

AEROMOTIVE EXPLAINS PERFORMANCE FUEL SYSTEMS

CHEVY

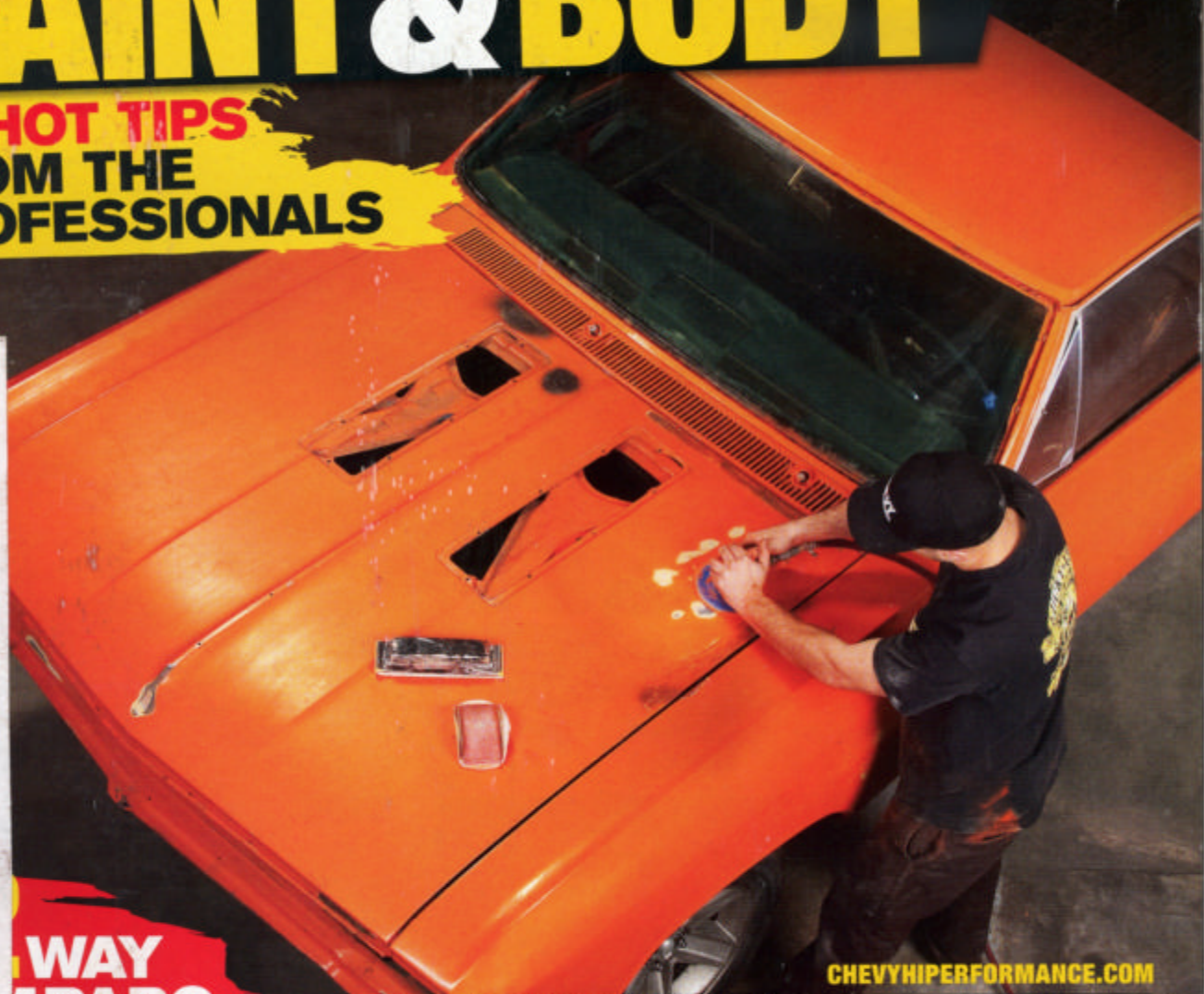
HIGH PERFORMANCE



**454ci POWERED
ROAD WARRIOR**

PAINT & BODY

**26 HOT TIPS
FROM THE
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Chevy Hi-Performance 6/09
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BREAKING IT DOWN



At one time or another we all end up taking our rides for granted and paying the price. Case in point, when vehicles sit idle for a while you can kiss your joints and bushings good-bye. Without the movement of the car's suspension, grease

doesn't get distributed and the factory rubber bushings dry out and turn to junk, turning literally to stone. They can no longer be relied on to do their job. Sure, they will work, but as soon as that suspension begins to articulate and twist again they become brittle.

What do bushings even do? On the short side, they serve as the middleman between moving metal parts—for example, suspension components such as the upper and lower A-arms. When bushings go bad, they can rattle a car to bits and create a sloppy feeling in the front end of the car, creating excessive play in the steering wheel and potentially putting you in a compromising situation. To make matters worse, if you happen to have a combination with big inches or even a power-adder, you could wind up turning any street machine into an rogue missile.

This month we hooked up with a reader who turned out to be a perfect candidate for us to work with. While the progress of the car had to be put on the backburner for the past couple years, it's on track now and anxiously awaiting a

big-block transplant. To get things started, we ordered up a front-end poly-bushing replacement kit from Classic Performance Parts. It came complete with all new polyurethane bushings, tie-rods, ball joints, and even new zerk fittings.

To help us out with the install, we relied on the expertise of Lou's Performance in San Fernando, California. Lou Zamora is a whiz when it comes to second-gen Camaros. Follow along as we replace the bushings and prepare this vehicle for hitting the streets again with a fresh front end.

QUICK NOTES

WHAT WE DID

Installed a Classic Performance Products frontend rebuilt kit. (PN 7579SFKP)

BOTTOM LINE

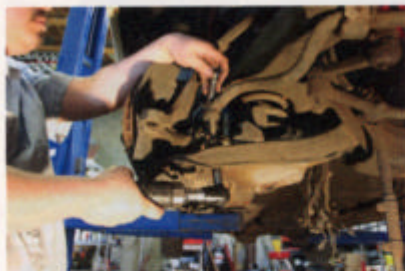
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COST (APPROX)

\$280



While a simple hydraulic hand-jack at home would do the same trick, to get this project going and for ease of illustration, we pulled the old Camaro onto a lift and raised it off the ground. Noyo Miramontes started by removing the front tires to gain access to the old rotors.



Miramontes attacked the front end with confidence and unbolted the brake calipers from the rotors using a 3/8-inch Allen wrench with a ratchet. He removed the calipers and set them aside. Then, using a 9/16-inch socket and wrench (top and bottom), he disconnected the sway bar and removed it as well.



PREASSEMBLY

CPP's kit includes upper and lower ball joints, inner and outer tie-rod ends, tie-rod adjusting sleeves, idler arm bushings, and control arm bushings and bump-stops. If you need new end links, they're sold separately. We also went ahead and preassembled as many of the components as possible. For example, we threaded together the new tie rods with sleeves and painted them. In the long-run this saves time and frustration.



Since the upper and lower A-arms need to be disassembled, we first had to remove the rotors from both sides. Miramontes removed the small grease cover and the cotter pin and, using an adjustable wrench, removed the spindle nut and took off the rotor.



For the spindles, we used a 3/4-inch box wrench top and bottom. If you don't have access to a ball joint tool, you can also try using a hammer and some hard blows on the spindle edge to more or less "pop" the joint loose. We were lucky; the spindle practically fell off.



Whats left? Not a whole lot, just the upper A-arms. Once you're at this stage, you might as well clean everything up. We went ahead and steam-cleaned the undercarriage and painted all the factory components.



Miramontes dove into the engine bay and began unbolting the upper A-arms. He used a 15/16-inch socket and wrench on both sides to remove them. He took note of how many shims were on each side and set those aside. Alignment will have to be done once the new parts have been installed.



Once the arms are off, and depending on the availability of tooling, the ball joints and bushings can be removed. We set up the arms in a vise and used a grinding wheel to grind off the heads of the rivets that were holding the ball joints in place. Next, we pried the ball joint off, but we had better luck using an air-powered hammer. For the factory bushings a special press must be used, or as an alternative you can get away with a large hammer. Still, we suggest taking the arms to a qualified suspension shop to get them removed correctly.



CPP's kit comes with a new idler arm, so we went ahead and painted that with the factory center steering bar. We bolted up the new arm with a 5/8-inch socket and an 11/16-inch wrench. From there, Miramontes attached the center steering bar with its associated nut and fastened it down with a 9/16-inch wrench.

BREAKING IT DOWN



Next we needed to install CPP's new bushings, ball joints, and bumpstops. The ball joints were a cinch and bolted in with new hardware, and a 7/16-inch wrench was used to tighten them down. The new ball joints also require a special installing tool. If you don't have access to one, we recommend getting a rental from your local hardware store.



PAINT TO PROTECT

What's the point of cleaning all that old stuff without laying down something to protect it? We made the extra effort to wash, clean, and repaint all the old factory components, along with the new CPP parts. Grab a can of Brake-Kleen and some fast-drying black primer, and you're set.



The freshly painted upper A-arms were thrown back into the engine bay with their associated shims and factory hardware. Then we could get the lower A-arms with their fresh CPP bushing already installed into the frame of the Camaro. Using the factory hardware, Miramontes tightened each bolt using a 13/16-inch socket. Also, using a spring compressor, we compressed the springs and installed them into each A-arm cup.



The spindles were next; we started by placing the lower ball joint into the bottom of the spindle. Using a jack, we pushed up the lower A-arm until the upper portion of the spindle met the ball joint from the upper A-arm. We fastened the spindle down into each A-arm using a 3/4-inch wrench. Finally, we attached the tie rods into the ends of the spindle and used a 9/16-inch wrench to tighten each nut.



With the front suspension nearly complete, we couldn't leave out the brake dust shields. Miramontes spent an unbelievable amount of time getting them to look good. Trust us, it's well worth the effort.



For the time being, Miramontes reinstalled the factory rotors by setting the rotor back onto the spindle. Using an adjustable wrench, he fastened the nut into place and finished it off with a cotter pin and the dust shield.



Finally, our second-gen Camaro can get its wheels back under it—literally. All in all, the job was long and tiresome and took a lot of patience. But then again we were working with a car that's almost 30 years old. It was worth it. Now where's that big-block we need to put in here? **CHP**



GREASE THE ZERKS

It may not be one of the things that gets overlooked, but this CPP kit comes with brand-new Zerk fittings. These fittings feed each point of movement with fresh grease to keep things moving freely. We installed each Zerk into its proper points and liberally greased it with a grease gun.

GET THE HOOKUP

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