

Gatorbak GB7 Bunk Cover Installation Guide



1.1 Before and after installation Photo, (Complete photo courtesy of www.boatrailer.com)

Foreword:

Thank you for your purchase of Gatorbak Bunk Covers. All of our Products are manufactured In the USA from our proprietary blend of synthetic materials and are constructed with 100% virgin materials. Our Products are backed by a three year warranty for quality in construction and durability. Be sure to complete your product warranty registration with Gatorbak LLC.

These Installation instructions are a guide for use with installing Gatorbak products, GB7 Models. Because each installation can vary in nature of the equipment it is installed on, these Instructions are a general guide to the correct application methods. Our Team at Gatorbak is highly dedicated to customer support. If you have any questions please contact Gatorbak LLC and we will be happy to assist you.

Tools Required/Recommended:

- Gatorbak Bunk Covers to fit the length of your Bunk Board area
- Stainless steel, 1" #10 Self drilling Screws for Wood and Stainless Steel 1" #10 Self tapping Screws for Metal bunks
- Sharp Cutters to trim material (Fixed blade Utility Knife or Carpet Knife, Straight Tin snips, Chop saw. 14 tooth hack saw can also be used.
- Power Drill with Bits to drive selected screws and a 1/8th inch drill bit to pre-drill each screw location 1/4" deep.
- Tape measure
- Marking pencil (grease pencil in contrasting color or marker)
- Tools for removing and replacing Bunk boards for your trailer
- Optional tools may be used to complete different installation methods. These tools will be discussed in the optional method notations.



Fig 1.2 Common Installation tools

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Warning; this guide recommends the use of various tools and or power tools for installation. Be sure that all appropriate safety precautions are used to avoid injury to persons or equipment. Follow all manufacturers recommendations of tool use at all times.

Step 1.

For the purpose of this guide we will begin with new or replacement bunk beams. Measure the bunk beam on your trailer to ensure that your replacement beams are the correct length and fit. It is recommended to allow treated lumber to dry before installation begins to obtain a true fit. Trim any excess length or width if necessary so the beams will fit properly. Using a tape measure mark out the locations of the mounting brackets on the beam to be used in order to help with bunk installtion once they are complete.

Tips-n-tricks

- By using new lumber you can prepare your new bunk beams in advance, take them with you to the boat ramp and echange them there with the boat launched off the trailer. Be sure to take all the necessary tools to make the swap quick and easy.
- Take this opportunity to replace old and worn hardware. Also, address any corrosion or rust in the bunk mounts.
- Beam Mounts through the side can be mounted over the Gatorak Bunk cover or the cover can be trimmed. If trimming the cover for the verticle mount be sure to use additional hardware to ensure trimmed are is securly mounted.

Step 2.

Layout the Bunk covers for initial fit. Determine the proper bunk cover length and bunk beam length to accommodate the full length of the cover. Trim the Length of the bunk cover with about a half of an inch of extra length to create the overlap for the end cap. End caps are not required but will give an aesthetic appearance. Trace the end cap form additional GB7 Material. You will need to determine how you will mount your end caps in this planning step.

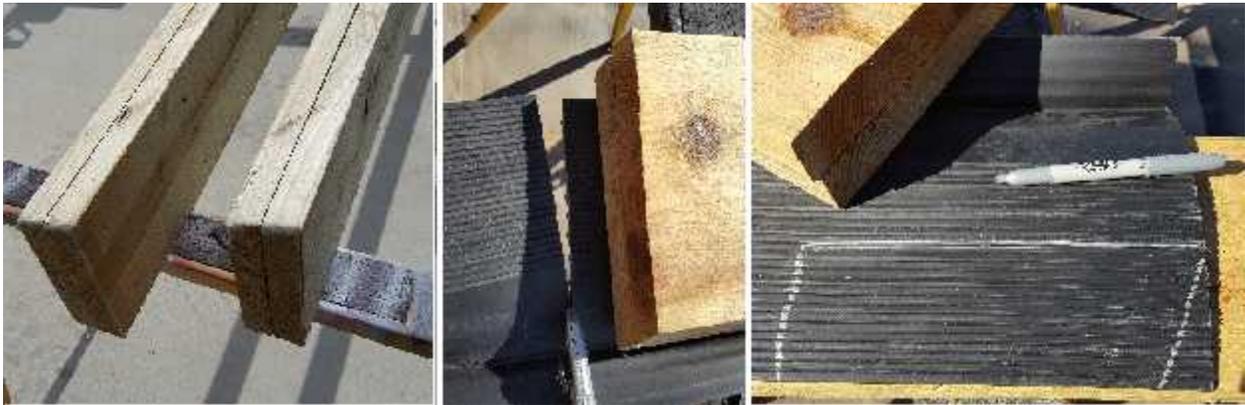


FIG 2 Plan how the end of your bunk covers will appear when completed

Tips-n-tricks

- Flat end caps can be mounted flush or can be recess mounted with about ½” of overlap from the Gatorbak bunk cover.
- For recessed end caps it is best to mount the end caps before mounting cover to ensure proper overlap is achived.

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Step 3.

First align the Angled Leg on the outside of the Bunk Beam. Hold the cover firmly against the leading corner and attach the length of the outside leg to the Bunk beam. Place screws 6-8" apart while beginning with double screws. Once the outside leg (leading edge) is installed pull the remaining cover tight against the face of the top of the bunk beam. Place clamps along the face side to hold the bunk cover in place while inserting mounting hardware.



FIG 3.0 Left, Note the screw placement for the end of the bunk board. Right(2), Attaching the cover to the front of beam, Screws should be placed on last row or two of ridges along front side, far and away from any possible contact point with hull.

Gatorbak Synthetic Bunk covers are designed so that all the mounting screws should be placed along the sides of the bunk beam. No screws should be installed facing in the upward direction in order to prevent a loose screw from damaging the hull.

The first screw is placed about $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the end of the bunk board. The Second screw should be placed approximately 1" from this first screw. Each screw after these should be spaced evenly 8" apart. Once you come to the end of the first side complete the end in the same manner as the beginning with the end screw $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the end of the bunk board and the second to last screw about 1" from the end screw position.

Tips-n-tricks

- J Move your clamps along the work surface as you go.
- J Working from one end to the next will ensure that the cover is tight and has a snug fit.
- J Use a drill bit to pilot drill the screw locations. Mark the bit at $1\frac{1}{4}$ " to save time.
- J Once the starting screws are placed measure and mark the screw locations every 8 inches along the side. See FIG 3.1 for proper screw insertion.
- J The cover should bend easily at the corners. If a tighter fit is desired, gently heating the cover along the breakover edge of the beam will be helpful.

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FIG 3.1 The screw on the left has been installed too tightly. The screw on the right has been installed correctly and just begins to bind the Bunk material

If the Inside face of your GB7 Cover is longer on your Beam application you may also consider adding additional hardware to ensure a snug fit. While stainless steel screw with button heads are recommended you may use staples in areas that you wish to have extra fasteners for cosmetic use. IN the below picture screws are mounted alternating with the primary mounting hardware.



FIG 3.2 Additional screws installed to secure excess cover width. If desired cover can be trimmed to any final width. Ensure all screws are mounted within the channels and away from any facing that contacts the hull. Stainless Steel Staples can be used as well (not shown) as the primary mounting is done with the recommended screws.



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End Cap installation

You can construct end caps with a Recessed or flat style mounting from excess bunk material.

Flat End cap Installation

If using the flat end cap installation method your bunk covers should cover the bunk board from end to end and be flush with the end of the beam. Trim any excess using a fixed blade or utility knife. Flat style end caps can be attached directly to the end of the board and should cover edge to edge with the cover.



FIG 4 Use the end of the bunk Beam to create the pattern that you need for your end cap, once mounted trim the End of the cover or cap to complete the fit.

Recessed End cap Installation

To instal the flat end cap recessed with Bunk Cover, first attach the Flat cap to the end of the board. Trim any excess so that the flat cap is flush with the end of the bunk board. Then fit cover with approximately ½” of overlap.

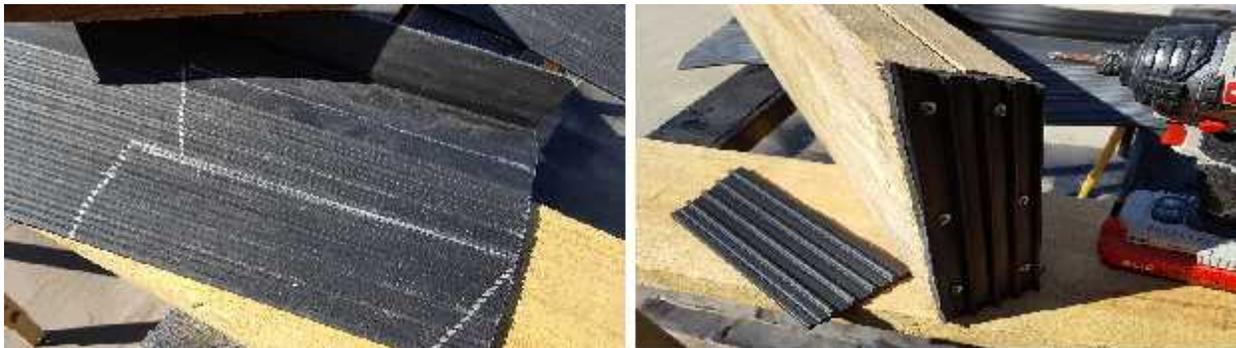


FIG 4.1 Use the end of the bunk Beam to create the pattern that you need for your end cap, once mounted trim the End of the cover or cap to complete the fit.

Tip-n-Tricks

- Painted head screws will hide the screws better, and allow for a different finish to your project
- Edges of ribs that are exposed can be knocked down with a file for a cleaner appearance if desired.
- Additional Stainless steel staples can be used to aide with mounting the endcaps to help secure the ends if desired.

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Gatorbak Bunk Use

IMPORTANT NOTE:

When mounting the new bunks to your vessel on the trailer, loosen the pivots and mounts once the boat is seated and centered and allow the bunks to settle or adjust to the hull so that they have the flattest fit, then retighten your adjustment points to the proper torque levels. It is important that your bunks fit the Hull as it sits on the trailer or lift.

Some break-in of the ribs is typical,

When you first begin Using your new bunks you may see areas of your bunks that will wear a little more than others. This is typical and once the new parts and the vessel have gone through a few loading cycles together this will subside. Often times highspots on the boards or in the bunk cradle will show these areas. Once your Boat has settled in on the New Bunks, you can remove the “curly Q’s” from the bunks to obtain a better asthetic appearance.

In the event that the wear is showing in places where this is not the case, some adjustment may be necessary. While the boat is loaded and centered on the chines where it should be, loosen the bunk assembly bolts to allow the Bunks to align themselves with the hull. Gatorbak bunk covers allow you to see the true fit of your bunks to your vessel. In some cases the bunks can be installed with spacers to allow a precise custom fit. Once the best fit is achieved, be sure to re-tighten all hardware to recommended torque specifications,

Caring for your new bunks is easy.

Gatorbak Bunks are made with UV and anti fungal protective compounds and will resist the elements well. Each time you get ready to load or unload your boat check the bunks to ensure dirt, sand, and debris do not collect on the bunks. Rinse these away or clean with a light detergent as needed. The bunks will allow these to drain away with normal use. Long range trailering, outdoor storage, and other factors like these between loading/unloading cycles can allow build up.

Loading and unloading your boat,

Gatorbak bunk covers are designed to protct your boats hull during trailering. To achive this they are made of a custom blended synthetic material that is many times softer than your hull. Because of this, some rub off of material may appear on the hull area. These “eraser” marks can be cleaned away with a damp cloth. If a stubborn mark persists, use a typical hull cleaner to remove it. Be sure to follow all manufactureers recommendations for the use of these types of products.

Most of our customers will say that loading their boat on Gatorbak Sysnthetic Bunk Covers is very compareable to loading on carpet. While some will say it is a little stickier, some will say it is a little slicker. Each application can vary and this depends greatly on ramp conditions and your boats hull.

We strongly recommend against (aggressive) Power loading or (any) dry Loading your craft. This will void your warranty from Gatorbak. In many places power loading is prohibited and can be hard on your equipment, vehicle and hull.

While ramp conditions can vary and will dictate the loading method required to compensate for wind, current or water level, Always ensure that your bunks are wet before loading. When loading your boat put your trailer in the water untill the bunks are covered in water as much as possible. Then pull your trailer forward until the bunks are just at the water level. Load your boat onto the trailer until the hull comes to rest on the bunks then connect your winch strap and winch the boat into the stop. Be sure to connect your safety and transom tie down straps as applicable.

It is important to note that Power loading and loading under power are two different applications. As a general rule, if your using small amounts of throttle or Idling to drive onto your trailer this is not defined by Gatorbak as Power Loading. Our website has a link to a recommended method for loading, please take a moment to view at your convenience. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljTaqFYcj24#t=42>