

15. Patch any holes on the inside of the trunk:

There will often be splits or holes on the inside of the trunk that may or may not be visible from the outside. Most often they are holes left by the removal or replacement of nails. Sometimes there will be long cracks or openings in the wood. They could be caused by abuse or natural shrinkage.

The cracks can be reinforced by using cleats made especially for this purpose. Hold your iron on the outside and nail in the cleat from the inside spanning the crack (See cleats in *Chapter 4* for more details).

After you have put cleats over the cracks you'll want to lay down a strip of cloth, paper liner, or sheet rock tape over the length of the crack. If cloth is used it should be a heavy cotton, sort of like a drop cloth material. It needs to extend beyond the crack on either side by about 1 1/2 inches. Apply it by laying the cloth out on a table covered with newspaper. Squeeze a run of wood glue up and down the cloth and spread it out evenly with a putty knife. After the cloth is covered you can then lay it down on the crack and run the putty knife over it to push out any air pockets.

If you use a strip of liner or sheet rock tape (our preferred method) you can simply install it with wallpaper paste.

Holes and gouges left by nails, etc. can be filled using wood filler or bondo. One application is usually enough. Make sure you go over it with the putty knife and leave a nice, smooth surface to avoid heavy sanding later. If you need to make a second application, wait at least 24 hours to let the first coat dry. Always have plenty of ventilation when using this type of material (See *Chapter 3, Safety*).



Shrinkage splits spoil liner.

Even if the cracks are not so bad as to require cleats for reinforcement you would probably want to cover them with cloth, a strip of paper liner, or sheet rock tape before you reline the whole trunk. The reason is that wood is always shrinking and expanding and if you don't have something between the crack and the liner there is a good chance the liner will split along the crack as the wood shrinks.

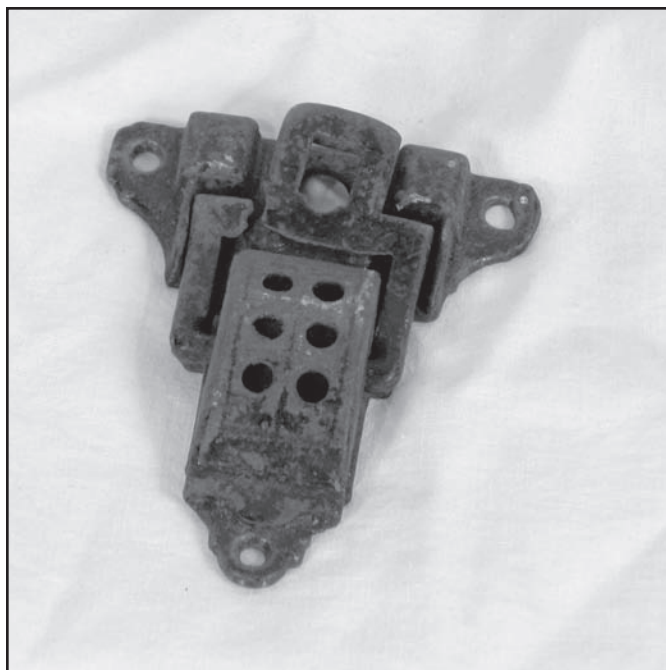
them, holding the iron on the outside while you use the hammer on the inside.

Old drawbolt won't stay closed because the bar spring is missing or broken:

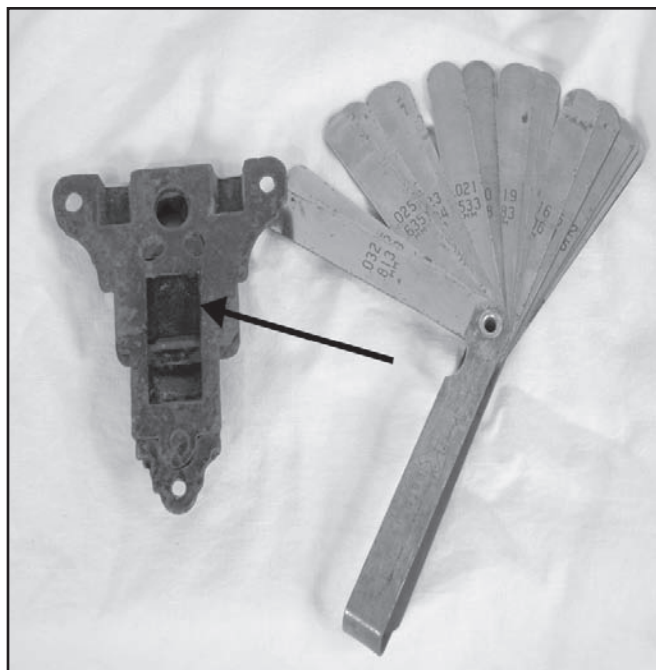
We have all run into this one at one time or another. The bar spring is a flat piece of spring steel inserted in the back of the drawbolt that keeps tension on the drawbolt lever. To repair, take the drawbolt off the trunk and remove any remaining pieces of bar spring. Make a new spring out of one of the fingers from a feeler gauge. What is a feeler gauge, you might ask. It is a mechanic's tool made up of flat spring bars of different thicknesses.

It is used in adjusting valves but will serve this purpose well. You can buy one at any auto parts or hardware store. You can also pick one up at a local flea market. Cost would run from a buck or two up to about five dollars. There will be several fingers in the gauge that will work fine although many are too thick or too thin.

Take the feeler gauge apart and choose the right size for your job. Cut it to size with a pair of tin snips. They are a little difficult to cut because they are made of spring steel which is quite hard. After it is cut you can slip it under the bar and into place. Bend the new spring slightly to put a little tension against the lever.



Basic cast iron drawbolt with a bar spring mechanism.



The back of the drawbolt showing the spring and the feeler gauge used to make a new spring.

Trunk is missing a curved oak slat from the dome top:

You can make one of these out of a straight oak slat from a parts trunk or you can buy or make a new oak slat and bend it to shape. How do you bend an oak slat and get it to stay bent? Good question. You make a steam box and put the slat in the box for a period of time. It could take up to three hours. It would pay to experiment a little because



A homemade steam box using a length of PVC pipe and a Warner wallpaper steamer. Seal both ends with rags. Notice the tilt to let the condensed vapors run out.

if you take it out too soon and bend it the wood will break. When it's ready, take it out and immediately clamp it to a 55 gallon drum until it cools, at least an hour. The picture above shows a simple steam box which works very well on this job. For more details on making a steam box go to the internet: <http://www.diybob.com/steambox.htm>.

Cutting out a liner patch:

Did you ever line a trunk and look in only to see that you had missed painting a nail and now



After the oak slat has been steamed in the box we clamp it to a steel drum while it sets.

Take a lock apart and fit a key:

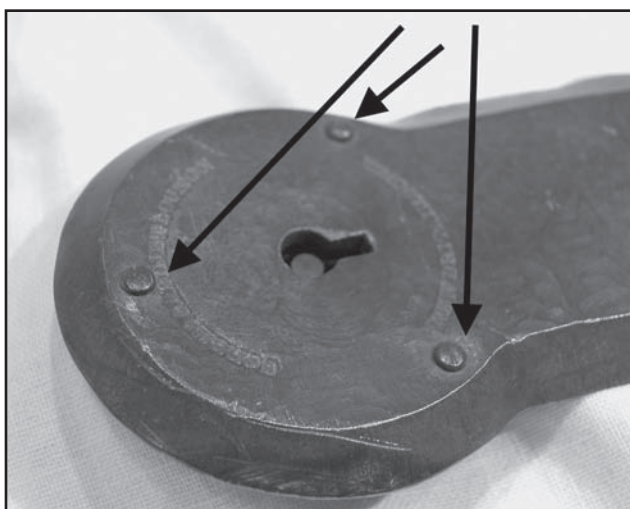
We've talked about locks and keys. Now, we will go over the process of taking a lock apart and figuring out how to make it work with a key we have.

Keys were usually made for specific types of locks with subtle variations on each key and in each lockworks so that one key would not fit all locks. The problem here is we have a lock and we also have the type of key that was made for this lock but the cut is off and won't work the mechanism. The solution is to take the lock apart and modify it to fit the key. A sort of backwards solution but one that works. Yes, you could cut a key blank to fit this lock but the key we have has already been cut and it can't be recut to fit this lock. So we change the lock.

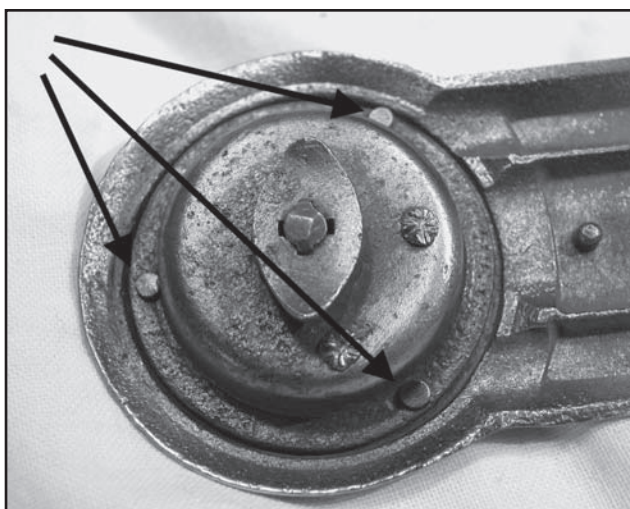
Here's how: remove the three rivets with a sharp chisel. Put the lock up against something that won't move. Place the blade of the chisel, bevel side up, against the head of one of the three rivets and strike the chisel with a hammer. If you have a nice sharp chisel, are holding the chisel almost flat against the lock, and strike hard enough, the head of the rivet will slice off, just like in the movies. Repeat on the other two rivets. Place the lock on a hard flat surface that has a 1/2" hole in it. Use a piece of flat steel or hardwood. Place the lock so that one of the rivets is over the hole and drive it out with your small diameter nail set.



Modify this lock to fit your key.



Start by removing the three rivets.



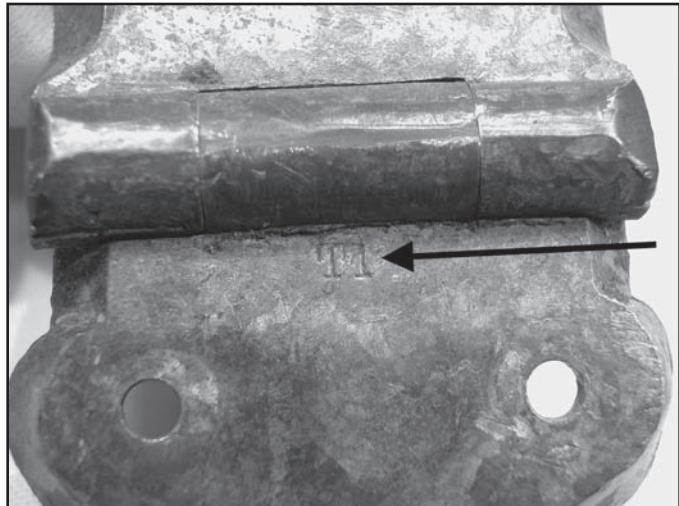
Back side of the lock showing the three rivets to remove.

Repeat on the other two rivets. Am I repeating myself?

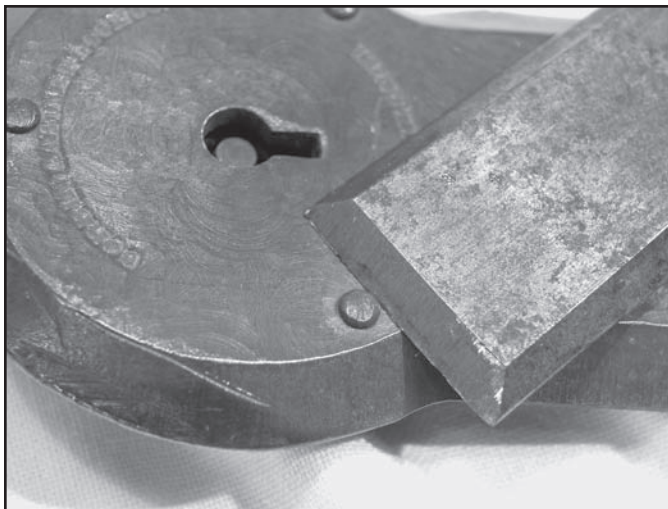
Take off the back of the lock making sure to do it slowly and don't lose any of the springs. Use your smaller needlenose pliers and start to take the lock apart. You will now see the inner mechanism. It consists of two spring loaded levers and a thin plate that separates them, plus the part that turns the latch.

Our mission here is simplify the mechanism by cutting a hook off of one of the levers. After we do that put all of the mechanism back together and see if the key will turn the lock. You may have to make a minor adjustment to the other lever or the key at this point. You might have to file the key a bit as in the illustration.

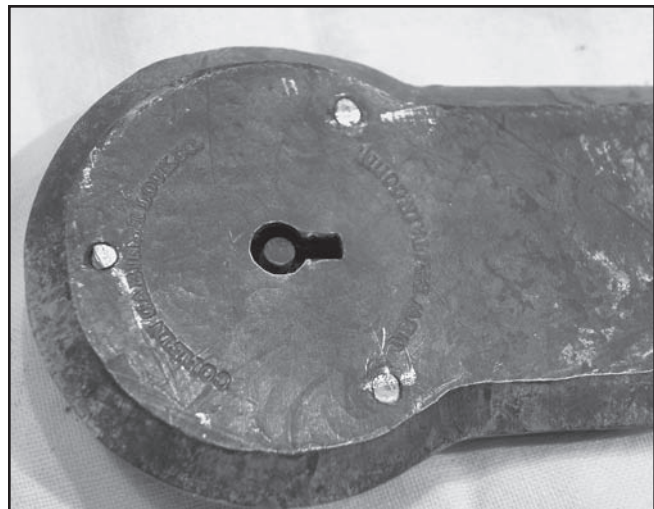
Once you have the key turning the lock, properly reassemble the lock using three new steel rivets. You may have to file out the holes a



If your lock has a number stamped on it and you have a key with the same number, you are all set. The key should fit the lock.



Remove the three rivets with a sharp chisel. Place the chisel with the bevel side up and strike with your hammer.



The heads have been knocked off of the rivets. Now drive the rivets out with a nail set.

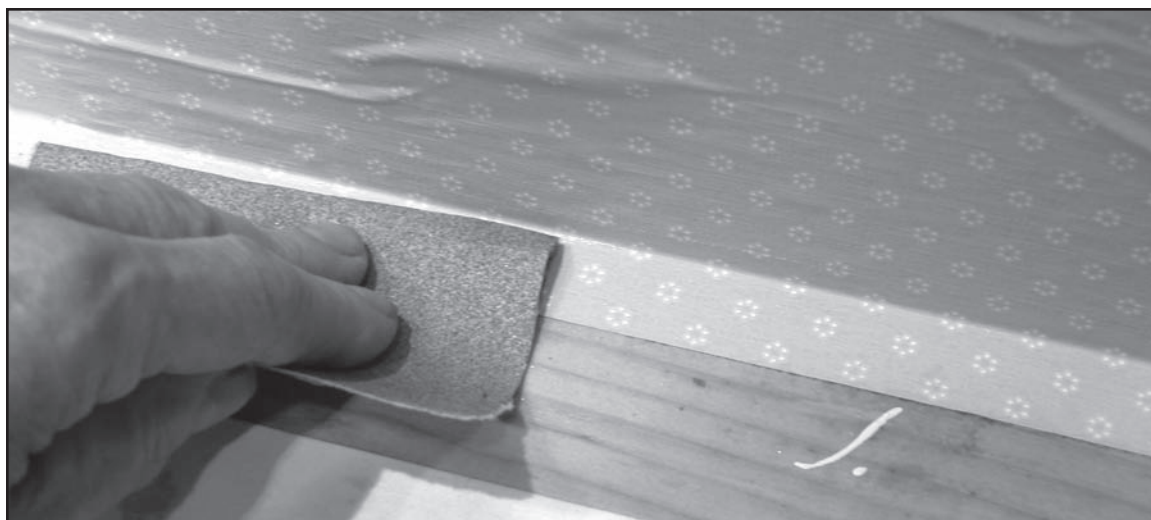
ing stone, large sponge, a couple of large flat surfaces, one for rolling out, measuring, and cutting the liner and the other for pasting up and folding over the liner. You will also want a damp cloth, a pair of scissors, and plenty of light.

Before you actually start lining the trunk you will want to cover cracks, knots, or other bumpy areas. You can use a piece of the wall paper you are going to line the trunk with or, as we usually do, you can use drywall tape. This is plain white paper about 2-3" wide that comes in 100 foot rolls. It is very inexpensive. Measure the length of the crack or whatever you are covering and cut your tape to that length. Slather the tape with paste and lay it in place.

The reason we cover cracks is that when the wood shrinks the wallpaper liner will have a tendency to split or crack when the wood moves. If the split is covered with something under the wallpaper this splitting is either eliminated altogether or at the very least it is minimized.

Line the trunk in this order: The ends of the trunk body first, then the back, the front, and bottom. Next, the ends of the lid, back and front of the lid, and the top of the lid.

Measure one end and cut the liner about one inch wider and about 1/2' taller than the measurement. Slather on some paste which you have already made up, fold the piece over on itself (called booking), and let it sit for about 3-5 minutes. The



Sand the overlap on vinyl coated liner so that the pieces will stick together.

paste will soak in a little and the paper will expand a bit.

Unfold the liner and apply it to the end of the trunk. Push it down from the edge about 1/4" or so. If you bring it right to the edge it will have a tendency to pull away or catch. The ends will wrap around the front and back of the trunk by about 1/2" and wrap across the bottom by about 1/2". Use your scissors to cut into the lower corners and the pieces will overlap for a nice fit. Otherwise it will bunch up in the corner.

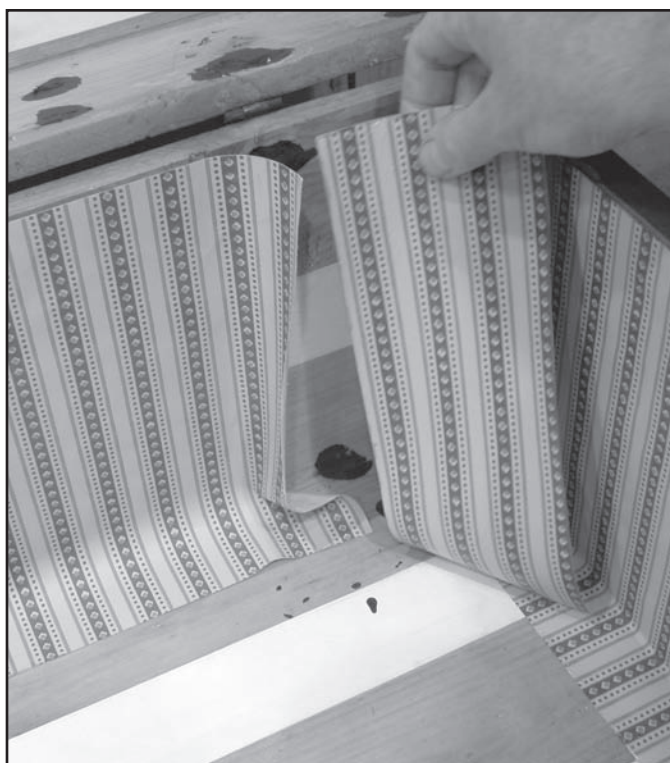
Use a damp sponge to wipe across the liner in broad strokes to remove the air bubbles then repeat the process for the other end.

Next, measure the width of the back. Measure the liner a little shy of the actual width because it will tend to stretch out when it is wet. And because you have wrapped the ends around the corners it won't show if the back is a little short. Unless you have a very wide roll of liner you will have to use two pieces on the back, bottom, and front. So cut a piece for the back being sure to add an extra 1/2" to come out along the bottom of the trunk. Butter it up with paste as you did with the end pieces, fold it over on itself and let it sit. Apply when ready and cut the next piece.

Now comes the tricky part. Some patterns will overlap nicely at any given point. Others must be lined up precisely or it will show. In order to line up the patterns you may have to cut off a couple of inches from the roll. A little experimenting is called for here.

So cut off another length and measure the width of the added piece you will need. Allow an inch or two to overlap the piece that's already in and paste. Repeat with the front.

The bottom piece should be cut a little shy of the actual measurements because the paper tends to expand or stretch a little after it is wet. About 1/4" ought to do the trick but it may take a



On the back lay left over right so the edge doesn't show.

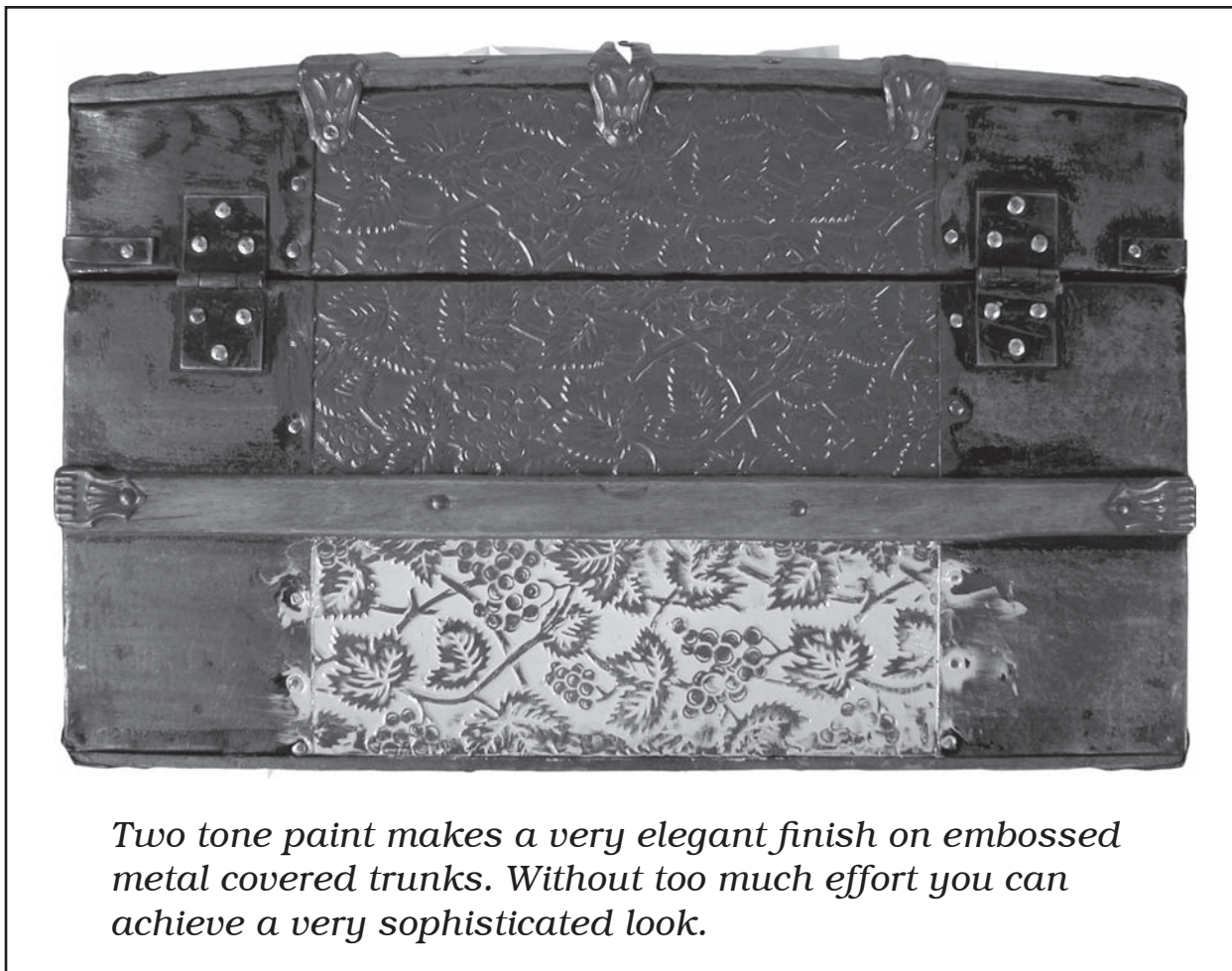
(missed spots). Although runs on embossed metal trunks are not very frequent, even if you do get a few they are very hard to see. Be careful around the slats. Keep a q-tip handy for wiping off any sloppiness. Don't worry about any paint that gets onto the trim metal because that will be painted over later.

Multi-colored embossed trunks:

Sometimes a trunk is covered with raised portions and another color on the background. This type of trunk is painted in reverse. That

is, you first paint the color of the raised pattern, say it's yellow. Let that dry then paint the color of the background, perhaps brown. While the second coat is still wet you wipe off the high spots with a clean, lint free cloth. This takes the brown paint off of the raised portions revealing the yellow leaves.

An alternative to this would be to first paint the whole thing the background color and then paint all of the raised portions with a small brush. It's more time consuming but you would get better detail.



Two tone paint makes a very elegant finish on embossed metal covered trunks. Without too much effort you can achieve a very sophisticated look.

Plain metal trunks:

This type of trunk is a bit harder because brush marks and runs will really stand out. Dome tops of this type are the hardest.

Place the trunk so that the side you are painting is facing up. That way you will be painting on a flat surface, minimizing runs. Let the surface dry completely then proceed to the next side. It's hard not to get a run or two painting the dome top so be watchful and brush a run out as soon as you see it.

An alternative to brushing the paint on is spraying it. You will have to mask off the wooden slats and anything else that you don't want to get paint on such as a brass lock. Give it several coats of your chosen color and finish up with clear satin if needed.

Brushing on spray paint:

Sometimes you can only find the paint you need in a spray can. However, you may not want to

spray the trunk, going to all of the trouble of masking and worrying about overspray. If that's the case you can take the can and spray it into the cap (or other handy container) until you have a good amount to start painting. Use your brush to paint the trunk with this paint.

When you are spraying into the container be sure to use plenty of ventilation or just do it outside. Also, it would be a good idea to use

A little dab'll do ya.

One of the best ways to avoid runs and get rid of brush marks in the paint is to first paint an area as usual. Then, when you are done, dab at the paint with the end of your paint brush. This will cause little bumps of paint to form and, at the same time, take away the brush marks. Check back after a little time to see if further dabbing is necessary to take care of any runs.

Priming the metal.

To primer or not to primer, that is the question. What, exactly, is primer and what does it do? It is just like its name says. It's the first or primary coat of paint. It is made more for adhesion than color and acts as a grabbing or bonding surface between the metal of the trunk and the top coat of colored paint.

It is not absolutely necessary to primer the metal before painting but there will be less of a likelihood that the top coat of paint will chip or peel if you do primer.