

YOU CAN DO IT EASY UPGRADES

by Randy Irwin

1955-57 ADJUSTABLE TRACTION BAR INSTALLATION



Randy Irwin - Technical Writer

Randy has been involved in the Chevy parts business for over 25 years. He is a wizard at creating, making and modifying custom parts for Chevys.

Traction bars are needed on any performance car that utilizes rear leaf springs. Under hard acceleration, the rear leaf spring will actually become twisted or "wrapped up" causing loss of traction and wheel hop. Traction bars prevent wrapping of the leaf spring by forcing the rear axle to remain a fixed distance away from the forward spring perch. There are various types of traction bars that can be used on a car with leaf springs like the old universal "slapper" bars, J-bolt type bars or bolt-on ladder bars. The slapper and J-bolt type bars work ok, but don't really give you a way to set any preload in the rear suspension. The ladder bars do allow you to set some preload in the suspension, but will give you a harsher ride and are usually in the way of tailpipes, not to mention they are ugly. Eckler's Classic Chevy offers a simple and very clean traction bar system that can be used with the leaf springs in the stock location or with the rear spring pocket kit. The traction bars use urethane bushings at each end for a smooth ride yet positive reaction. They are fully adjustable from zero up to all the preload you want. A great feature of the traction bars compared to others on the market is that they have left and right handed adjustable rod ends at each end, which allows full adjustability of the traction bars without removing them from the car.



#21-165



#21-33

Tools Needed:

Welder
3/4" Socket
1" Socket
Breaker Bar
1" Wrench

Time Frame:

3 Hours



#21-155

Parts List:

	Catalog price	Member price
21-155 1955-57 Traction Bar Kit For Stock Spring Location	\$199.99	\$189.99 kit
21-165 1955-57 Traction Bar Kit Use w/Spring Pocket Kit	\$199.99	\$189.99 kit
21-33 1955-57 Rear End U-Bolt	\$10.99	\$10.44 ea.
21-57 1955-57 Rear KYB Rear Gas Shock	\$34.99	\$33.24 ea.



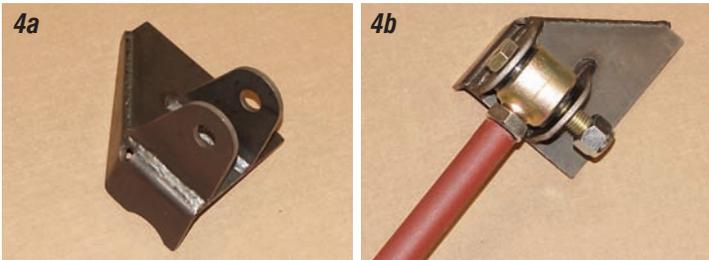
Photos 1a & 1b: The front of the rear leaf springs are held to the frame with a bracket or "perch" that is welded to the outboard side of the frame rails. The rear end housing is held to the leaf springs with two 1/2" U-bolts, four tall nuts and a lower shock plate on each side.



Photos 2a, 2b & 2c: The left and right rear traction bar brackets are the same and mount to the bottom of the stock rear lower shock plates. The brackets are held in place using the existing four U-bolt nuts. With the rear traction bar brackets installed, torque the four nuts to 65 ft/lbs. If the threads on the U-bolts do not protrude through the heads of the four nuts, replace the U-bolts with longer ones P/N 21-33.



Photos 3a & 3b: Each traction bar has one left hand and one right hand threaded rod end with jam nuts. With the threaded rod ends on each end of the bar, the preload of the traction bar can be adjusted without removing the traction bar like other brands. Before threading the rod ends in, lubricate the threads with anti-seize or a good quality grease.



Photos 4a & 4b: The left and right front traction bar brackets are different from side to side. Locate the correct front bracket and attach the traction bar to the bracket using the supplied 3/4" X 2" grade-8 bolt and lock nut. Leave the lock nut loose at this time.



Photo 5: The front traction bar bracket is welded to the frame beneath the front factory leaf spring bracket. The frame must be cleaned of any paint, dirt or rust before welding the bracket in place.



Photos 6a & 6b: The rear suspension must be in the ride height position when the front bracket is welded to the frame.



Photo 7: Connect the rear of the traction bar to the rear bracket at the lower shock plate with the supplied 3/4" X 2" bolt and locking nut leaving the nuts loose at this time. Now raise the front mounting bracket into place and tack weld the bracket to the frame.



Photos 8a, 8b & 8c: With the traction bar bracket tack-welded to the front spring eye bracket, remove the front bolt and nut from the traction bar. Next, remove the nut for the front spring eye bolt and drive the bolt in flush with the front spring eye mounting bracket. This will give you room to weld the traction bar bracket to the front spring eye mounting bracket. Now, weld the traction bar bracket to the front spring eye bracket. Once the metal has cooled, give the frame and bracket a coat of paint and reinstall the front spring eye nut.



Photo 9: Now, set the car on the ground and install the left and right traction bars using the supplied 3/4" bolts and lock nuts. Torque the

bolts to 65 ft/lbs. Install the traction bars so that the right hand threaded rod ends are to the front of the car. By having left hand threads on one end of the traction bar and a right hand threads on the other end, the "preload" can be adjusted without removing the bars from the mounting brackets. By putting "preload" in the traction bar, the rear end will be forced to the ground and keep the tires from spinning or hopping off the ground (wheel hop).

To adjust the "preload" in the traction bars, the car must be sitting on the ground on all four tires. First the traction bars will need to be in the "neutral position", no preload. With the jam nuts on the rod ends backed off from the traction bar tubes, the traction bar tubes should be loose enough that you can turn them by hand clockwise and counter clockwise about a third turn. Now find the center of the third turn. This is the "neutral position" of the traction bar. Next, on the passenger side traction bar, tighten the traction bar (shorten in length) by turning the traction bar tube 1/2" turn clockwise.

Now take the car for a ride and see how much the traction has improved. More preload can be added to the right traction bar if needed. Good Luck. ▽