



## Lowering the back of the II

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After lowering the front of my car with a simple spring swap, I wanted to lower the back a little to level the car out and to also improve the stance of the car. I thought an inch would be enough but I was puzzled about how to do it and didn't really want to spend a lot of money doing it. After studying the problem for a bit, here's my solution. What I came up with is relatively easy and best of all it was free!

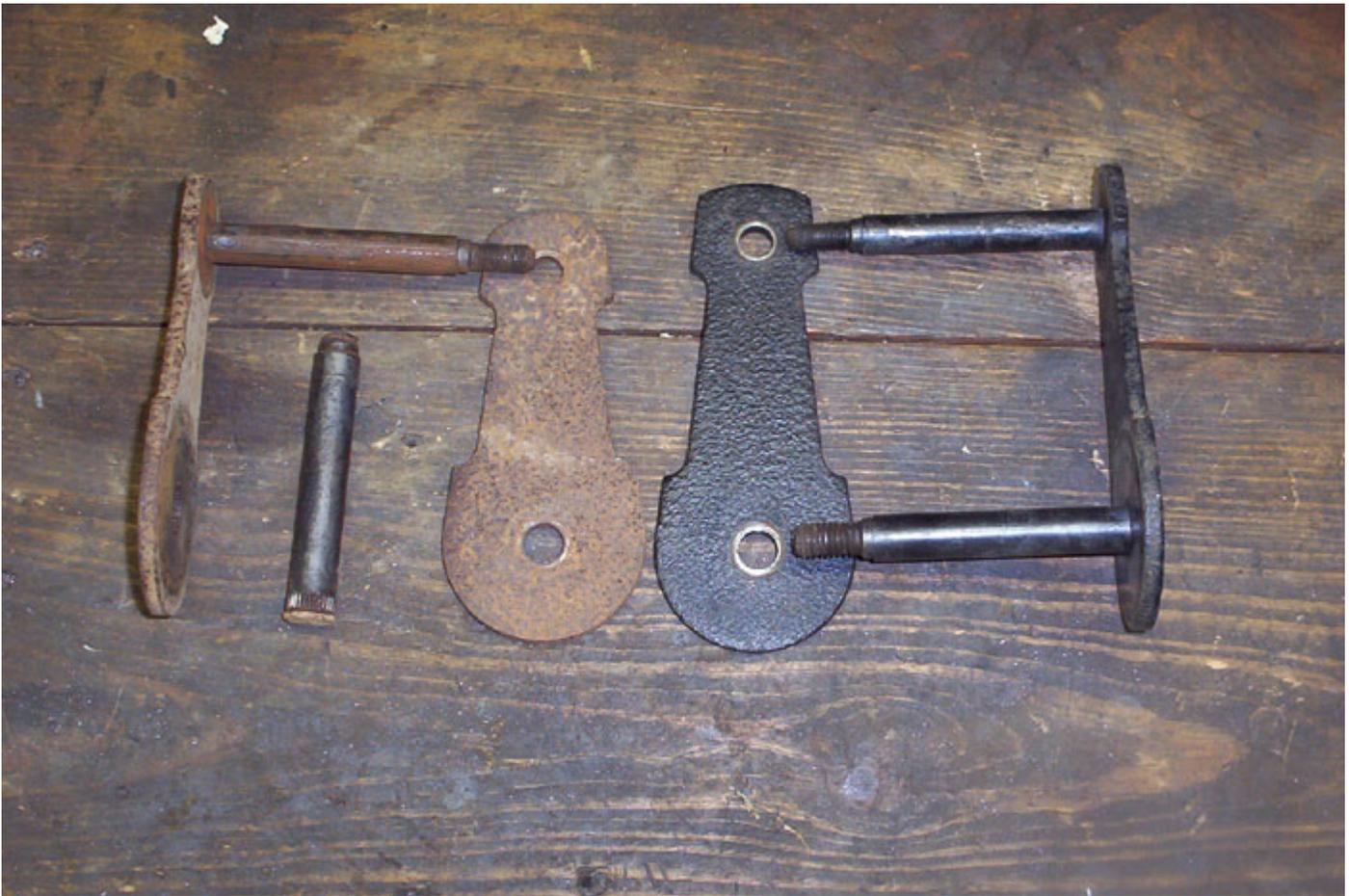
Lowering the back of these cars is challenging, as you either have to have custom lowering springs made, or find someone to make lowering blocks, neither of which will be fast or cheap (or at least as cheap as this!) Here's where I started out - 24 3/4" according to the tape measure at the wheel centerline.



Here's a picture of the front spring mount before I started. Notice in the mount there's over an inch of clearance above the spring eye.



Here's something else I found; there were different shackles used on these cars. I don't know the reasons for the different shackles but what I found is that the ones in my car were 4" from the centers of the shackle bolts. I have a few parts cars and found that most used a shackle that was 3 1/2" center to center but on the '75 model car they were 3" center to center, so like I said, I don't know why they are different but I chose a set that was 3 1/2" center to center. Also, if you don't have access to parts cars you could just knock out the splined shackle bolts and re-drill one set of holes in your old shackles a bit closer together and redrive the bolt in the shackle. Notice the one I drove out doesn't have any threads. I snapped it off removing it from the parts car, so be sure to use penetrating oil and a careful touch. Fortunately I had more and I just used the broken one for the pics.



Here's where you get to the spring mount. You have to remove the bottom of back seat to get to the 4 bolts that secure it to the unibody. Not hard to get at, just two bolts securing the seat at the front and it comes right out, then roll back the carpet a little and you have access to all 4 bolts. Before doing this, set your jackstands in a secure spot that doesn't interfere with the rear springs or axle. Do not just set them under the thin unibody sheetmetal! I used the rear bumper shock mounts. Then loosen (don't remove) the front spring eye bolts, unbolt the shocks from the axle and remove the axle vent hose above the brake line "T". Jack up the rear axle and remove the 8 (4 each side) unibody to mount bolts. Lower your jack and the mounts will come down with the axle and springs and you can then remove the eyebolts and take the mounts to the workbench.



Here I am marking the mount for the new eye bolt holes. I scribed a line all the way to the top of the mount from the bolt centerline. Then I measured from the center of the rear unibody mounting holes to the eye bolt centerline. These measurements were the same on both

sides of the mount, so my new holes should also be directly across from each other. The measurement from the rear unibody bolts to my scribe line was  $2 \frac{15}{16}$ ". Then I scribed a line 1" up from the the centerline of the old hole and centerpunched the spot for the new hole. The factory eye bolt hole was  $\frac{17}{32}$ " but I used a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " drill bit and it worked fine. When drilling big holes in metal I always start with a small bit and work up. I started with  $\frac{3}{16}$ ", then  $\frac{3}{8}$ " and finally  $\frac{1}{2}$ ".



Here's the mounts with the new holes drilled, sandblasted and painted.



Here's the mounts reinstalled in the car. If you notice there is a unibody support that runs right in front of the bolt head. If you ever want to service the spring eye again, such as to replace the bushing, this support will be in the way of removing the spring eyebolt. To remove the eyebolt you will either have to notch this support or remove the spring mounts from the unibody again, which is what I will do if I ever need to. This being said, if you don't notch the support, when you reinstall the mount you will need to insert the eyebolt in the mount and then lift the spring and mount into the body as a unit. A small detail but should be noted. Insert and just snug the 8 (4 each side) unibody to mount bolts and jack up the rear of the car to place all its weight on the springs. Tighten the 8 unibody to mount bolts and then tighten the 2 front spring eye bolts. Reinstall the shocks and vent hose and take the car off the stands to lower it to the ground. Properly tightening these bolts is essential so here's some of the torque specs:

Spring eye bolt: 80-120 ft. lbs.

Spring mount (bracket) to body bolts: 50-58 ft. lbs.

Lower shock bolt: 30-50 ft. lbs.

Shackle bolts: 14-22 ft. lbs.



I figured with the front eye mod and swapping the rear shackles I would lower the car about  $3/4$ " (half of 1" in the front ( $1/2$ " ) and half of  $1/2$ " in the rear ( $1/4$ " ) . Turned out it lowered it a full inch ( $24\ 3/4$ " to  $23\ 3/4$ " ) but 1" is about what I was shooting for. This mod took me about 7 hrs. but that includes pulling the shackles from my parts car, sandblasting and painting the mounts and shackles, a little bit of headscratchin' and the actual work, so you can probably do it a little quicker. Probably comparable to the time it would take to loosen the U-bolts to install lowering blocks or actually swapping out the springs.



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