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# Catalina 250 Wheel Steering To Tiller Conversion

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**Printed on:** 06/28/2022

## Topic:

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**Topic author:** offline

**Subject:** Catalina 250 Wheel Steering To Tiller Conversion

**Posted on:** 10/01/2019 10:31:50

**Message:**

Has anyone converted their 250 from the edson wheel pedestal steering to a tiller? Looks fairly straight forward. Just remove pedestal and rudder attachments. Then add a tiller and some access plates where the pedestal was mounted.

Any thoughts?

Thanks,

Chris Edwards

## Replies:

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**Reply author:** whk1965

**Replied on:** 10/01/2019 11:51:15

**Message:**

Just did it. You are right on but you have to expand the pedestal hole for the access plate. If you are buying a new tiller check the dimensions at the rudder head don't trust your emergency tiller Mine did not fit when I had to use it.

**Reply author:** offline

**Replied on:** 10/01/2019 12:06:58

**Message:**

Awesome! Mine fits but its too short. I ordered a new tiller from rudder craft. My pedestal cables and brake is shot. Edson quoted me \$730 for a set of double cables to replace my single cable setup plus \$80 for a new clutch break. The tiller was \$200 finished and shipped then another \$120 for a tiller extension. A no brainer for me, not a big fan of a wheel in the first place.

Just glad someone else has done this before I attempt it.

Thanks,

Chris Edwards

quote:

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*Originally posted by whk1965*

Just did it. You are right on but you have to expand the pedestal hole for the access plate. If you are buying a new tiller check the dimensions at the rudder head don't trust your emergency tiller Mine did not fit when I had to use it.

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**Reply author:** whk1965

**Replied on:** 10/01/2019 18:33:09

**Message:**

I love wheels but not on a 25 footer, bought my tiller from rudder craft it is great. Good luck.

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**Reply author:** offline

**Replied on:** 10/02/2019 17:13:50

**Message:**

Bill,

I removed the compass and controls. Then I removed the 4 bolts holding the pedestal. It wont even wiggle, is it glued down? Maybe use a scraper or a chisel? How did you get the pedestal off?

Thanks,

Chris

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**Reply author:** whk1965

**Replied on:** 10/02/2019 18:10:28

**Message:**

They probably used silicone caulk, try gently putting a thin chiesl under and pry it off tap it with a hammer but keep it from digging in to the sole.

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**Reply author:** RPLieser

**Replied on:** 10/03/2019 09:40:06

**Message:**

I had to remove my pedestal to install the new "Pull-Pull" system from Edson... BTW, love my wheel as it's easy on the back and for the grandsons with their very short arms. Anyway, mine was also very "stuck" from the factory. After removing all of the bolts, I hooked my come-along between the top of the pedestal and the base of the 1" grab rail near the cabin top winches. The constant strain of the come-along and a little urging on my part broke it loose. I found a small mountain of sealer under it with a perfect impression of the base. Sooo... (for those re-installing) I left the original sealer and just laid a new, thin coat on top when re-installing.

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**Reply author:** offline

**Replied on:** 10/03/2019 09:51:46

**Message:**

RP,

You gave me a great idea! I'll hook a rope around the pedestal and use the winch to pull while I scrape and chisel it loose.

Thanks,

Chris

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**Reply author:** islander

**Replied on:** 10/03/2019 11:30:00

**Message:**

I would imagine there is some sort of adhesive sealer. They had to make it water tight. 😊

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**Reply author:** Stinkpotter

**Replied on:** 10/03/2019 14:30:59

**Message:**

If the sealant is an adhesive such as (God help you) 3M 5200, Don Casey recommends a release chemical called DeBond. (West carries it.) Apparently you score the edges of the seal, spray DeBond on it, wait a bit, pry and score some more, spray again,..... It might be worth it to avoid damaging the gelcoat on the cockpit sole, since 5200 is famous for pulling it off the fiberglass. (...famous to me because it happened to me, where a builder bedded teak hand-rails with it.)

As I've said many times, 5200 should only be sold to... well, maybe nobody! 😡

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**Reply author:** offline

**Replied on:** 10/04/2019 06:36:07

**Message:**

They used caulk. Once the four bolts holding the pedestal were out I tied a rope to the pedestal then to the winch. A couple of turns on the winch and the pedestal came loose. I then used a paint scrapper to remove the rest of the caulk. Now to install a 4" access plate to cover the control wire hole.

Thanks,

Chris

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**Reply author:** islander

**Replied on:** 10/04/2019 14:47:32

**Message:**

Don't forget to caulk the access plate. 🛠️

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**Reply author:** NCBrew

**Replied on:** 07/26/2021 07:43:29

**Message:**

I would like to go the other way from tiller to wheel. Any thoughts on that?

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**Reply author:** DelilahII

**Replied on:** 07/26/2021 16:58:59

**Message:**

NCBrew, Just my two cents: I just finished converting to tiller also. You might want to mock up a cardboard pedestal and wheel in your boat. See what it's like for boarding, and if you trailer-sail, see what it's like to step the mast and rig the boat with the wheel in place. You'll also want to consider the added parts you'll have hanging down into the aft berth and the battery compartment area; depending on your boat's configuration, it can be pretty tight.

One thing to also consider is weight; most of the parts are pretty light, but if you're going to add a HDPE cockpit table, pod with electronics, etc. it all adds up.

You'll be drilling and cutting some fairly large holes in your boat and rudder, but I don't think there's anything too challenging for your average DIY savvy sailor.

If you have to buy the parts from Edson new, I would be very curious what it would all cost!

**Reply author:** Voyager

**Replied on:** 07/27/2021 09:45:47

**Message:**

I have a standard tiller and that's always in my way in the cockpit. I've been thinking of buying another one to shorten up by about a foot. I could not imagine what kind of an obstacle a wheel would be in a Catalina 25/250 cockpit.

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**Reply author:** RPLieser

**Replied on:** 07/28/2021 09:53:00

**Message:**

I've commented before on my pro-wheel stance (probably in the minority here)... but while it is a bit tight to get around to change helmsman, it otherwise provides more space for guests. With the helmsman sitting center aft, we easily put two in the catbird seats and three more in the cockpit - and no banging of knees, nor having them move as is the case with the tiller... and we are not a small group of six, I'm 6'4" as are a few of my friends. Also, the ease of steering with the Edson pull-pull system whilst running offshore in Central California's large swell is a blessing.

I have the 1" S/S grab rail attached to the binnacle, and I've duplicated a slightly smaller version above the mainsheet hardware where one enters the cabin... both are well-used.

The PO of my boat had converted from wheel to tiller as the single cable had frozen. I reversed the process and do keep the tiller as a backup device.

As an aside... my grandsons can easily steer the boat and more clearly see forward from the helm.



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