



**1954-87 CHEV BED INSTRUCTIONS**

(Revised Nov 2002)

Thank you and congratulations on your purchase of the finest Street Rod Pickup Bed on the market today. The following instructions should help you assemble your bed in the most efficient manner.

**READ THE INSTRUCTIONS SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE STARTING ASSEMBLY**

**REQUIRED TOOLS**

- Flat work surface, floor or bench
- Electric or battery drill
- Drill bits - 1/8 - 5/16 - 11/32 - 17/32
- Mig welder (optional)
- Body grinder (optional)
- Wrenches - 9/16" - 1/2" - 7/16"
- 3/16 Allen wrench
- Nutsert installation tool – available from Pro’s Pick or industrial hardware supply
- Tape measure, Felt tip marker, Pencil

**STEP 1 UNPACKING**

Check the contents to make sure that it’s all here!

<b>Description</b>	<b>Qty</b>	
Front panel	1	
Left bedside	1	
Right bedside	1	
Cross members	3	may be various sizes
Rear cross member	1	
Rear cross member hardware kit	1	

As with most things in life there is more than one way to skin a cat. When the General produced your truck it was meant to haul hay & pigs. They weren’t too fussy about the way things fit. Today we expect things to fit like the new vehicles. This means that if we are going to have the “Right Look” we will have to correct these things. We have found the following procedure to work best for us.

## **STEP 2: INSTALL REAR Cross member**

**If using a Pro's Pick "Smoothie Tailgate kit with your bed consult step 2 of the tailgate installation instructions before proceeding.**

The rear cross member bolts to the bedsides with two 3/8 x 1" bolts on each side. The rear cross member will sit on the bottom bedside lip and be flush with the rear of the lower bedside panel.

## **STEP 3: INSTALL THE FRONT PANEL**

The front panel has 1/2" returns on each end. These returns fit **inside** the bed side panels. The rear cross member has a bed wood support lip that supports the bed wood so that the bed wood is flush with the top of the rear cross member and at the front the bed wood sits on the lip at the bottom of the front panel.

Clamp the front panel in place. The top of the roll on the front panel is to be even with the top of the bedside. Square the bed by measuring diagonally from corner to corner. To be square, the corner to corner measurements should be the same. Adjust as necessary. Once satisfied that the bed is square and clamped, either drill the bedsides through the holes in the front panel and bolt together, or weld the front panel to the bedsides through the aforementioned holes. It is advisable to also weld the bottom lip of the front panel to the bedside in each corner.

## **STEP 4: WELD & FINISH GRIND FRONT PANEL**

If you welded the front panel in place, grind off excess weld so as to leave a smooth finish.

## **STEP 5: PREPARING THE TRUCK FOR THE BED**

This procedure might seem like we're taking you the long way around the barn, rest assured, this is the shortest and best method.

To overcome the poor fit that the General gave us, it is important to start at one end and go to the other. Any time we have deviated from this practice it has come back to bite us later in the job.

Start by making sure the chassis is square. Correct as necessary.

Mark the axel center lines on the frame rails using a plumb bob. Check that the axels are square with the frame. Using the plumb bob mark the center of the chassis from left to right on the shop floor. Do this at both the front and the rear. You have now established the centerline of the vehicle from front to rear. Use a chalk line to mark the vehicle centerline on the shop floor. We will use it as a reference point later.

Mount the cab to the chassis, making sure that the cab is centered from left to right. Fit the hood to the cowl, making sure the gaps are even. Use a temporary support to hold the front of the hood up. Use the plumb bob to verify that the center of the front of the hood matches the centerline on the floor. Sometimes the fit of the hood is so bad that the hood has to be reworked at the cowl to get the gaps right. Do not move on until the hood is centered and the gaps are right.

Now the fenders can be fitted to match up to the hood. Many times we have seen that when the hood to fender gap is good, the height of the fenders from the shop floor can vary as much as an inch. If this is the case, set your running boards in place to see how they line up with the bottom of the fenders. You will have to decide whether to modify the bottom of the fenders or go back to the hood and add material to it. In most circumstances it is easier to work with the fenders.

By now you can see just how bad quality standards were back then. What you are doing is correcting factory deficiencies as you go along. Skipping a step or cheating **will** come back to haunt you later.

Fit your running boards to the front fenders, we use vise grips to temporarily hold the boards to the fenders. Pay attention to how the running boards follow the lines of the cab as often they weren't parallel from the factory. The rear of the boards may have to go up or down to get it to look right. Make sure that the distances from the shop floor to bottom of fenders and running boards are the same left and right.

By now things should be looking pretty good. Get back ten or twenty feet to get a good side view of the truck, roll it outside if you have to. Correct as necessary.

## **STEP 6:      POSITIONING THE BED ON THE CHASSIS**

The bed floor boards sit on the bottom return of the front panel and on the recessed lip on the rear cross member. Using a straight edge draw a pencil line on each bedside representing the bottom of the bed floor.

Set the bed over the chassis, using temporary supports such as axel stands to hold it up. In some applications the bed side and the running board mate to each other. Often there were huge gaps between these surfaces, adjust the bed height to close these gaps up if applicable. Sometimes the gap between the cab and the bed was excessive, move the bed forward as necessary, be sure that moving forward isn't messing up any mating surfaces. Get back ten or twenty feet so you can get a good side view. Now is the time to see if everything flows as far as looks go. Should the bed be higher or lower in relationship to the cab? Don't be afraid to experiment. Time spent here will pay off in the finished look.

## **STEP 7:      LOCATING THE CROSS MEMBERS**

Consult the packing list that came with the bed. You will notice that the cross members on the packing slip are designated A, B, C, or D and then the corresponding eight digit part number. A is the front cross member B the second and so on. There should be a paper tag on each cross member on which you will see the part number. The side with the punched holes goes up to accept the skid strip fasteners. Using one of the cross members as a straight edge, check to see if the over axel hump in the chassis is lower than the pencil lines on the bedsides. Sometimes we have cut off some of the frame hump to clear the floor and then boxed it in for strength.

### **PRE PUNCHED BED STRIPS**

If you are using bed strips with pre-punched holes you will have to compare the spacing of the punched holes to the frame mounting holes to determine which end of the strips face the front of the bed. The bed strips have extra holes between some cross members so don't be concerned about it yet.

Having sorted out the cross members and determined which end of the strips face forward, place a carriage bolt in the front hole, through the bottom of the front panel in two of the strips. Fit the front cross member up from the bottom and install a washer and nut finger tight. Proceed in this fashion until all of the cross members are in place.

Check to see that the bed is still square and centered from left to right. The cross members are secured to the bed strips, raise the cross members up until the tops of the cross members meet the pencil line and weld them to the bed sides. Be very careful, go slow, you don't want to warp the bed sides. You may now remove the strips.

### **NON PUNCHED BED STRIPS**

If you are using bed strips that do not have pre-set hole positions the following procedure will be necessary. As described earlier in step 7 sort out the cross members. Check to ensure that the bed is square and centered.

The front cross member goes directly beneath the front panel, position it and secure temporarily with two bolts. The next cross member goes ahead of the axel. We usually position it on the chassis hump at the point where the top of the cross member meets the pencil line. Tack weld the cross member to the bedsides, make sure the cross member is square in the bed and up to the line. Be very careful, go slow, you don't want to warp the bed sides. The third cross member goes behind the axel, position it and weld to bedsides. The fourth goes close to the end of the frame, position and weld. At this point you should have a bed that is square, with cross members welded in at, but below the pencil line.

## **STEP 8: BED MOUNTING**

We are assuming that the bed is still blocked up in its final location. Locate about eight feet of steel strapping that is the same width as your cross members are wide and 1/4" thick. We will take a piece of this strap, hold it up vertically against the side of the frame and directly under the cross member, creating a leg which we will weld to the bottom of the cross member and bolt to the side of the frame. Do this for each cross member and you now have a one piece bed that can be easily removed.

## **STEP 9: FINISH**

It is possible that after all of this you may have an open space between your running boards and the bottom of your bed. Take a measurement of the opening, make a sketch and have a local sheet metal shop bend up a filler piece.

## **STEP 10: CENTER THE WHEELS**

Visually grip the rear fender to the running boards and to the bed side. You will find that many times the rear wheels were not centered in the fender. If this is the case with yours, there are several options.

You could shorten or lengthen the running board as necessary or you can move the rear axle to the center of the fender.

Usually our preference is to move the axle. Remove the U bolts that secure the axle to the rear springs, lift the axle off of the spring center bolts. Move the axle until the tires are centered in the fender opening. Mark the new location of the center bolt on the side of the axle spring pad. Turn the rear end up and drill a new hole in the axle spring pad for the center bolt. Re-install the rear end. If you have moved the axle more than an inch it may be necessary to modify the length of the driveshaft.

## **STEP 11: INSTALL BED FLOOR**

In order to complete the installation you will require the bed wood, skid strips, side angle strips and appropriate skid strip bolt kit. These instructions apply only to Pro's Pick wood kits but the procedure for other kits are similar.

**A note about bed wood:** Pro's Pick bed wood is kiln dried to a very low moisture content. The boards will take on moisture very quickly if they are not protected. As soon as your wood arrives apply two or three coats of the chosen finish, coating all six surfaces of the boards. If the finish is marked during assembly it can be remedied when the final two or three coats is applied.

**There are eight boards in our wood kit. Six center boards and two edge boards.**

### **REGULAR BED STRIPS**

Place the two edge boards in place. The outside of the edge boards are the side that has the widest machined groove. Place the side angles onto the edge boards with the widest side of the angle sitting on the floor. In some applications the bolt holes are previously punched and in others you will have to drill the necessary holes.

The bed side angles must be bolted to the bedside. Assure that the bed side angles are sitting on the edge board and are fitting nicely to the bedside. With a felt marker, mark the side angle strip for attachment holes half way up the vertical leg of the side angle in the location of the stake pocket. The object is to hide the required fastener inside of the stake pocket. Having marked the side angle strip, remove, center punch the hole location, and drill 1/8" holes. Reinstall the strip, using the 1/8" holes as a guide, drill 1/8" holes in the bedside. Remove the side angle once more, enlarge the holes in the bedside to 17/32" and install the supplied 5/16 NC nutsert. Enlarge the holes in the side angle to 11/32". Bolt the side angle to the bedside.

Lay out the other six boards, drop the carriage bolts through the strips and proceed. Use large fender washers provided on the bolts located between cross members. Be careful, have a helper watch from above as you tighten the bolts, over tightening will deform the skid strips.

### **“WOW” STRIPS”**

If you are using “Wow Strips” the procedure is easier. Lay out the bed wood, slide seven “T” bolt fasteners into each strip, align studs to cross members, position excess T bolts between cross members, apply nuts, lock washers and fender washers between cross members and tighten. Because you have welded the cross members to the bed sides, the side angles are purely ornamental. Countersink the bolts along the bedside that will be covered by the angle strips. If you are using Wow Strips simply attach the side angles to the bed side with two sided tape.

## **STEP 12: FENDER INSTALLATION**

If you are using steel fenders, temporarily install the fender by clamping or holding in place. When satisfied with the fit, using a can of spray paint, paint through the fender mounting holes from under the fender. This will mark the fender hole locations. You may now remove the fender and drill the fender holes in the bed side

If you are using fiberglass fenders, starting in the middle of each fender, lay out a uniform bolt pattern. **Bear in mind that two of the fender mounting holes, one front and one rear, run through the bed side angles, if using exposed bolt bed strips. Before drilling these holes make sure that the edge board is perfectly flat, once these**

**holes are drilled you are stuck with the result.** When satisfied with the bolt pattern, drill one fender for mounting holes. Clamp the left and right fenders together by their mounting flanges. Using a can of spray paint, paint through the drilled holes to mark the un drilled fender.

When installing the fenders use nylock nuts. Avoid over tightening the fender bolts as it can distort the bed side.

**STEP 13: SIDE ANGLE BOLTS – if using exposed bolt bed strips**

As mentioned in step 11, two of the fender mounting bolts on each fender pass through the side angle strip. On the side angle find the center point between these two bolts. Center punch and drill first a 1/8" hole and finally an 11/32" hole. Install 5/19 button head bolt and nylock nut.

We hope this has been a pleasurable experience for you and once again thank you for purchasing our product. If you have any comments as to how we may improve our product line, or ideas for new product you think would be valuable, please drop us a line. Address correspondence to Paul Maurer at any of the following:

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