

US 3,476,437 / A DESIGN EXPLAINED

The Targa is a system. Not just a missing roof.

An engineering reading of Porsche's roof patent, followed by a catalogue change point that can be compared directly with chassis 12871136.

11.08.65

German priority date

18.07.66

US application filed

04.11.69

US patent granted

The original record

Patent US3476437A names Gerhard Albert Richard Schroeder, Werner Trenkler and Hans Tomala, assigned to Porsche KG. It describes a roof combining a fixed transverse member, a detachable reinforced cover and a rear closure. [S04]

A USEFUL DATE CORRECTION

1969 is the US grant date, not the start of the design. The patent claims German priority from 11 August 1965.

Why it belongs in this archive

The patent lets a reader move beyond a visual icon and ask how parts locate, latch, seal and fold. The three drawing sheets can be opened directly from this guide. They are design disclosures, not certified construction drawings for this car.

[S04 / Read the original patent record](#)

[S04 / Open the seven-page original patent PDF](#)

01 / THE DRAWING KEY

Read the numbered parts before the shape.

This guide selects the components that explain the system. Patent numbering belongs to the patent; it is not a Porsche spare-part number.

PATENT REF.	ELEMENT	QUESTION IT ANSWERS
6 / 7 / 8	Fixed member / formed sheet-metal halves	Which part carries the structural function?
15	Decorative covering, described with stainless steel as an example	Which visible surface is trim rather than the entire load-bearing assembly?
33 / 35 / 38 / 39-40	Removable panel, reinforcements and connecting bands	How can a covering retain shape yet remain foldable?
42 / 45-49	Locating pin / eccentric closure	How are positioning and clamping treated as distinct tasks?
18 / 19 / 20 / 30	Rear cover, window, supporting frame and zipper	How can the rear closure be tensioned and opened?

STRUCTURAL MEMBER ≠ STAINLESS COVER

The familiar visible finish should not be used as shorthand for the full structure. The patent explicitly distinguishes the formed member from its decorative covering.

REFERENCE: S04, drawing sheets 1-3 and description, particularly PDF pp.5-6. These are selected patent elements, not a claim that every detail is identical on every production Targa.

[S04 / Sheet 3, figure 6 - rear-cover / transverse-member section](#)

02 / FUNCTIONAL INTERPRETATION

Locate. Clamp. Seal. Fold.

Four different jobs explain why a roof that looks simple from the outside requires a carefully coordinated assembly.

01 / LOCATE

Position the panel relative to fixed body references.

02 / CLAMP

Retain the panel without treating a locating feature as the only latch.

03 / SEAL

Keep adjoining edges in a controlled relationship.

04 / FOLD

Permit stowage without losing the intended geometry when reassembled.

Original functional interpretation, not a scale drawing or a manufacturing specification. The categories help organise an inspection; they do not authorise modifying latches, seals or structural members.

Three plates worth opening

PDF PAGE	PATENT FIGURES	WHAT TO STUDY
1	1 and 2	Overall arrangement and removable-panel plan.
2	3, 4 and 5	Positioning, locking and support details.
3	6	Relationship of rear closure, sealing edges, trim and fixed member.

[S04 / Open original drawing sheet 1](#)

[S04 / Open original drawing sheet 2](#)

[S04 / Open original drawing sheet 3](#)

Any water leak, flutter or difficult latch operation requires inspection of the actual assembly. A diagram cannot establish the strength, adjustment, condition or safety of a component after decades of use.

03 / A CHASSIS-SPECIFIC CATALOGUE LEAD

12871136 sits after the roof-frame change.

Porsche PET records a chassis break for position 60, “Roof frame”, in illustration 811-05. This is the most directly vehicle-specific technical lead in the archive. [S03]

PET POSITION 60	912 CHASSIS RANGE	CATALOGUE REFERENCE
Earlier roof-frame entry	Up to 12870437	901 565 201 40
Later roof-frame entry	From 12870438	901 565 201 42
Marc's recorded chassis	12871136	Falls on the later side of this listed break

THE INFERENCE, PRECISELY STATED

For position 60 in this catalogue, chassis 12871136 points to the later 901 565 201 42 entry. This does not prove which part is fitted now.

What this does not establish

The reference is for the illustrated component, not a promise that a complete roof can be ordered under that number. The reason for the engineering change is not established by the parts list. Supersessions, applicability and any prior roof replacement still need to be checked.

Read the illustration and list together

- [S03 / Targa exploded diagram - PDF page 622](#)
- [S03 / Position 60 and chassis break - PDF page 625](#)

CATALOGUE INFERENCE from the recorded chassis number. Do not order a part solely from this page; use the full assembly context and a qualified Porsche Classic parts specialist.

04 / PERIOD DESIGN VERSUS THIS CAR

Soft window is a finding. Originality is a question.

The owner's rear-quarter image appears to show a flexible rear window. Keep that observation separate from the date and provenance of the fitted assembly. [S07]

EVIDENCE	WHAT IT CAN TELL YOU	WHAT IT CANNOT TELL YOU
Owner photograph	Visible construction and present appearance.	Factory fitment date or complete restoration history.
Patent disclosure	How a proposed flexible rear closure is arranged.	The exact bill of materials of chassis 12871136.
FIA form 580, page 1	Both opening-rear-window and fixed-rear-window variants are described.	Which version this specific car left the factory with.
Certificate options	Tinted Targa glazing is recorded.	A conclusive identification of the rear-window system.

A useful roof evidence set

Document the panel exterior and underside, latch hardware, locating features, seals, rear window, zipper or glass attachment, and any visible component markings. Keep overall context photographs with the close-ups. Have difficult or safety-critical areas examined by a specialist; do not dismantle a functioning roof merely for the website.

[S07 / Photograph supporting the flexible-window observation](#)

[S05 / FIA form, both body variants - PDF page 1](#)

[S04 / Full original patent](#)

This study is an independent reading guide. It offers no structural certification, restoration instruction, crash-safety claim or permission to fabricate parts from the patent drawings.