



**TOOL LIST FOR TAILGATE CHECK LINK STRAPS
FOR 48-85 DODGE HIGHSIDE UTILINE (STEPSIDE) TRUCKS**

Sharpie Marker

Ball Peen Hammer

Center Punch

3/8" or 1/2" Drill

1/8", 1/4", and 3/8" Drill Bits

Masking Tape

5/32", 1/4" and 3/16" Allen Wrenches

Tape Measure

17/32" Drill Bit **(this part is available from MAR-K separately, if needed).**

Round File

Small Flat File

1/2" Open-end Wrench

MAR-K

RESTORATION AND CUSTOM PICKUP PARTS

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAILGATE CHECK LINK STRAPS FOR 48-85 DODGE HIGHSIDE TRUCKS

1. Assemble the bed and make sure the box is square. Measure the distance between the bedsides at the floor level. This width should be 49" for a 48-60 short bed and 54" for a 61-85 short bed and 48-85 long bed. Also measure cross wise from one front corner to the opposite rear corner in both directions. These measurements should be within 1/16" of each other.
2. Install the hinges and tailgate and make sure it is aligned to your satisfaction.



3. Support the tailgate in the horizontal (open) position. At the top of the tailgate, between the rivets for the original latch, measure in 1" and make a mark with a sharpie marker. Make a vertical line 1-1/2" long on this mark. Measure down from the top curl of the tailgate on this line and make two marks at 2-13/16" and 3-11/16" respectively. Repeat this for both ends of the tailgate.



4. Center-punch these two locations on each end of the tailgate.



5. Drill these holes on each end with a 1/8" diameter drill and then a 9/32" drill. These holes will be drilled through the tailgate skin and the heavy gage latch bracket riveted to the tailgate. We chose this area to attach the link assembly because the extra thickness of the latch bracket on the tailgate will give the tailgate skin strength. Debur these holes on both sides of the tailgate when completed.



6. With (2) 1/4-20 x 3/4" button head screws attach the link assembly to the tailgate. The screws go through the outside of the tailgate and thread into the link assembly on the inside of the tailgate. The link assembly mounting bracket is threaded but we suggest using the supplied 1/4" hex lock nuts. There is a left and right link assembly because of the pivot bracket that gets attached to the tailgate. The driver side is shown. The offset part of the bracket should be towards the bottom of the tailgate.



7. Fold the tailgate shut while folding the link assembly with it. At this point you need to mark the bedside for the upper pivot bolt holes. Make sure that the link assembly is folded up as shown and hanging vertically. Place some masking tape behind the link assembly where the oblong hole meets the bed sides.



8. Insert a 3/8" drill bit with the drill through the link assembly slotted hole. Lift up on the link assembly while keeping the link assembly vertical and mark the bedside with the drill. You just want the drill bit to mark the tape here.



9. Center-punch this mark. Drill this hole with a 1/8" drill bit first then with a 1/4" bit. Continue stepping up sizes until reaching a 17/32" drill bit. This hole size is needed for the insert type nut.



10. Test fit the threaded insert into the 17/32" diameter hole. Use a round file to enlarge the hole if the insert will not fit. Often, a drill will not make a perfectly round hole in sheet metal. Use the file to make the hole round. The insert must be installed so that its' flange is against the sheet metal surface of the bed side.

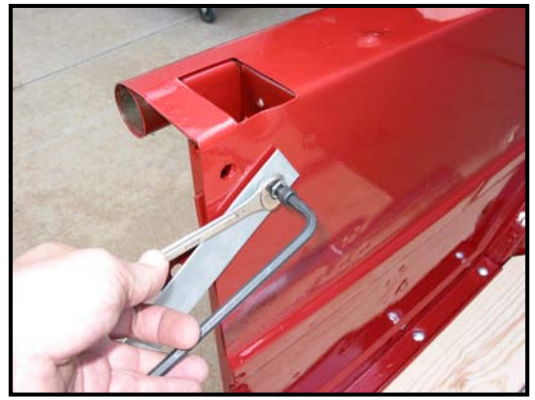
11. Special tools are available to squeeze the threaded inserts but we will show you how to do this without these special tools. Obtain the 5/16"-18 x 1-1/2" bolt and 5/16 hex nut supplied in the kit. Thread the hex nut about 1" onto the bolt. Place the bolt through the supplied flat washer and then through a scrap piece of metal with a 5/16" hole in it. Next thread the insert onto the bolt with the flange of the insert towards the template finger tight against the scrap metal.



12. Place the insert into the hole in the bed side. Make sure to hold the insert flange tight against the bed side. This scrap metal will act as a handle to keep the insert from rotating when the nut is tightened. It would be beneficial to have a helper for this step to hold the scrap metal handle.



13. While holding the bolt head steady with a 1/4" Allen wrench and continuing to hold the insert flange tight against the bed side, start turning the nut off of the bolt with a 1/2" wrench. This will pull the bolt outwards and start compressing the threaded insert. The hex nut will be fairly hard to turn, so be prepared to exert some force on the nut. Turn the nut until it will not turn any more and the insert will be fully installed. Now remove the bolt, hex nut, washer, and sheet metal handle.



If you need further explanation of this procedure, go to www.mar-k.com and click on the Installation information on the home page. Scroll down to "Other helpful information" and click on "Threaded insert Information".



14. Supplied in the kit are 5/16"-18 shoulder screws and washers to act as upper pivots for the link assemblies. Place the bolts through the slotted end of the links. Then place the washer on the bolt. Thread these bolts into the threaded inserts. The washer keeps the link from scraping the bed side. Tighten these bolts with the 3/16" Allen wrench.



15. Raise the tailgate slowly to the closed position. The links should fold smoothly downward while closing. Supplied in the kit are two self-adhesive bumpers. Attach these bumpers where the link assembly will contact the tailgate when closed.



You have successfully installed the link assemblies. At final assembly, use a thread locking compound on all threaded areas to prevent them from coming loose. This kit is greatly complimented with our hidden tailgate latch which is Part # 130213.

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