

After the seatback the tub is the next large assembly you should work with. Just follow Rotorway's instructions for cutting the initial holes for the landing gear locations. Another thing more builders including the builders of the factory ships are starting to do is procedure referred to as "splitting the tub". This allows you to take off of the front of the tub to have access to tail rotor pedal assemblies, as well as avionics that will be mounted in the forward part of the console. I decided to use the "parting hole" method for splitting my tub. Here are the steps of what I did to this.

1. First locate and cut out the gear leg holes in the tub.
2. Using the front gear leg holes as a guide, use masking tape to create a seam line on the bottom of the tub from one hole (pilot's side) to the other (passenger side).
3. This seam line is where the tub will be split into two separate pieces, so take your time and make sure you mark it in the correct place.
4. Now start my drilling some 1/8" holes every three to four inches. These will be your guide markers.
5. On the inside of the tub use a Dremel to cut through the two wood spars located in the tub bottom. These are fiber glassed into the tub by the factory to stiffen the tub bottom. It is ok if cut through to the tub bottom, just make sure your cut is even with the pilot holes you drilled earlier.
6. Now lay up some packing tape on the aft or rear side of the guide holes. One or two rows are enough. This should be on the inside of the tub. This will be used to keep the fiberglass from sticking to the rear part of the tub that you are going to lay up. You are essentially creating what is referred to as a "panel bonding strip".
7. Make sure you also sand and lay up fiberglass forward of the guide holes as well. This is where the bonding strip will be permanently attached.
8. Let the fiberglass cure and kick until it starts getting pretty warm, but not hot. Now take the Dremel tool with an abrasive disk and cut carefully cut from each hole to hole. The tub halves will then separate and you will have a perfectly formed bonding strip that will mount nut plates in to secure the halves back together when you permanently mount them on the airframe. Here are a few pics to show what the finished product looks like.

