

" THIS ARTICLE IS INTENDED FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY.

ACTUAL PARTS, YEARS AND BODY STYLES CONTAINED

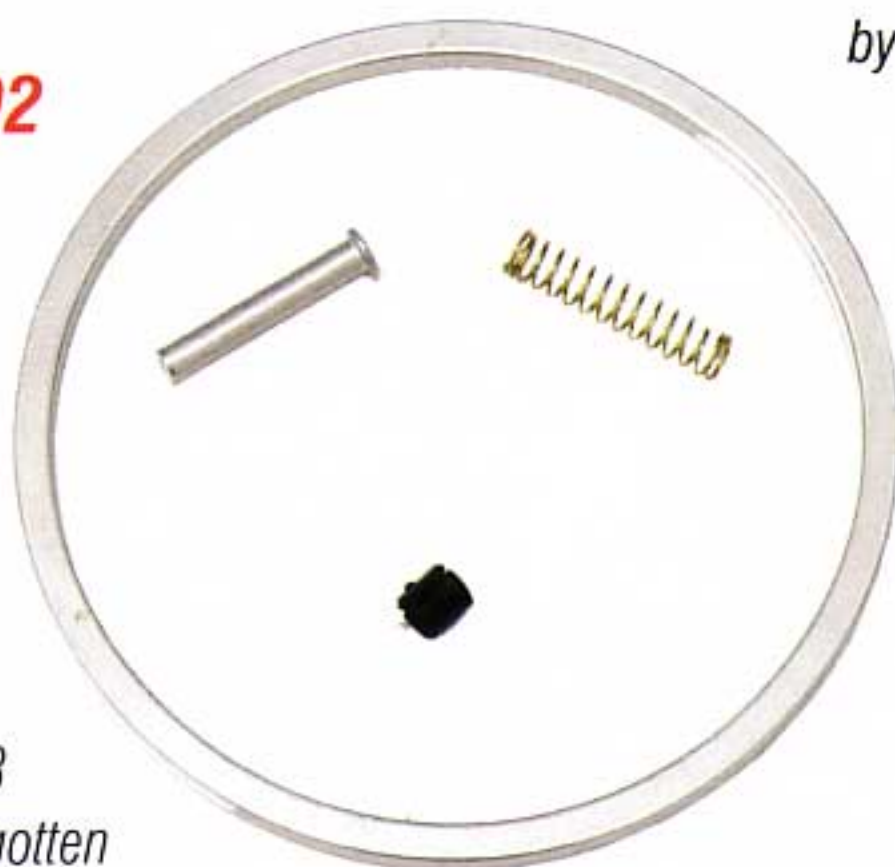
IN THIS ARTICLE MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY FROM YOUR APPLICATION. "

YOU CAN DO IT EASY UPGRADES

1955-68 LATE MODEL TILT STEERING COLUMN & ORIGINAL STEERING WHEEL INSTALLATION

by Randy Irwin

#53-202



One of the best upgrades to come along in a long while is the ididit tilt steering column for the 1955-68 cars. Many of us have gotten a little (and some a lot) larger around the equator and getting in and out of a 1955-68 car with the stock steering wheel and non-tilt column has gotten a little tight to put it mildly. In the August 2000 issue of *Classic Chevy World*, we did a tech article on how to install the stock steering wheel onto a late model tilt (OEM 1969-up or ididit) steering column. The tilt column makes it much nicer getting in and out of your classic and allows you to make driving position adjustments for your own comfort. We now have a complete installation kit that allows the installation of a stock 1955-68 steering wheel or the new 15" replacement 1955-57 steering wheel on the late model tilt column. The new 15" replacement steering wheel and horn ring have been reduced in size, but the center hub and cap are the stock size so that the replacement wheel will match up to the stock mast jacket just like an original. Our installation kit P/N 53-202 includes a simple horn connector kit, a new spacer ring that fits on the bottom of the steering wheel so you do not need to modify the steering wheel hub match up to the later tilt/ididit column.

Parts Needed:

- 53-202 1955-68 Original Steering Wheel to Late Model Steering Column (ididit or 1969-up GM) Kit
- 53-144 1955-56 Bel Air 15" Replacement Steering Wheel
- 53-145 1957 Bel Air Or 210 15" Replacement Steering Wheel

Tools Needed:

Philips Screw Driver
3/4" Socket & Ratchet
Steering Wheel Puller

Time Frame:

1 Hour

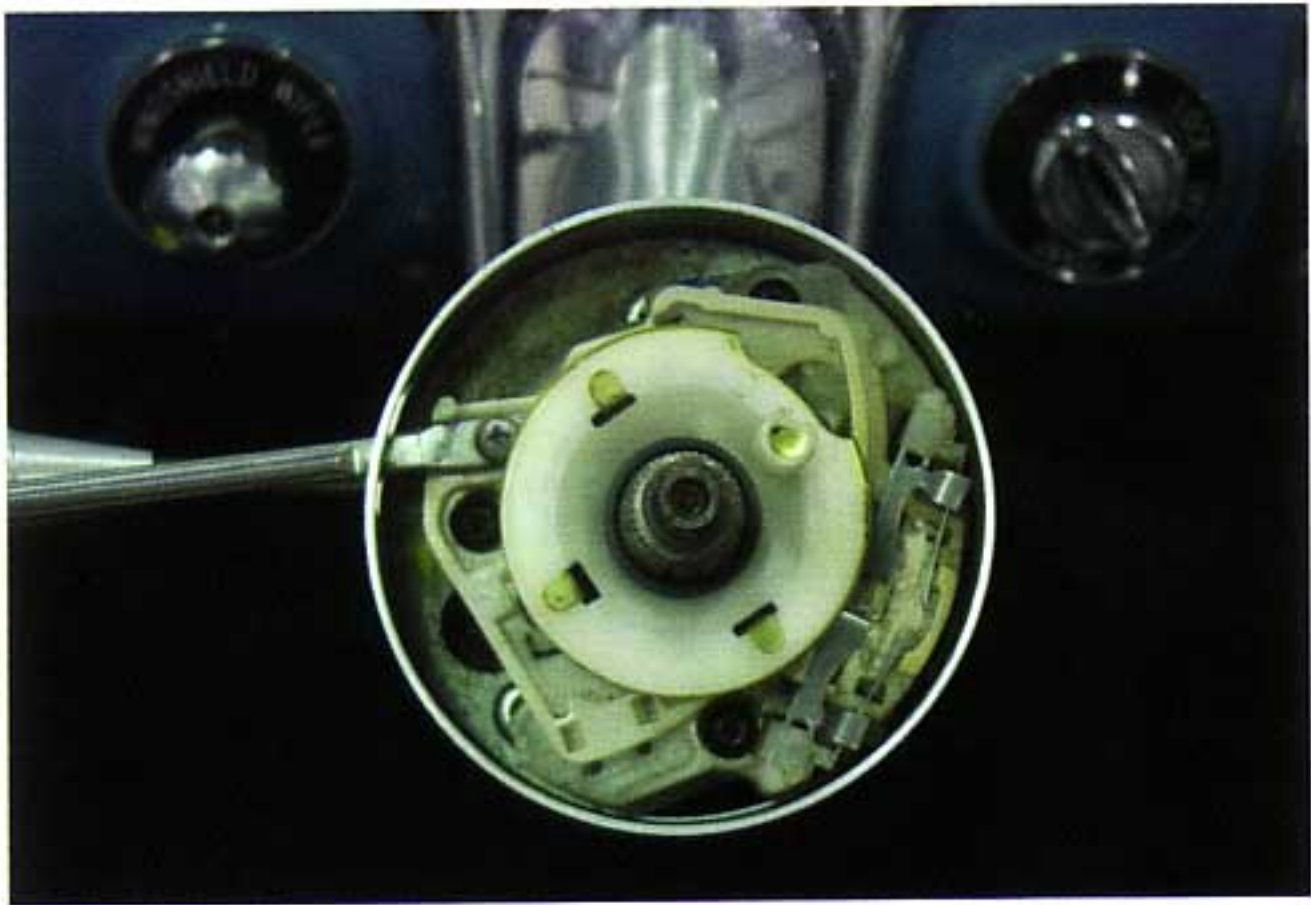


Photo #1: The ididit tilt column uses a 1969 and newer GM type tilt head at the top. The entire turn signal switch area and upper column is completely different than the stock 1955-68 column. The ididit column has a female stem facing upward that the late model horn button connects to.

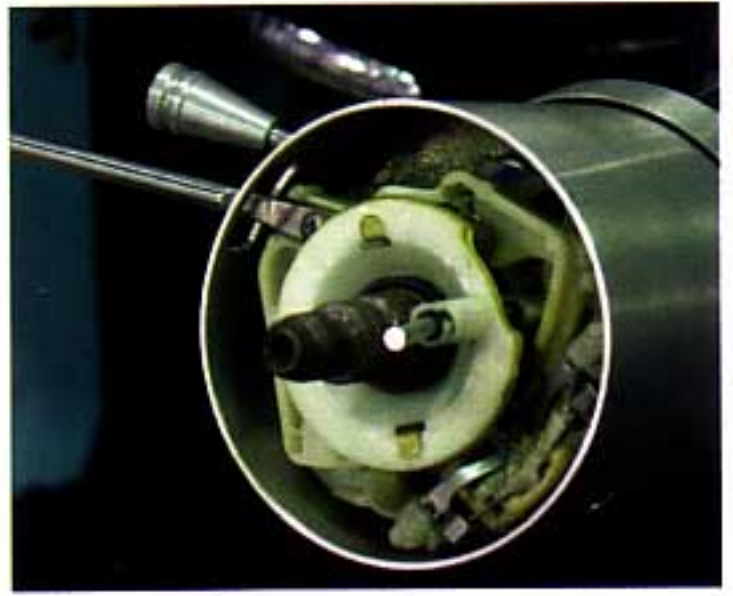
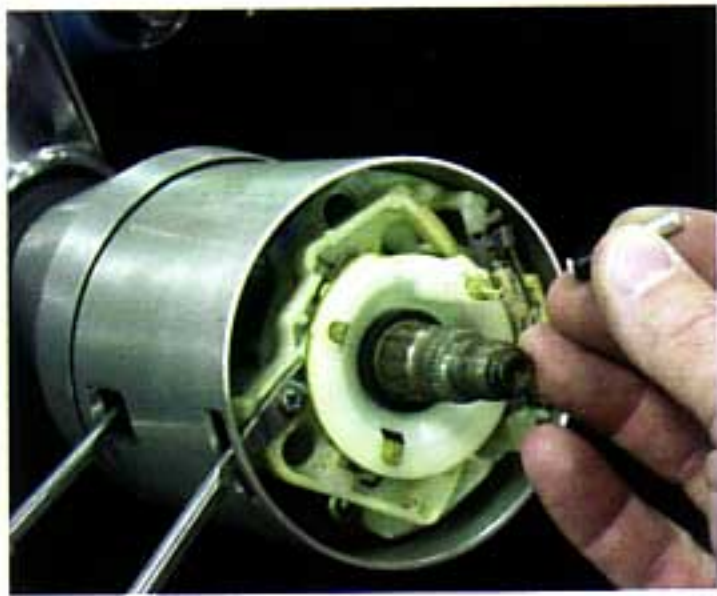


Photo #2a & 2b: Kit #53-202 includes a brass locking spring, a plastic sleeve, a contact pin and a polished aluminum ring that fits onto the hub of the steering wheel. First install the brass spring down into the female stem and slide the contact pin through the plastic sleeve and lock the coupler pin into the female stem on the column.

Photo #3: The polished aluminum ring fits on the bottom of the steering wheel hub so that the diameter of the hub will match up with the diameter and recess of the



late model/ididit steering column. JB Weld epoxy or even Super Glue works great to glue the polished ring to the hub of the steering wheel. This ring can be painted if you prefer to match the color of the steering wheel.



Photo #4a & 4b: Make certain the center steel hub of the steering wheel is clean and free of paint. This is necessary for the horn to work properly.



Photo #5: When installing an original or the original replacement steering wheel on a late model/ididit tilt column, the stock turn signal canceling ring will not be used. The canceling device is built into the tilt steering column.

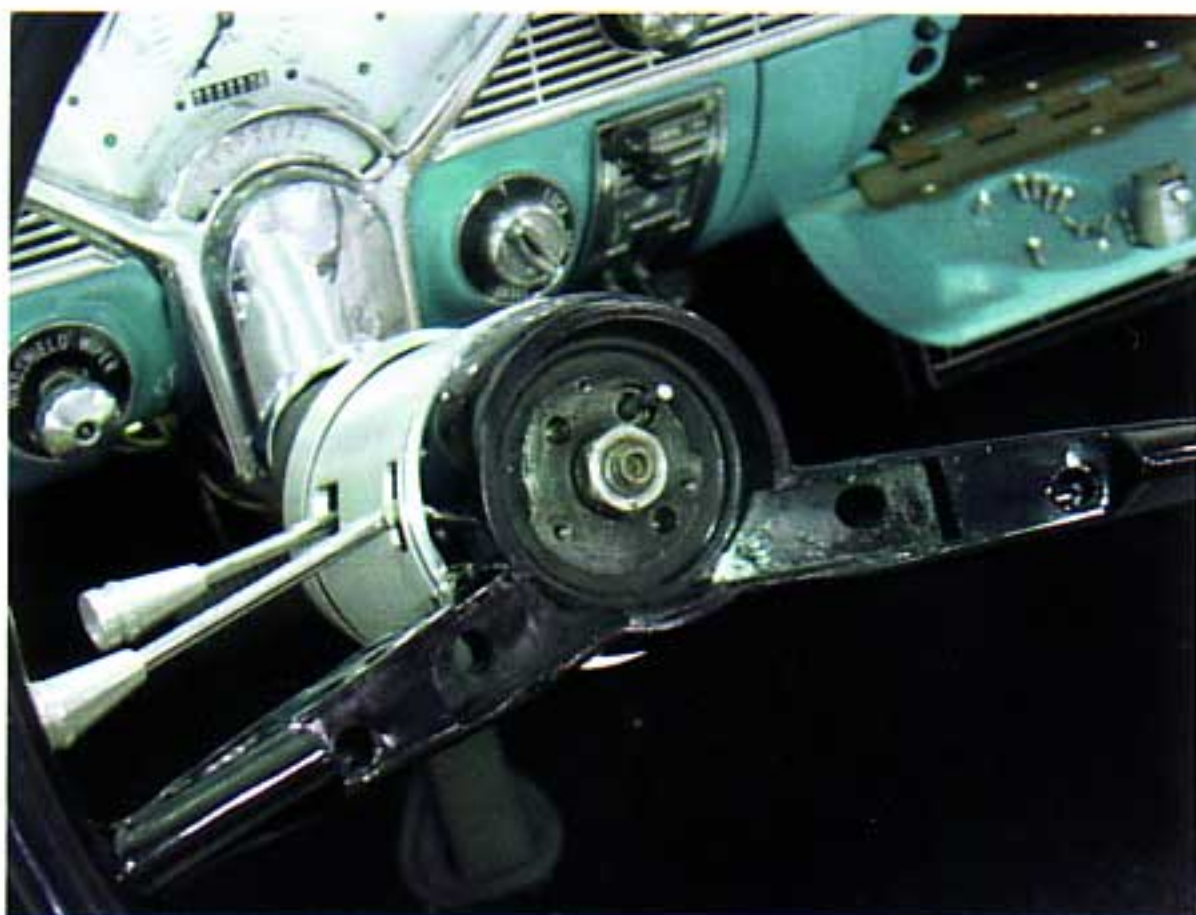


Photo #6: Install the steering wheel onto the steering column and torque the steering wheel retaining nut to 45 lbs. The contact pin will stick up through the hole in the steering wheel hub.

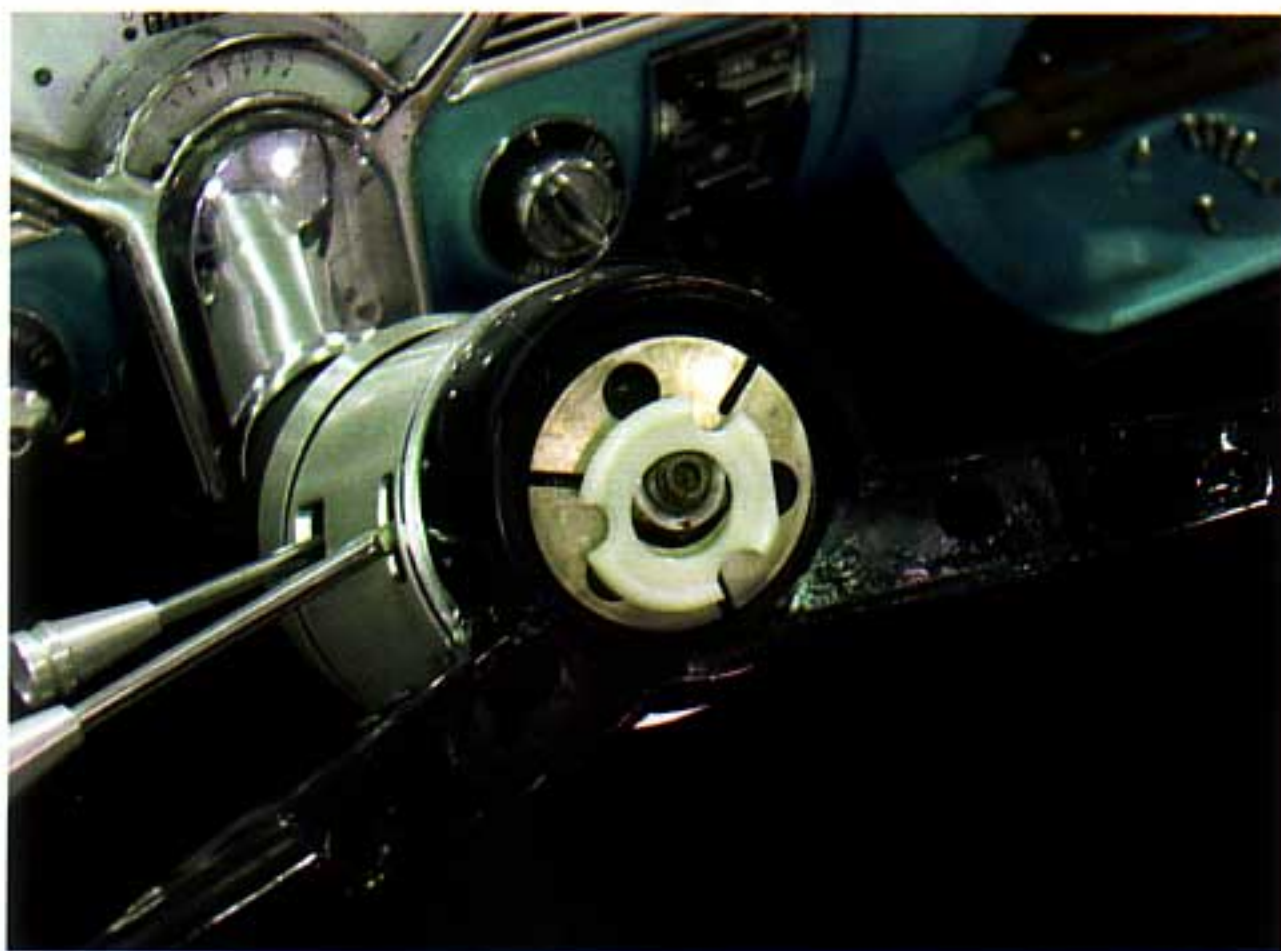


Photo #7: Now install the Belleville spring and the nylon ring. These parts will fit under the horn ring. Make sure the arch of the Belleville spring is facing upward.

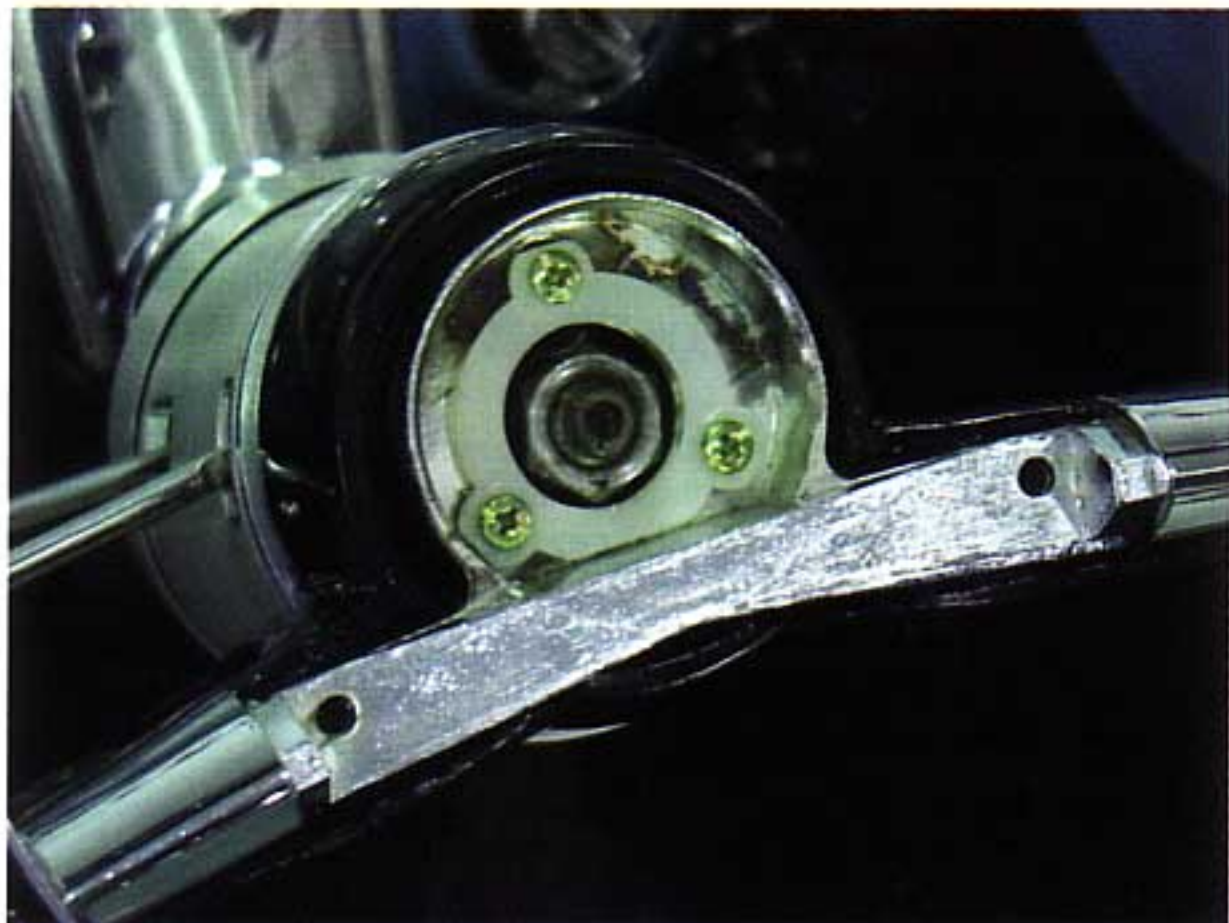


Photo #8: The horn ring is attached to the steering wheel hub with three #10 machine screws. These screws pass through the three ring insulator and hold the horn ring in place. Snug the three screws down to hold the horn ring firm but not too tight. You will want to leave the screws loose enough so that the horn ring will pivot.



Photo #9: Once the horn has been tested, install the horn ring center cap. The 1955-56 cap is held to the horn ring with a 1/4-20 machine screw from the bottom of the

horn ring. The replacement steering wheels have a replacement center cap emblem that is different from the factory emblem. You may replace it with the correct reproduction factory emblem if you wish.

Photo #10:

You can see how well the aluminum ring matches up with the steering column; this



really finishes off the interior nicely. If you are trying to retain the stock look inside yet have the updated comfort of a tilt column, this kit is just the ticket!

Good Luck! 