulder room underneath it when sheltering in the forward end of the cockpit with your back to the bulkhead.

So when selecting a hood, bear in mind that a more rectangular frame might not look quite so nice. But it might be a bit roomier when hunkered down at the front of the cockpit (see below).



The advantage with the Martex frame is that you can play with it to get the angle, height and overhang that suits you best. They then make the fabric part accordingly. The current price quoted for a Trident-sized three-frame Martex hood is £360 (compared to £6-700 others quoted).

You might also need to check the position of your cockpit winches to ensure the hood clears these. We had no problem but may or may not have refitted our winches a bit further aft than they were originally during *Lottie's* refit. After painting we couldn't tell. But then we don't know how standard that original position was either.

*Details and prices from:*  
 terrycross@martexmarine.com  
 www.martexmarine.com  
 Martex Marine, Hillside,  
 Over Road, Church Minshull, Nantwich, Cheshire,  
 CW5 6EA Telephone 01270 522251

♦ *If you already have a hood that was once satisfactory but is now worn, you can simply take the fabric bit apart carefully by unpicking the stitching. Then use the individual panels as a pattern to cut out new ones from acrylic canvas. But be careful to take note how they all went together when taking them apart. We did this with our old Westerly Konsort and had no difficulty making a replacement hood twice the size of a Trident's. We were even able to reuse all the original hardware and webbing. The most difficult bit when making a complete hood is stitching in the windows: a layer of tissue paper underneath the plastic material may help it feed through the sewing machine.* □