

1. Luggage rack
2. Exhaust fan
3. Permanent bed doubles as sofa
4. Tool drawer under bed
5. Folding table on door
6. 110-volt outlet

7. Floor drain
8. Space for second bed
9. Ready-made dresser
10. Partition for privacy
11. Hinged panel for driver's rear view
12. Storage space behind front seat

D. Kasmussen

How to fit out a CORVAN as a camper



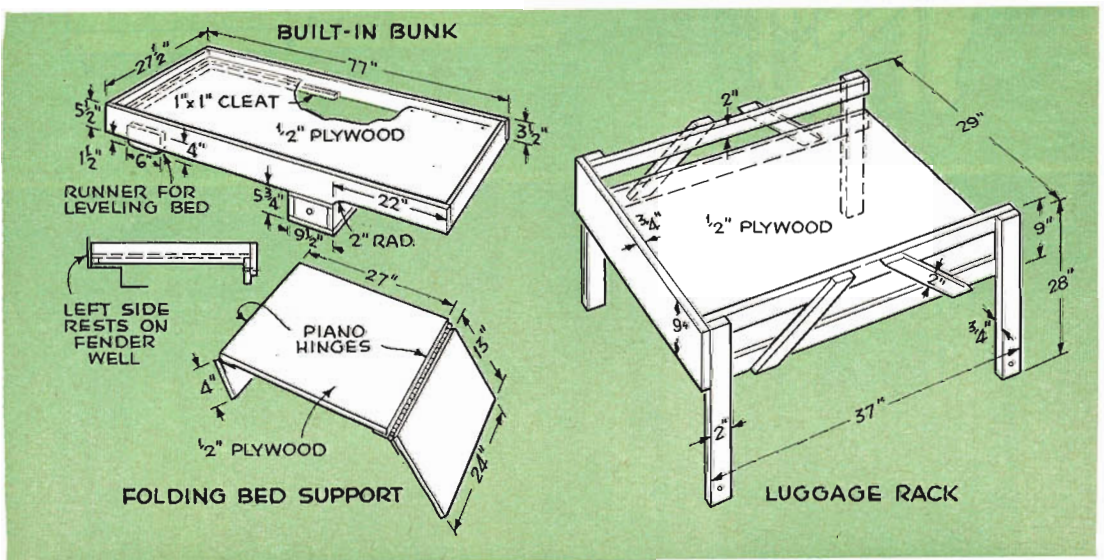
For sleeping, sofa on left side becomes one bed. Other bed is set up under luggage rack on right side.

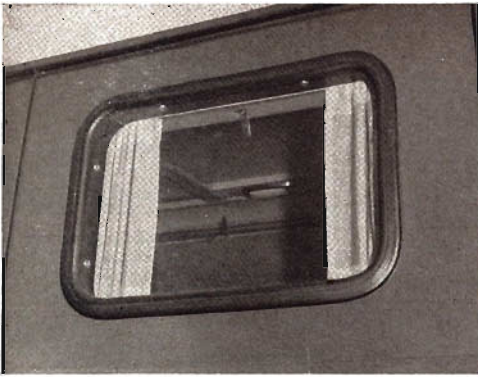
YOU might think that a panel truck is a fine thing to deliver groceries, but hardly a camping rig. Chet Chatman of Red Bank, N. J., proved otherwise.

He bought a Chevy Corvaire Van, familiarly known as a Corvan, and installed windows, put in beds and other furniture, built in a privacy wall behind the front seat, and doodled up an ingenious mount for a detachable awning. The result, shown on these pages, **CONTINUED**



Temporary bed (foreground) rests on hinged plywood support in front. When not in use, support is folded up and stored, along with mattress, under luggage rack.





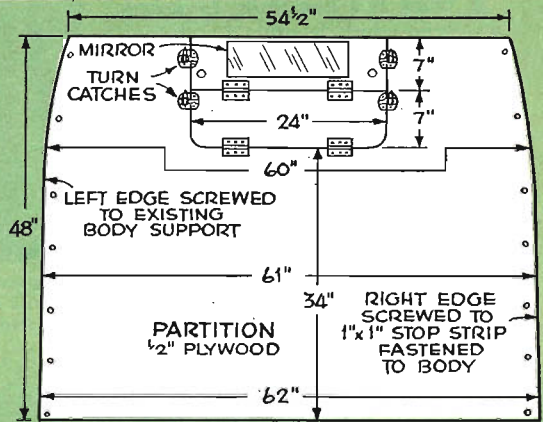
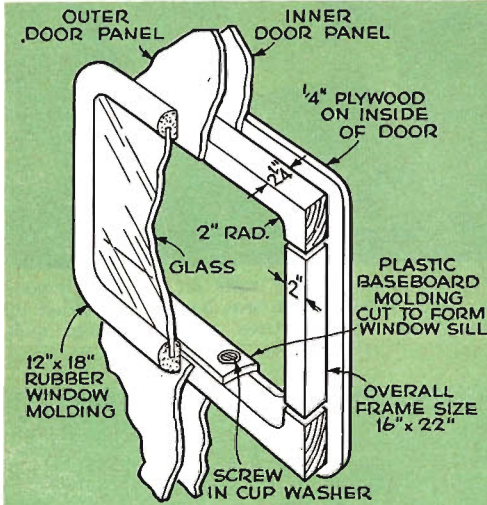
Professional-looking windows like this one can be installed by yourself with stock auto-glass parts. Opening is first cut in outer body panel with a saber saw (with blade broken off short to avoid striking inner panel). Inner panel is then cut in same way. Wood filler blocks are screwed between the panels to form a solid rim, as shown below. Rubber window molding hooks into the opening, and glass snaps into the molding, locking into place.

is a rugged mobile camper that can go anywhere and provide a cozy home-away-from-home in any weather. It sleeps two adults on full-length beds in the rear and a child across the front seat.

Why a panel truck? Chatman gives two good reasons. First, a truck generally sells for considerably less than vans designed for family use; it's a bare shell with no windows or fancy interior fittings. Second, because you're buying just space—a whopping 160 cubic feet of it—you can organize it any way you want.

Adding windows is a must, though. Besides making the living quarters homey, they have an important effect on a camper's legal classification. Without windows, Chatman found the van could be licensed only as a commercial vehicle, keeping it off parkways closed to commercial traffic. With windows, the van can be licensed as

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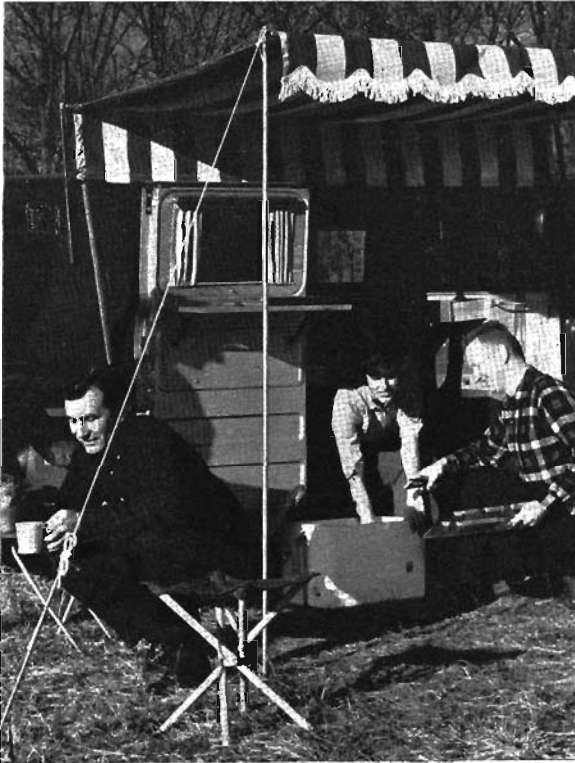


Plywood partition behind driver's seat gives privacy in living quarters. Ready-made dresser below is 57" wide, fits exactly across van. Drop-down table on door at left is 18" by 23".



How to Fit Out a Corvan as a Camper

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a private vehicle and can go anywhere.

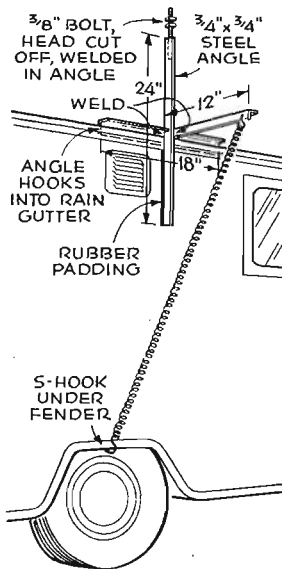
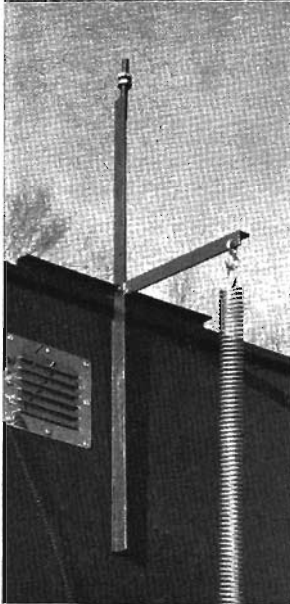
The installation job turned out to be easier than anyone guessed. Stock windows are available for this purpose at shops that handle auto glass and supplies. They consist of rubber moldings that simply hook into place after openings have been cut and framed in the van walls. How they work is shown in a drawing. Chatman added four in all—two on the door side and two in the opposite solid wall.

Fitting out the inside. Chatman decided to keep the furniture simple. Instead of elaborate built-ins, he chose a large ready-made dresser that provides 10 drawers of storage and fits across the van behind the front-seat partition. Its top serves as a counter.

Only one bed is permanently installed, and this doubles as a sofa by day. The other bed is set up on a folding plywood support that raises its front end level with the higher cargo deck at the rear. Both beds have 4"-thick foam-rubber mattresses.

For cooking, there's a two-burner propane stove and a portable charcoal grill. Other equipment includes a 10-gallon water tank, chemical toilet, small gas heater, and two plastic ice coolers—one for food, one for cold drinks. Washing is done in a plastic basin. A drain hole cut in the floor lets you dump dirty water through a funnel without going outdoors.

A 110-volt outlet on an extension cord is kept handy for plugging into power lines available at public campsites and trailer parks. With this, you can run a toaster, hot plate, electric shaver, lights, power tools—any standard household appliances. The interior is kept ventilated by a marine-type deck vent mounted on the roof and an exhaust fan on a rear wall. A two-section hinged panel at the top of the forward partition can be closed for privacy or opened to give the driver an unobstructed view through the rear of the van. Roller shades on the windows give full privacy throughout the camper. ■ ■



Rear edge of awning is supported by ingenious brackets that hook into the rain gutter. They're held in place by tension of long springs hooked under the fenders. Two nuts at the top allow the awning to be adjusted up or down until its edge fits snugly in the gutter.