

The French Steel Company

Step-by-Step Guide: Correcting and Reinstalling a French Steel Door with Incorrect Swing Detail

This guide outlines the process to flip your steel door in the rough opening due to the incorrect swing detail. Flipping the door will reverse its handing, requiring modifications to the threshold, sealing of glass stops, and new hardware. **Important Safety Notes:** Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including safety glasses, gloves, hearing protection, and a dust mask. Work in a well-ventilated area. If you're not comfortable with power tools or structural modifications, consult a professional installer. Ensure the door is securely supported during removal and reinstallation to prevent injury or damage.

Tools and Materials Needed:

- Angle grinder with cut-off wheel (for cutting the threshold)
- Self-etching primer (aerosol or brush-on)
- Black spray paint (rust-resistant, suitable for metal)
- Black Dow 795 structural silicone (and caulking gun)
- Aftermarket threshold (compatible with your door size and rough opening; measure before purchasing)
- Measuring tape, level, and shims (for reinstallation)
- Screwdriver or drill (for hardware removal/reinstallation)
- Cleaning supplies (rags, mild detergent, and degreaser for metal surfaces)
- New hardware kit (order based on the new handing; see Step 7 for details)

Step 1: Prepare the Work Area and Remove the Door

- Clear the area around the door to provide ample workspace.
- Remove any existing hardware (e.g., hinges, handles, locks) from the door using a screwdriver or drill. Set aside reusable parts.

- Carefully remove the door from the rough opening. Have a helper assist to support the door's weight. Unscrew the hinges from the jamb and lift the door out.
- Inspect the rough opening for any damage or debris and clean it thoroughly.

Step 2: Remove the Welded Steel Threshold

- Locate the welded steel threshold at the bottom of the door jamb.
- Using an angle grinder equipped with a cut-off wheel, carefully cut the threshold out from between the jamb legs. Make precise cuts close to the jambs to avoid damaging them.
- Remove the cut threshold pieces and dispose of them safely.
- Clean any remaining residue or burrs from the jamb legs with a file or sandpaper to ensure a smooth surface.

Step 3: Flip and Reinstall the Door

- Rotate the door 180 degrees to reverse the swing direction (flipping it so the original exterior side now faces interior, or vice versa, as needed for the correct handing).
- Position the flipped door back into the rough opening. Use shims and a level to ensure it's plumb, square, and properly aligned.
- Secure the door by reinstalling the hinges (or new ones if required) into the jamb. Test the swing to confirm it operates correctly.

Step 4: Install the Aftermarket Threshold

- Measure the width of the rough opening between the jamb legs to determine the required length for the aftermarket threshold.
- Using the angle grinder with a cut-off wheel, trim the aftermarket threshold to the exact length needed.
- Clean the cut edges of the threshold to remove any debris.
- Apply self-etching primer to all exposed steel surfaces on the cut edges. Allow it to dry according to the product's instructions (typically 10-30 minutes).
- Once primed, apply black spray paint over the primed areas for corrosion protection and a finished look. Let it dry fully (usually 1-2 hours).

- Install the prepared threshold into the bottom of the rough opening, securing it per the manufacturer's instructions (e.g., with screws or adhesive). Ensure it's level and seals properly against the door.

Step 5: Seal the Glass Stops

- With the door flipped, the glass stops (originally designed to face interior) may now be exposed to the exterior.
- Clean all joints and surfaces of the glass stops with mild detergent and a rag to remove dirt or oils.
- Apply black Dow 795 structural silicone to seal all joints in the glass stops. Use a caulking gun for even application, smoothing the bead with a tool or finger for a watertight seal.
- Allow the silicone to cure fully (typically 24 hours) before exposing the door to weather or water.

Step 6: Test the Door Assembly

- Once all modifications are complete, test the door's operation: Open and close it several times to check for smooth swinging, proper alignment, and no gaps.
- Verify that the threshold seals correctly and that there are no leaks around the glass stops (test with a hose if possible, after silicone has cured).

Step 7: Order and Install New Hardware

- Since flipping the door changes its handing (left-hand vs. right-hand swing), your original hardware may no longer fit or function correctly.
- Contact our customer service or your hardware supplier to order a new hardware kit compatible with the updated handing. Provide details such as door model, size, and new swing direction.
- Once received, install the new hardware (e.g., hinges, handles, locks) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Perform a final test of all hardware for secure fit and functionality.

If you encounter any issues or need clarification, please reach out to our support team with photos of your setup for personalized assistance. This process should resolve the swing issue and ensure your door performs as intended.