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Question: Why should I choose MilSpec fasteners over “competitive” brands?

Answer: Because other brands aren’t really competitive.

MilSpec is the original manufacturer of these components and invented the adjustable receptacle concept in 1994. Since then, we have been continuously improving them for better fit, function and durability. The fasteners included in all of our cowling kits for Van’s RV and Lancair aircraft are part of our heavy duty 4000 series system with adjustable depth receptacles. You may see other companies advertising similar kits in slick packaging and making all sorts of claims to bait you in. But, before you make a choice, please consider the following honest, side by side comparison so that you can make an informed decision about what you want to use on your aircraft. We don’t need to use gimmicks and tricks or insult our competitors. We just make a great part, deliver it on time and at a good price. Compare for yourself and the choice will be clear. Genuine MilSpec quality parts simply can’t be beat!

Studs & Grommets:

MilSpec studs and grommets are precision machined using the latest technology and only the finest, domestically produced materials for a bright and shiny finish. We also put our name on every part so you can be sure you are getting Genuine MilSpec quality products.



Genuine MilSpec Studs and Grommets

Skybolt® Studs and Grommets

MilSpec offers two basic fastener head styles, “collared” slotted or Phillips (cross recess). The slotted head studs are encapsulated on the ends to prevent a screwdriver from slipping out and damaging your panel or paint. The Phillips head studs have a standard #2 head which is precisely machined into the fastener head. This increases the bearing surface of the screwdriver preventing accidental slippage and provides better torque characteristics when locking and unlocking the fasteners. It also looks much prettier than a broached or cold headed form and offers significantly increased durability and strength.

Receptacles:

The heart of this fastening system is the adjustable depth receptacles. If you compare the adjustable receptacles side by side you will notice some important differences.



Genuine MilSpec Receptacle



Skybolt® Receptacles

MilSpec uses a fully enclosed cage to encapsulate the adjustable receptacle body. This cage allows an industry standard 1/16" float in any direction which is enough to provide relief for minor misalignment from stud to receptacle but, not so much that it allows excessive shifting of the panel (cowling). In addition, this cage configuration positively and permanently retains the receptacle body and is available in a variety of materials. (Zinc Plated Steel, Aluminum or Stainless).

If you look at the alternative adjustable receptacle cage, you will notice that it is made of thin aluminum with small tabs which are bent around the receptacle body to retain it. This cage allows the standard 1/16" float fore and aft but, much more side to side. Over time in the field, the tabs are frequently bent back open by pressure exerted on the fastener when engaging the mechanism. This can lead to the receptacle body becoming loose which further increases the amount of float or worse yet, a complete failure of the fastener system.

Also, you will notice that the MilSpec receptacle utilizes a metal anti-lock pin for the initial depth adjustment of the receptacle while the alternative brand uses a plastic pin. There are two drawbacks to the plastic pin. First, it is not uncommon for the head of the plastic pin to be broken off when attempting to remove it from the receptacle. When this happens the body of the plastic pin remains in place and prevents the locking clip from engaging and setting the proper depth for the receptacle. Second, once the plastic pin is removed, it can not be reinstalled if readjustment of the receptacle is required. Instead, a separate tool is necessary. The metal MilSpec pins do not have either of these problems.

Materials:

MilSpec also offers a choice in receptacle materials. Aluminum, Bright Zinc plated steel or Stainless. Each of which have pros and cons to be considered. Others only offer bare aluminum.

Aluminum was chosen as the original material because of its light weight and ease of machinability. However, it lacks surface hardness and will wear with fasteners being locked and unlocked many times and may require periodic replacement of the insert.

Zinc plated steel receptacles give us the surface hardness we are looking for but are heavier than the aluminum. The bright zinc plated steel receptacles are aesthetically pleasing and are a good compromise between durability and cost. The plating will give you considerably long life but, if the receptacle is subjected to certain adverse environmental conditions it can eventually show signs of corrosion.

Stainless steel has sufficient surface hardness to prevent the wearing problem and is about the same weight as steel. However, it is more expensive initially than aluminum or steel. This material will provide maximum service life and is therefore somewhat less expensive in the long run than the other materials because it will not require replacement.

We invite you to compare for yourself MilSpec Products against any competitor for quality, durability and price and we think you will agree that a **Genuine** MilSpec Product is simply superior by any measure.

If you have any comments, questions or need additional information, please let us know.

Genuine MilSpec Products.....
Simply Superior !



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