



**TOOL LIST FOR HIDDEN TAILGATE LATCHES  
FOR 48-85 DODGE HIGHSIDE UTILINE (STEPSIDE) TRUCKS**

Sharpie Marker

Ball Peen Hammer

Center Punch

3/8" or 1/2" Drill

3/16" and 7/16" Drill Bits (7/16" bit must have shank turned down for 3/8" drill)

Masking Tape

Small High Speed Cutter/Wheel

Needle Nose Pliers

Tape Measure

Round File

Small Flat File

# MAR-K

RESTORATION AND CUSTOM PICKUP PARTS

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTION FOR HIDDEN TAILGATE LATCHES ON 48-85 DODGE HIGHSIDE TRUCKS

1. Check the alignment of the tailgate to the bedsides. If necessary adjust the position of the tailgate hinges.
2. Support the tailgate in the horizontal open position. (Mar-K's link assembly kit has already been installed on this tailgate and is a nice compliment to the hidden latches.)



3. Measure down from the top curl of the tailgate 1-1/8" on the inside and mark a line from the end of the tailgate curl inward approximately 4"



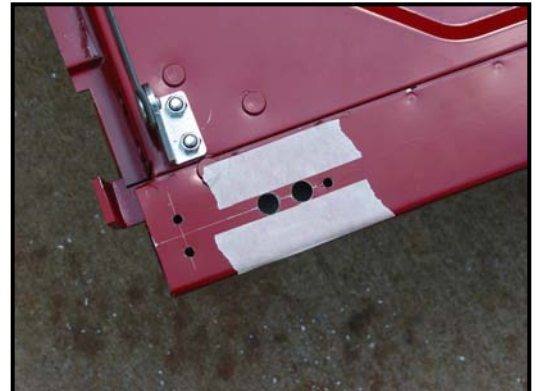
4. Measure in from the end of the curl  $5/8$ " and make a vertical line crossing the first line made in step #3. This line should be approximately 1" long with  $1/2$  of the line on each side of the first line. The lines should look like a cross.
5. Mark three points on the horizontal line at  $2-3/4$ ",  $3-3/8$ ", and  $3-7/8$ " respectively measuring from the end of the tailgate top curl. Also mark two points on the vertical line drawn in step #4. One each of these points should be  $3/8$ " above and below the horizontal line. Center-punch all five points.



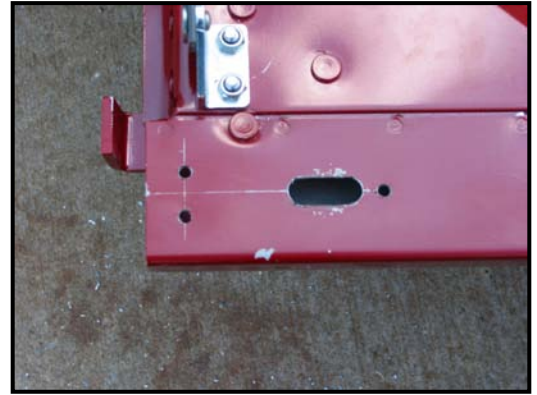
6. Drill the farthest point in on the tailgate with a  $1/8$ " drill and then a  $1/4$ " drill. Also drill the two points on the vertical line with the same diameter drill finishing with the  $1/4$ " drill. You may want to use a drill stop so that the drill point does not damage the tailgate on the outside when it breaks through.
7. Drill the other two points with a  $1/8$ ",  $1/4$ ", and finally a  $7/16$ " drill. It usually works better if you start with a small drill bit and work your way up to the  $7/16$ " diameter.



8. Place masking tape along the sides of the two  $7/16$ " diameter hole to create a cutting guide as shown. Using a small high speed cutting wheel, connect the two  $7/16$ " diameter holes by cutting the metal out between them. This will create the slot that the knob on the latch will slide in. Before finishing the second cut, grab hold of the scrap metal with pliers and keep it from falling inside the tailgate end.



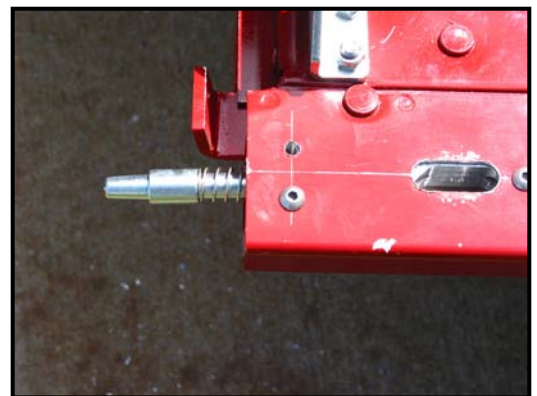
9. Clean up any burrs from the opening and straighten the sides of the slot if necessary with a file. Also clean up any burrs on the inside of the curl where the drill bits and cutter broke through with a flat file. It is important that the latch barrel or sleeve sit flat against the inner curl of the tailgate.



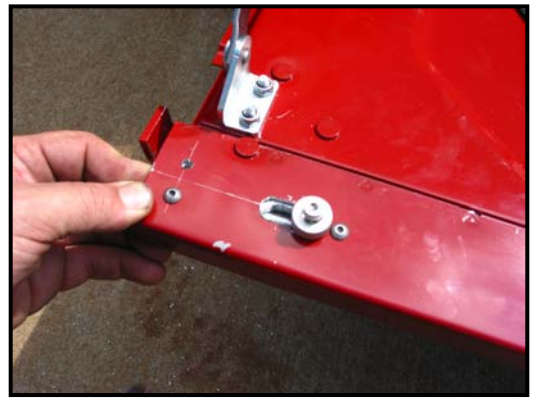
10. Slide the latch sleeve into the tailgate curl until the small threaded hole lines up with the small holes in the tailgate. Thread the 10-32 button-head screws through the tailgate into the latch sleeve and tighten with the supplied 1/8" hex wrench. Check the alignment of the slot in the tailgate with the slot in the latch sleeve. It does not matter which latch assembly you use per end of the tailgate as long as you keep the plungers with their respective latch barrels as they came in the kit.



11. Install the spring onto the plunger and slide it into the latch sleeve. A liberal amount of your favorite grease on the plunger is recommended before final assembly.



12. Push in on the plunger and position the aluminum knob with the stainless shoulder screw. Thread the screw into the plunger and tighten the screw with the 1/8" hex wrench.



13. Test the movement of the plunger by sliding it back and fourth. Also pull the plunger all the way back and twist the knob to lock it in the retracted position. If the knob rubs on the tailgate or will not retract far enough to lock, you will need to enlarge the slotted hole in the tailgate with a file until full movement is obtained.



14. Once the latches are installed on both ends of the tailgate, make sure both latches are retracted and shut the tailgate. Hold the tailgate in a vertical position. Observe where the hidden latch plunger will hit the bed side when released. Place a strip of masking tape in this area.



15. Release the latches by twisting the knobs. The latches have a pointed tip that will mark the masking tape for the position of the latch hole to be drilled in the bed side. Lower the tailgate and support it in the open position. Drill a 7/16" diameter hole. Again, it is better to start with a small drill and work up to the 7/16" diameter to ensure a more uniform round hole. If you have access to a step drill, these tend to make perfectly round holes in sheet metal.



16. Insert the supplied rubber grommets into the bedside holes.  
Close the tailgate and release the latches into the grommets.



You have successfully installed the hidden tailgate latches. During final assembly, be sure to use a quality thread locking compound on all threads.



Another Outstanding Part Manufactured in Oklahoma City, USA by



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