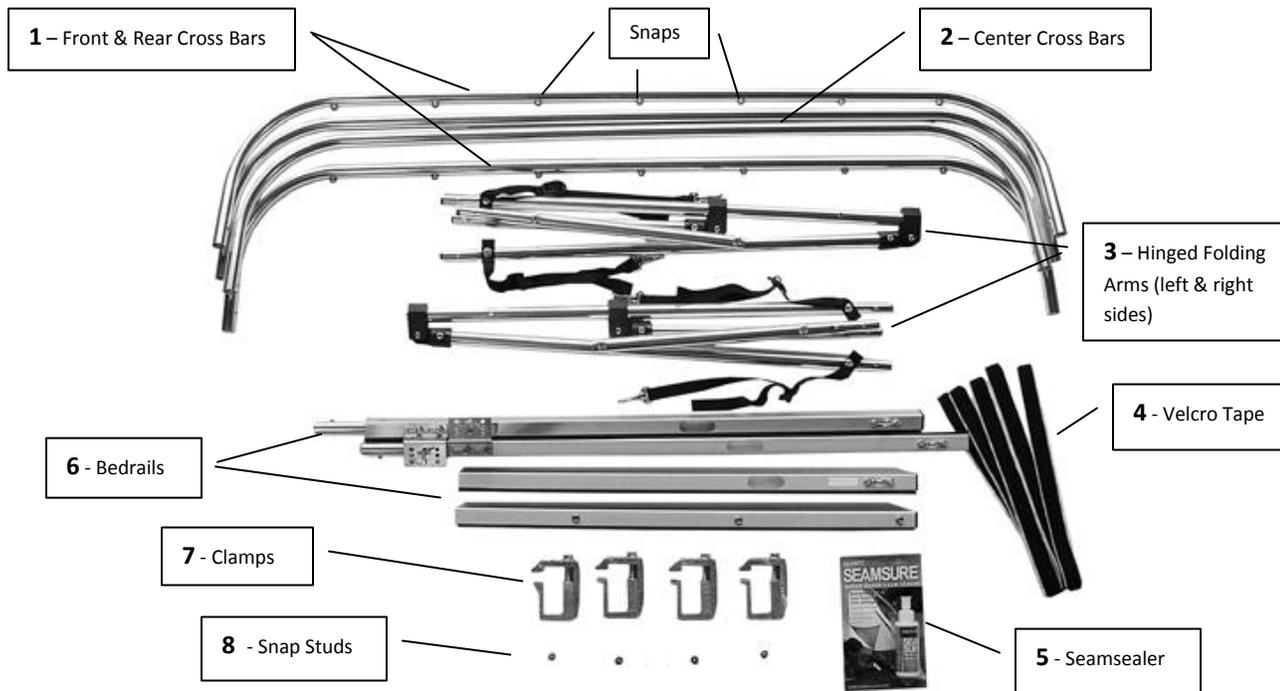




## SOFTOPPER INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

**\*\*Remove all contents of the Softopper carefully to protect the frame from scratches\*\***



### Your Softopper contains the following pieces:

1. Front & Rear Cross Bars
2. Center Cross Bars (two for standard models, three for long beds)
3. 2 Hinged Folding Arms (left & right sides)
4. Velcro Tape (hook side)
5. Seamsealer – Apply before canopy installation. See seam sealer instructions on page 6.
6. 2 sets of bedrails (2 pieces each)
7. 4 clamps (6 for long beds)
8. 4 screw-in snap studs

**NOT SHOWN:** One Fabric Canopy, two plastic snap-fit parts, two 12-inch round bars, one 40-50 inch round bar (depending on model), four #12 screws, two #20 self-drilling screws.

- ❖ Select the bedrail pieces (the four (4) 1-inch square tubes). Join the two pieces of each bedrail together. They will go together so that the snaps are all on the same side. Join them by inserting the round tube into the square end of its mate. Then line up the push buttons with a corner, slowly push together and carefully turn until the push button finds the hole.
- ❖ There is a LEFT and RIGHT bedrail. **NOTE:** To tell the difference, the push button will always be forward of the split point (cab side of where the bars split in two). The angled pivot point bracket must be facing inwards, towards the bed and the snaps will be facing outwards. Place the bedrail on the top side of the truck's side rail, with the weather stripping facing down (if there is a paper-like strip on the weather stripping – remove before placing on truck. If there is a mylar coating on the weather stripping – Do Not Remove. This is to prevent it from sticking to the truck). The front end of the bedrail should be evenly aligned with the front inside corner of the bed.



It can be placed evenly with the inside edge of the truck's side rail or moved outward slightly. It is recommended that it rests within ½ inch from the inside.

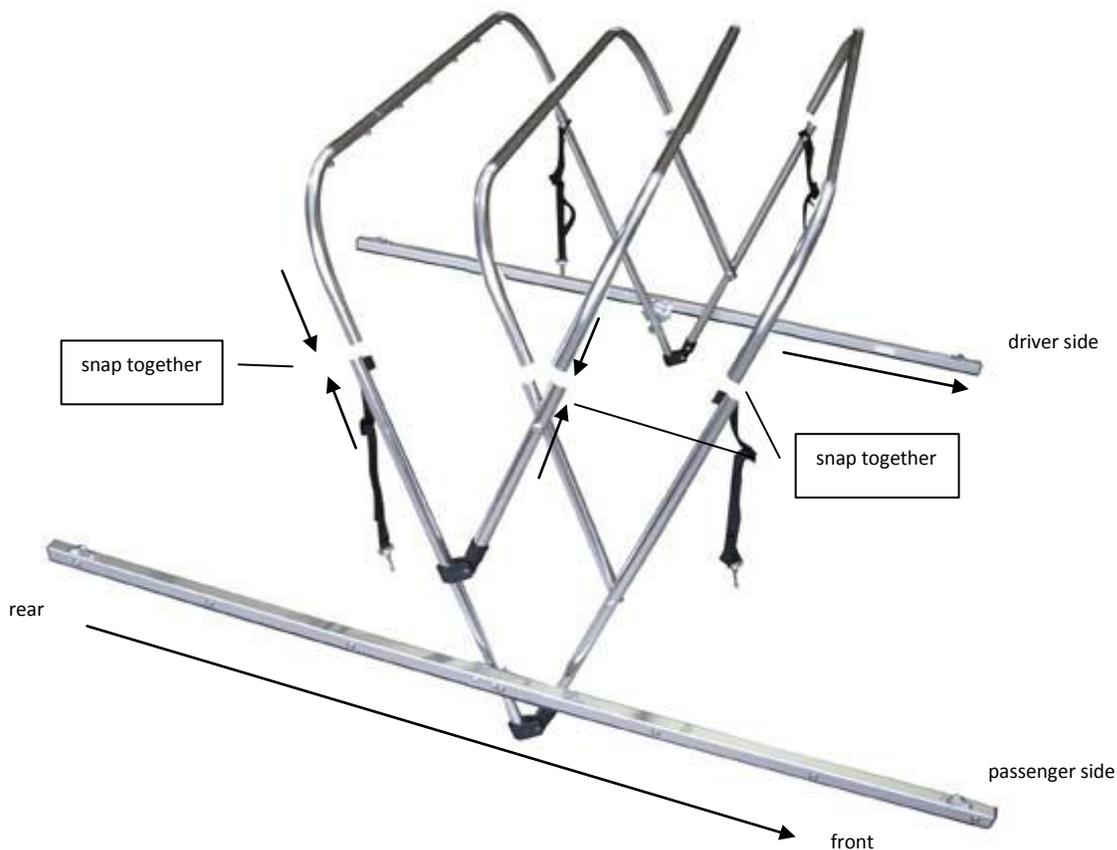
- ❖ Carefully place the clamps under the trucks side rail and then into the slots on the inner side of the Softopper bedrails. The clamps bolt will be on top. Some vehicles have ridges under the bedrail – try to avoid if possible.

**NOTE:** Some newer vehicles may be equipped with utility tracks beneath the bedrails. In this case you will use special utility track clamps (as shown below). To install utility track clamps, remove the track end caps (if applicable) and slide the "T" portion on the clamp into the track to the appropriate location where it lines up with the Softopper bedrail slot. Newer Nissan Frontiers with utility tracks use a C-shaped clamp that installs above the utility track, and directly onto the trucks bedrail.



Tighten down firmly...don't over-tighten. Just make sure they are snug so the Softopper bedrail is unable to move.

**NOTE:** You may have to re-tighten the clamps in a few minutes, after the weather stripping has had a chance to compress. Follow the same steps on the other side.



**NOTE:** At this point it's nice to have another person around as an extra hand to help put the folding frame together. You can do it alone . . . but it's a little awkward.

- ❖ Take the hinged folding arms (left and right sides) and hold 4-5 feet apart. They should be exactly opposite of each other. The snap buttons near the connecting points will be facing inwards. One side has colored dots near the top.
- ❖ Take each of the four cross bars (or five for long beds). They each have colored dots on one end. Carefully fit them together with the corresponding colors on the arm. Press the push button with your finger and carefully slide them together until the button finds the hole. You may have to wiggle them a little. **HINT:** Be carefully not to pinch your fingers between the pieces.

- ❖ Before installing the frame onto the pivot pins on the truck bedrails, make sure to get the left and right sides correct. **NOTE:** The pivot point holes in the frame are in the tubes that will be towards the rear of the truck. **EXAMPLE:** If the folding frame were on the pivot pins and lying forward behind the cab, the bar with the holes in it should be on the top. Remove the cotter pin from the pivot pin in the bracket on the bedrail and carefully slide the frames' pivot hole onto the steel pivot pin. You may have to wiggle them a little or pivot it back and forth to get them on. Reinstall the cotter pin. Do the same on the other side.



**NOTE:** The pivot pin is designed to loosen slightly to allow for movement and flexing of the truck bed.

**TIP:** It is easiest to attach the canopy to the frame by working from the rear on the tailgate. Carefully lay down the frame towards the rear of the truck. Unfold the canopy a little to find the front snap flap. **NOTE:** The back window has zippers; the front does not...so look for the front.



- ❖ Wrap the front snap flap (that has 6 or 7 female snaps) over and around the front cross bar and connect to the male snaps located on the front cross bar of the frame. Now raise the frame into a position that makes it easy to attach the rear snap flap (that has 6 or 7 female snaps) to the rear cross bar of the frame. Flip up the rear window panel onto the roof, (or climb into the back of the truck) and attach the rear snap flap snaps to the rear cross bar. Be sure to go over and around the top of bar and snap from underneath.
- ❖ Now raise the entire frame up and forward. Attach the two front straps to the eyelets located on the top from ends of the bedrails. The corner fabric may bind a little this first time so you may have to help it a little. Now retract the topper towards the front of the bed.
- ❖ You will now need to attach the plastic parts to the rear inside of the 1-inch square bedrails. The one marked (A) goes on the driver side and the other, marked (B) goes on the passenger side. If there are no pre-drilled holes you will need to drill two 3/16 inch holes into the rear bedrails as shown. The first hole is 1 inch from the rear of the bedrail in the center of rail, and the second hole 3 ¼ inches from the end of the rail. **NOTE:** Do not include the plastic end caps in these measurements. Install the adjustable snap-fit parts with the #12 screws provided.



These photos represent the rear of the driver-side bedrail



- ❖ Bring the topper back up, and attach the rear straps to the rear eyelet holes on the plastic parts (make sure the straps are loose). **NOTE:** The topper should still be able to rock back and forth a little, as the straps should still be loose.
- ❖ Flip down the front and sides of the canopy and connect the snaps along the edge of the fabric to the snaps on the side of the bedrail. It's easier to start at the front and work your way back. Snap the 2 or 3 on each side and then tighten the back straps a little. Work your way back, one snap on each side at a time.

The Canopy will be quite snug the first time it goes on. Take your time and let the fabric have time to stretch out. The roof will stretch out and everything will fit into place. It can take a few minutes or more...if it's very cold (in winter) take more time or move the truck into a warmer garage.

**NOTE:** If it is snug when you are nearing the last few snaps, place on hand up on top of the frame and pull down gently to help set the snaps.

Reach in and adjust the front webbings until they are snug. Don't over-tighten the straps; you just want them to be snug. They are only to hold the roof in place when the sides are rolled up.

**NOTE:** Test again to see if the bed rail can move. If so, retighten the clamps. After a short time the weather stripping will compress and there will be no need to retighten. Just be sure to check it once in a while.

Adjust the four corners of the Canopy with the adjustable corner Velcro to get a nice fit on your truck.

**CAUTION:** When removing the canopy from the frame, pull evenly on the snaps. If there is any resistance, wiggle them around under a little tension until they release. Tugging violently can cause the snaps to deform, making it very hard to re-snap.

- ❖ Insert a 12-inch bar tube into each end of the longer tube, with the plastic end caps out. Press the bar assembly into the snap-fit parts on the bedrail, adjusting the total length as necessary for a tight side-to-side fit. The idea is to have the larger tube centered and have as little side-to-side movement as possible once secured in the plastic parts and have equal lengths of the smaller tubes protruding from each end. Mark the location of where the smaller tubes enter the larger tube. The longer tube has pre-drilled holes in each end. These holes will be used to guide a 1/8 inch drill bit into the smaller tube. Hold the smaller tube securely in the larger tube at the correct location and drill through. Install the #20 screw and repeat on the other end. Insert the finished tube assembly into the window panel sleeve, press into snap-fit parts on both sides and check fit.



Not to scale

- ❖ **Velcro** . . . Three pieces will go on the outside of the tailgate (if you so choose), and the other two will go on the inside wall of the bed, at the front of the box near the top.

If using the velcro on the tailgate, pull down the zippers on the back flap and adjust the velcro on the back corners of the canopy so that the back flap sits nicely along the top of the tailgate. Tug gently on the back flap and find the place where it seems to sit easily. There is Velcro (loops) sewn along the bottom inside edge of the back flap. This is where the Velcro tape must line up once installed on the tailgate. Not too high or too low, just right so it won't be seen when the back is zipped down and secured. **TIP:** Use a washable crayon to help find the center and to help you line things up. **Don't pull off the sticky backing yet.** Be sure to clean the area well (use a 50/50 solution of water and alcohol) where the Velcro will be installed. Plastic bed liners or tailgate protectors generally have a waxy surface, which reduces the holding strength of the Velcro. It is best to apply the Velcro directly to the paint. Flip the back flap down and retest again for evenness. Take one piece and peel off the plastic that conceals the sticky backing, and then very carefully apply it to the center of the tailgate. Now take the second piece and apply it to one side of the tailgate, leaving about an inch extending past the edge of the tailgate. This remaining inch should be wrapped around the edge of the tailgate. Now apply the 3<sup>rd</sup> piece to the other side. Now go over the three pieces and press along back and forth to make sure they are firmly attached. **NOTE:** Velcro tape will reach maximum holding strength after 24 hours. Feel free to cut to shorter lengths if necessary or preferred. You will now repeat this process with the remaining two pieces of Velcro tape, spacing them approximately 18 inches apart for the front flap along the inside front of the truck box. With bed liners you can instead install the screw-in snap studs (supplied) to attach the front inside flap.

**SEAMSEALER:** The seamsealer should be applied to the underside of the fabric ( as it may show if it's on the outside). It usually only needs to be applied to the seam that goes all the way around the roof, and on the upper area of the buckle webbings on the sides and rear. Be sure to shake the bottle well before applying to mix up the contents. Apply liberally to the seam, concentrating on where the needle and thread penetrated the fabric to fill the needle holes.

**NOTE:** Recheck the clamps again to make sure they are tight and the bedrails are secure.

.....

## Folding/Retracting the Softopper

- ❖ Undo the snaps on the side panels, raise or unzip the rear zippers and flip the sides up and lay them nice and flat on the roof.
- ❖ Flip the rear panel up onto the roof and lay it flat.
- ❖ Stand on one side of the Softopper, and holding the front bar in place, bring the rear bar forward. You want to try and get the fabric to make even loops down in between the bars to make is as compact as possible  
**IMPORTANT:** When retracting, especially in colder weather, it is very important to make sure that the front window folds evenly in the middle and rearward, into the bed of the truck. Failing to do so may cause the vinyl window to fold improperly and crack.
- ❖ Lower the whole unit down behind the cab. You'll notice that the pivot point is offset and the frame will move back as it's lowered forward.  
**IMPORTANT:** When folding the Softopper forward down behind the cab it is very important to attach the rear straps (on the folding frame) to the attachment points at the front (where the front straps are attached to the bedrails). Make them snug. This will prevent the Softopper from being able to accidentally pop open when driving.
- ❖ When re-opening the Softopper...undo the rear safety straps from the front attachment points and lift the whole unit up to cab height. Now open the frame and canopy. You'll notice that as the rear part of the frame moves back, the front moves forward. Attach the rear straps, snap down the sides and rear...and you're off to the races.
- ❖ If you're going to remove the Softopper completely, retract the topper, then detach the front panel from the bed (Velcro or snaps) and wrap the front panel down under, then around the canopy into a nice little package. If you purchased the boot cover/storage bag, you can now place it over the canopy. You can remove the cotter pins and remove the folding frame and canopy as one piece.

Please see the care & maintenance page for important information

**\*\*Do not go through an automatic car wash\*\***

Please call or email with any questions

1-800-810-7227

[info@softopper.com](mailto:info@softopper.com)

Softopper

PO Box 17426

Boulder CO 80308