

SAFE AND SOUND

Install Flowmaster's U-Fit Dual Exhaust Kit in Your Chassis |

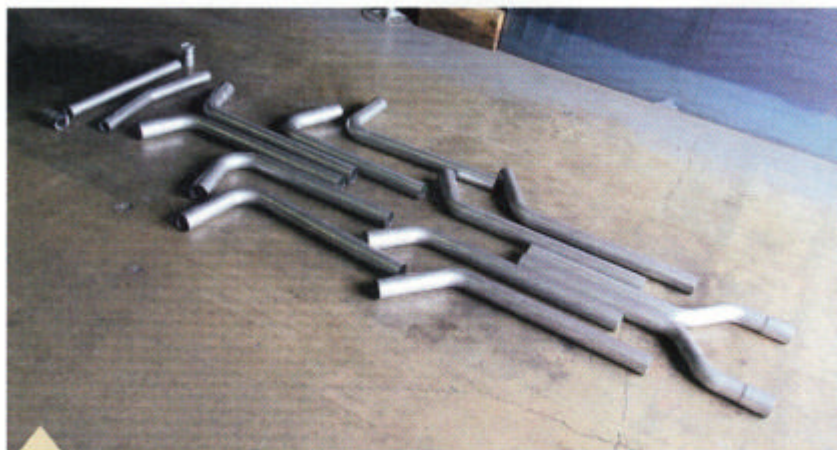
Last month on the C-10 we showed *Classic Performance Products'* trailing arm crossmember for the '67-72 Chevy trucks in preparation to run a new exhaust system through it—up out of harms way! The old exhaust system hung down too far after the truck was lowered and it didn't live too long as a result. I wasn't about to make the same mistake twice.

Obviously a heavily lowered C-10 with an LS engine and a 700-R4 isn't that standard in the world of pre-made exhaust kits, so one would have to be built from scratch. This is where Flowmaster's U-Fit Dual Kit comes into play. It is an affordable, comprehensive, universal exhaust system kit that you add mufflers and hangers to and cut and weld as your needs see fit (or have a shop easily do it for you). There are enough mandrel-bent tubes in the U-Fit Dual Kit to configure your exhaust just about anyway you want. It also includes pieces for a crossover or balance tube, as well as your choice of optional tailpipe exits.

Of course Flowmaster has mufflers to suit just about anything and are known for their famous and aggressive 40 Series mufflers, but I wanted a muffler that was anything but

"loud". My intent is to drive the C-10 on a daily basis and to do so with some sort of economy, which means I would have to keep my foot out of it and we all know aggressive mufflers aren't very good for exercising restraint. After expressing my needs to the folks at Flowmaster, they suggested their 50 Series SUV muffler. It is a larger version of the regular 50 Series muffler, which means it is quieter and thanks to a special tuning chamber, features reduced interior resonance. The Flowmaster website does a pretty good job of differentiating their mufflers as well and has all the physical dimensions of each muffler.

I decided to let someone else do the work for me this time and took the truck and the Flowmaster parts over to The Muffler



Naturally, the Flowmaster U-Fit Dual Kit comes in a big box. Once you unpack it, lay it all out on the ground in some sort of symmetrical arrangement. To help visualize it fitting under your truck. The two smaller tubes to the left are for an H or crossover pipe and the flanges to go with it, should you so choose.



Here is the old exhaust system that was in the '72 with its X-pipe that ran under the transmission and over every speed bump and driveway in Southern California, basically destroying the exhaust after only a couple of years. This is the reason I wanted to use the Classic Performance Products' trailing arm crossmember with the holes in it to run the exhaust up in the chassis and out of harm's way.



Over at the Muffler Man in Placentia, California, Josh has started with a head pipe coming off the header with a 90-degree bend in it that leads back to the inlet of the muffler. When it comes to exhaust work, you have to leave yourself plenty of leeway with the pipes until you are sure they will fit properly. See how he can't quite get the head pipe up over the trans crossmember until it is cut?





I personally didn't want to have too much exhaust noise or resonance, so after talking with the people at Flowmaster, they suggested their 50 Series SUV mufflers. These are much less aggressive sounding than Flowmaster's famous 40 Series mufflers.



Due to the larger size of the 50 Series SUV mufflers, it was a bit of a squeeze to get them in the chassis. Their larger size will reduce noise and resonance to hopefully help me keep my foot out of the not-so-loud pedal.



With the head pipe cut back about 6 inches, a piece of a bend is cut that starts to angle the tube upward and back to the muffler inlet.

Man in Placentia, California, for the install. Since The Muffler Man does this kind of stuff all day, every day, it only took about five hours for the install from start to finish. Going all the way out the back of the truck would take a little longer. We also didn't install a crossover tube in the system despite the advantages to using one because the exhaust runs through the trailing arm crossmember and it

would make it impossible to remove the system without cutting it.

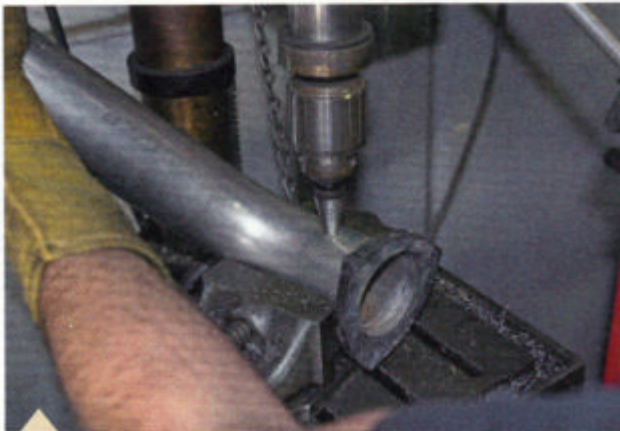
After some time in the driver seat I can say I'm quite happy with the results. The truck has a mild-mannered sound at idle and under normal cruising, but growls just enough to let you know it's there when the pedal goes to the metal. See more of what Flowmaster has to offer at www.flowmastermufflers.com.



A corresponding piece of angled tube is marked and will be cut to hopefully join the muffler. Everything gets tack-welded together along the way once each piece (or pieces) fit.



Here is the muffler side of the first head pipe and its two short and quick bends. I know it will be a bit tricky to remove the whole exhaust system when it's done (in fact it'll be real tricky once it passes through the crossmember), but at least I won't be dragging any of it!



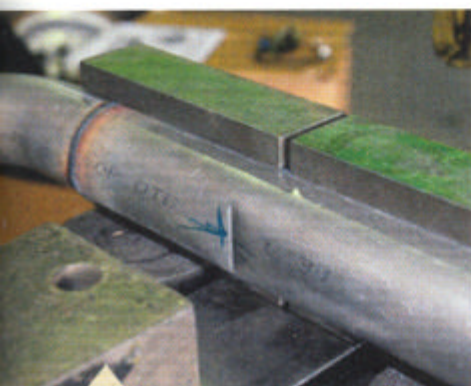
My system also needed oxygen sensors in it for the LS engine that I recently installed. Josh marked and drilled out the holes for the sensors before welding in the bungs.



Now the head pipe gets MIG-welded to the inlet of the 50 Series SUV muffler for good! In tight spaces, you can cut back the inlet and outlet tubes on the mufflers for more tube clearance. Make sure to wear proper welding gear if you are pulling the trigger.



Once Josh is happy with the fit of the tubes, they are systematically welded together out of the truck before being welded to the muffler. With an installation like this where tubes pass through the chassis in confined spaces, you have to make sure you can get to the joints that need to be welded in the chassis with the welder.



One other matter of business on the left head pipe was to clearance it just a bit for the shift linkage. Josh has a hydraulic bender that he used to dimple it, but you could do it at home with a torch, a hammer, and a large bolt or piece of rod.



After the left side was pretty much in place, Josh moved to the right. While some of most exhaust systems can't be a mirror image of the other side, it's always best to try and make that way.



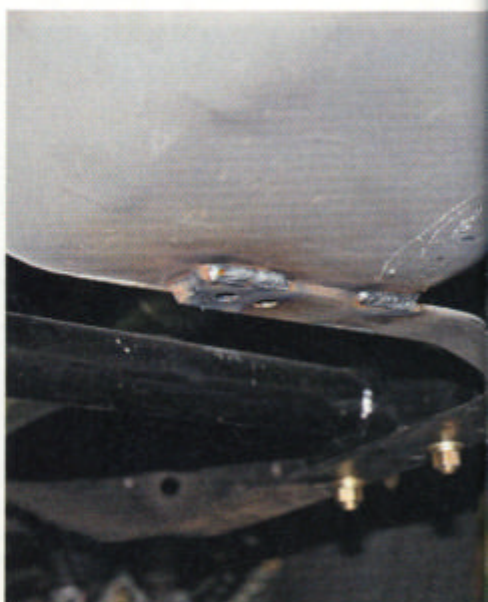
For the head pipe on the right side, a tube with a 45-degree bend in it worked where the header collector terminates. Along with this, a short length of straight tube and the connection to the inlet of the other muffler are made.



Josh prepares each side after the crossmember with the same angle in the tubes that will lead back. Angle finders like these are inexpensive at hardware or home improvement stores.



With the dump location set and everything else in place, the outlet of the muffler is welded to the rear portion of the exhaust. From the back light of the welder, you can better see how the tubes pass through the CPP trailing arm crossmember.





With the outlet of the muffler cut back, Josh had enough room to snake a couple of bend pieces through the exhaust hole in the CPP crossmember. None of the exhaust on the truck will hang below the frame except for where the exhaust will run out from the center of the truck to the outside of the body, sweet.



Reminiscent of the C-10s my dad and his friends had, I chose to have the exhaust dump right in front of the rear tires. There is a long slip-fit tube with a 45-degree angle in it that is perfect for this.



All exhaust systems need support. Most of the time, typical muffler universal weld/bolt-on hangers will do, but since this truck is so low and we are trying to keep everything up in the chassis, typical won't work. Josh came up with this simple bracket coming off the frame with a heat resistant bushing that was welded to the underside of the muffler. The mufflers filled up so much of this area that a typical hanger couldn't be, well, hung.



Toward the rear there was more room. A standard hanger was bolted to the frame in an existing hole just above where the tube passes under the frame on its way to the front of the tire. The long rod section is heated, bent around the pipe, cut, and welded to it.



For those going over the rearend of their truck, Flowmaster includes these mandrel-bent tubes that are bent over 90 degrees that do just the trick. For really low trucks, just make sure you have enough room between the rearend and any suspension parts and the bed floor when the suspension bottoms out or altered with air bags.



Without stands or arms in the way, here's how the front section turned out. It was pretty smooth up here thanks to the wide frame and tight headers. As mentioned, the top of the left head pipe had to be dimpled to make sure to clear the shift linkage from the frame to the transmission. Those with less space restraints shouldn't have a problem at all.



Yes it is a tight fit with the mufflers on each side of the transmission and driveshaft, but it all worked out nicely in the end. The space under the bed of trucks with trailing arms gets a bit tricky since the arms cut diagonally across what would normally be a good place for the mufflers. Those with parallel leaf springs might have more options.



To ensure my toes and floorboards stay cool above the stuffed chassis, Flowmaster has aluminum heat shields that easily attach to their mufflers. Since I want nothing but driveability, comfort, and reliability out of this exhaust system, I ordered those in addition to the U-Fit Dual Kit.



The heat shields simply fit on top of the mufflers and are held in place by these giant clamps. Put the heat shields on first if you have tight space restraints such as I (just a tip!). Flowmaster also has exhaust tips and many other accessories to go along with their U-Fit Dual Kit.