

The following pictorial guide shows the complete replacement of the plywood transom of a Classic Lido 14 sailboat. Your transom may not require full replacement so be careful to assess the extent of the wood damage before you start digging in. By far the most complicated part of this process is removing the wood sandwiched between the seats and the transom. You will need to get a bit creative in making tools that will reach down into that gap to remove the wood. If in doubt, only remove the wood that you have full access to.

Always be careful to not damage the exterior fiberglass of the transom.

Good Luck,

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Stage 1: Appraisal of damaged wood.

Having removed the inner layer of fiberglass, you see the problem at hand. In this case, the lower half of the transom wood was very rotted while the upper half is unusually sound.

This is easily explained – water trickles down the edges of the wood and collects down at the base of the transom.



Stage 2: Wood Removal

Thru lots of scraping, cutting, and chiseling, we've removed virtually 100% of the original plywood. You'll need to be a bit handy to reach down into the gap between the seats and the transom to get the last bits removed. In most transom repairs, that portion of wood is left in place – simply too much complication to get it removed. We were lucky in with this boat – long metal rods with sharp points were used to gouge out the rotted (still very wet) wood.

Sand the fiberglass to prepare it for bonding

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Stage 3: Prepping the new wood.

Here we've clamped a piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick plywood (a high quality piece with no defects). We traced out the bottom of the hull curve onto the plywood (not shown) and also the top of the transom.

The Lido 14 was built with quite ordinary plywood for the transom. If you can afford it and can find it, marine grade plywood is nice to use – it's stronger and probably has a very clear surface.



Stage 4: Cutting out the transom.

We cut the hull shape and the notch to fit over the drain plug. Note that we haven't cut the upper curve of the transom or the tiller opening. That happens last.

If you did a good job of clearing out the old wood, you just may be able to test fit the wood to get the shape just right. Be prepared for getting the wood stuck in place. We got stuck once but we were able to simply bolted a long 2x4 to the top edge and used sledge hammers to knock against the 2x4 to lift the plywood back out.



Stage 5: Bonding

Epoxy is the best solution as it also serves as a water barrier. However polyester resin will do just fine too – it was the resin used throughout the construction of all classic Lido 14s. Here we are coating the fiberglass in preparation for insertion of the plywood.

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Stage 6: Insertion

We are inserting the wood and coating it too. The coating of resin will aide in slipping the wood in (by lubricating tight spots) and it will serve to bond the wood in to the fiberglass of the seats.

We used hammers to tap the wood into final position.



Stage 7: Clamping and curing.

We've clamped the plywood in place as best as we could – focusing on the upper edge. There's a piece of wood (like a 2x4) on the back side to create a clamping sandwich.

Note that the clamps are sitting in little paper cups – to avoid getting the clamps bonded to the wood.



Stage 8: Fiberglass coating

We've trimmed out the tiller hole and trimmed the top edge – using the exterior fiberglass as our trimming guides.

Now we are applying a single layer of fiberglass cloth to create a protective layer.

We took the time to get the fiberglass to fit nicely up underneath the gunwales too.

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Stage 9: Trimming

Prior to laminating the fiberglass, we've filled the gaps around the edges of the seats with Duraglass – a polyester filler with chopped fiberglass. Bondo makes an equivalent product. You can see the filler here – it's green. Once the filler is cured and smoothed and the wood surface sanded, we wetted out the wood and applied the fiberglass. Polyester resin is fine, epoxy is better due to its water barrier properties..



Stage 10: Good enough to go.

We've left the transom clear coated. To protect epoxy from UV degradation, you need to apply a coat or two of UV inhibiting varnish.

Be sure to seal up the top edge of the transom too.

Some folks like to finish off the top of the transom with fiberglass or perhaps with a nice strip of teak wood.

A modern style traveler system has been installed to eliminate having to re-install the traveler track and caps.

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