

How To Make A Valve Cover Gasket

by BikeCliff (a.k.a. BassCliff) with lots of help from Don Clifton

Greetings fellow GS riders. This "how to" was passed on to me by Don Clifton, a member of the [GSR Forum](#), who rides a GS550. He was kind enough to send his pictures and instructions so that I might add them to the collected knowledge for these classic motorcycles. With Mr. Clifton's permission, I have edited his text and used his pictures to help pass along his procedure for making a valve cover gasket. This procedure could be modified slightly for the fabrication of other low-pressure gaskets. So without further ado, let's hear from Don Clifton.

Hi Cliff, it's me again. I noted your comment about making a gasket and the fact that you would need a lot of practice. I will admit that the Valve Cover Gasket is quite an intricate one compared to some other gaskets that are quite simple to reproduce. Anyway, I made the one for my 550 last night. I will include some pics for you, just in case you are interested.

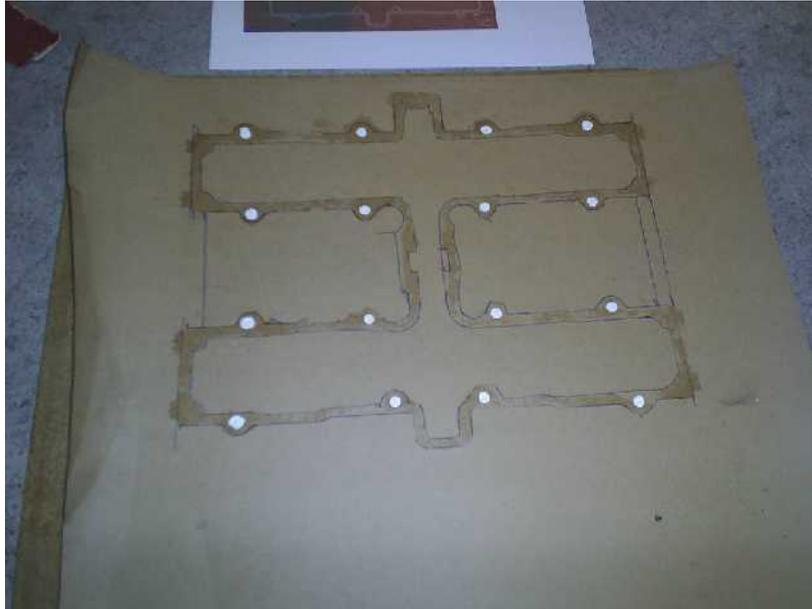
Anyway, here goes.

A quick run down on how I did it as the pics do not convey everything.

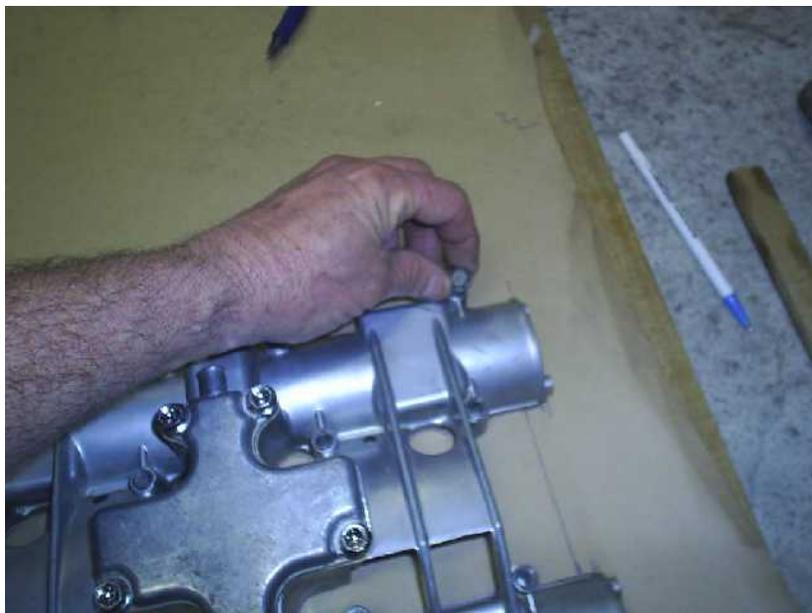


1. Wash valve cover in petrol to get it clean. Then wash the surface that will have the gasket against it with thinners to get it squeaky clean.
2. I used 0.8mm thickness gasket sheet material purchased from local auto store.

3. I used a narrow paint brush and painted the surface of the cover that will contact the gasket with kerosene. (The kerosene, being oily, leaves a stain on the gasket material.)

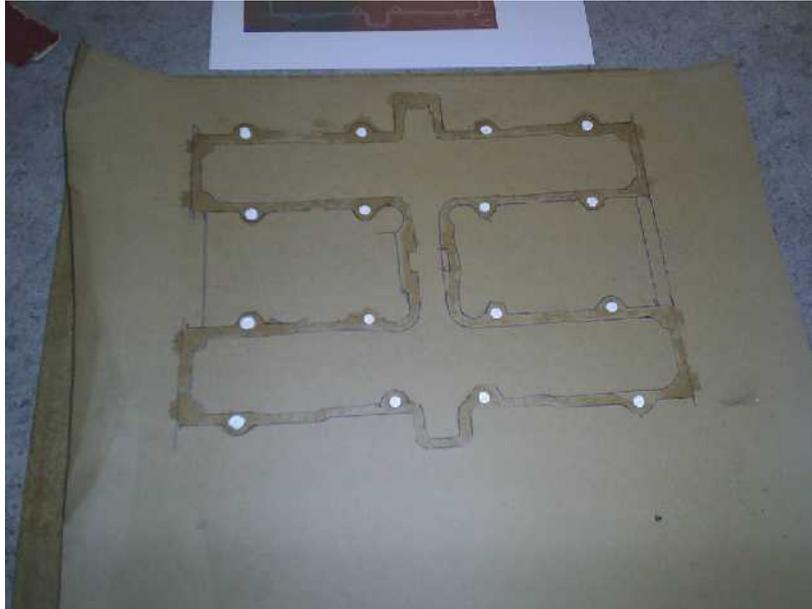


4. I then drew around the outline of the cover while it was in place on the gasket material.



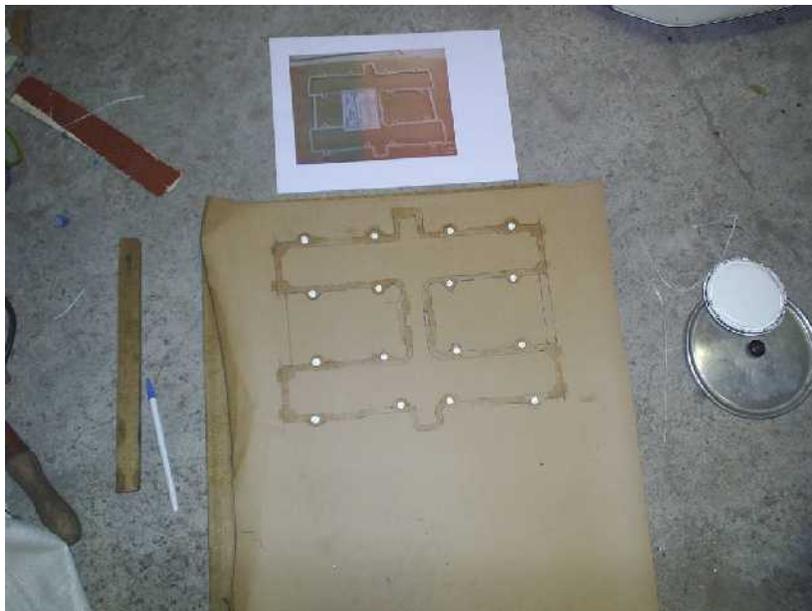
5. Then, while the cover was still in place, I used a 6mm bolt and dipped just the tip in white house paint, put it in each hole of cover in turn and turned it a number of revolutions to mark where I would need to punch the holes in the gasket. You can see the white circles on some of the pics.

6. I also included 2 outrigger pieces on the gasket as per the original to give the gasket more stability during the process of making it. i.e. cutting it out.



7. As with everything, the preparation is the most tedious and necessary part of the task.

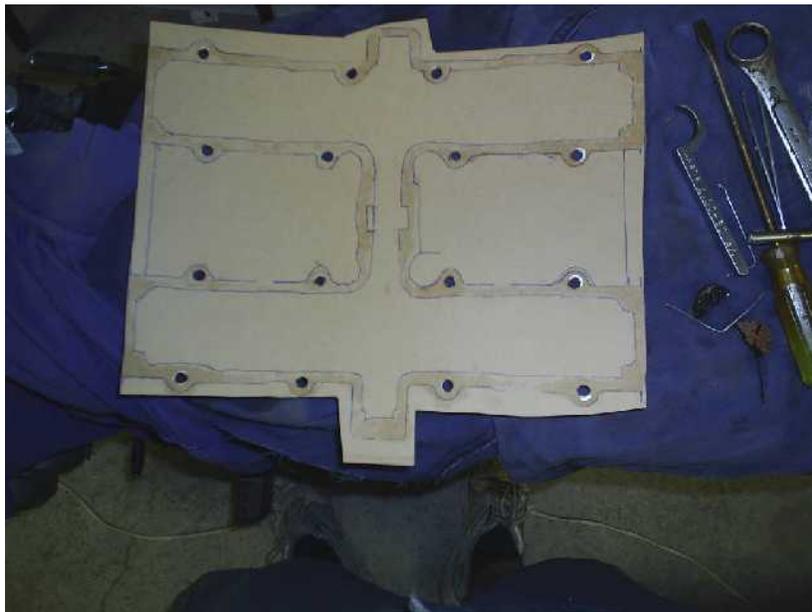
8. You will see I used a picture of the original gasket off EBAY to help in getting the task right, a guide to follow.



9. I used a hole punch and hammer on a solid steel base (vise) to make the holes. This is done before the gasket is cut out. It is more stable in that form and will not tear or rip easily.



10. The 2 holes diagonally opposite each other which had dowels in them to locate the cover on the cylinder head had to be made a bit larger (next size up hole punch).



(Cliff's note: Below is a view of the gasket after rough-cut.)



11. As you can see, the gasket fits perfectly. I won't know until I bolt it all back together whether I will need to trim a bit here and there to miss cam chain, camshafts etc. But you can get the idea from this how I do it. There may be a better way, but I've found this works for me and is usually successful. The only other thing is to obviously cut the gasket as wide as possible and trim it later. The wider the gasket surface the better chance of sealing the oil and stuff inside the motor. Cheers!

Don Clifton