



**TOOL LIST FOR TAILGATE CHECK LINK STRAPS  
FOR 53-87 FORD FLARESIDE TRUCKS**

Vise Grip Clamps – C-clamps

Sharpie Marker

Ball Peen Hammer

Center Punch

3/8" or 1/2" Drill

3/16", 3/8" and 1/4" Drill Bits

Masking Tape

Small High Speed Cutter/Wheel

Needle Nose Pliers

5/32", 1/4" and 3/16" Allen Wrenches

Tape Measure

17/32" Drill Bit **(this part is available from MAR-K separately, if needed).**

Round File

Small Flat File

1/2" Open-end Wrench

# MAR-K

RESTORATION AND CUSTOM PICKUP PARTS

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAILGATE CHECK LINK STRAPS FOR 53-87 FORD FLARESIDE TRUCKS

1. Assemble the bed and make sure the box is square. Measure the distance between the bedsides at the floor level and the top. This width should be 49" for a 53-72 short bed and 54" for a 76-87 short bed and 54" for 53-79 long bed. Also measure cross wise from one front corner to the opposite rear corner in both directions. These measurements should be within 1/16" of each other.

2. Install the hinges and tailgate and make sure it is aligned to your satisfaction. A smooth tailgate has been used for this instruction but any stock tailgate will work.



3. Support the tailgate in the horizontal (open) position. Place the sheet metal template as shown on the front face of the tailgate even with the end of the tailgate. The template should be even with the bottom curl of the tailgate. Clamp the template in place being careful not to damage the outside of the tailgate surface.



4. Mark the tailgate through the four 1/8" diameter holes in the template. Repeat this procedure for the other end of the tailgate with the same template. Make sure to flip the template over to get a mirror image pattern for the opposite side.



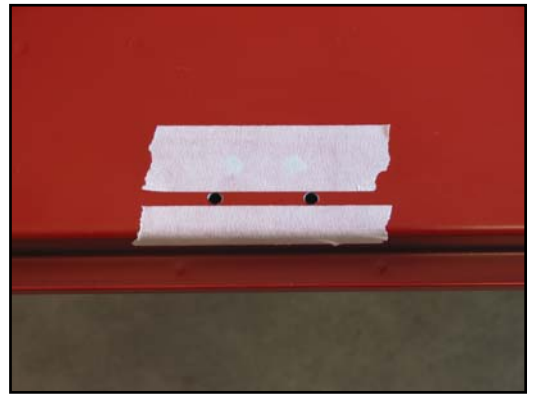
5. Center-punch these four locations on each end of the tailgate



6. Drill the outer-most holes on each end with a 3/16" diameter drill. Drill the two inner-most holes on each end of the tailgate with a 1/4" drill. Be careful to not damage the outer side of the tailgate with the drill point. You may choose to use a drill stop on the drill bit or wrap some masking tape on the bit to stop the drill from hitting the outside of the tailgate skin. Repeat for opposite end of the tailgate.



7. You need to cut a slot for the link assembly mounting bracket to fit through. Place masking tape on each side of the 3/16" diameter holes as shown. This will make it easier to see where to cut. Do both ends of the tailgate.



8. Using a high speed cutting wheel, carefully cut out the material between the two 3/16" diameter holes. We used a Dremmel tool for this with a reinforced cutting wheel. When you are almost finished cutting the last cut, grab hold of the scrap with a pair of pliers so that it does not fall into the tailgate. Remove any burrs with a small flat file and dress the opening to the tape lines.



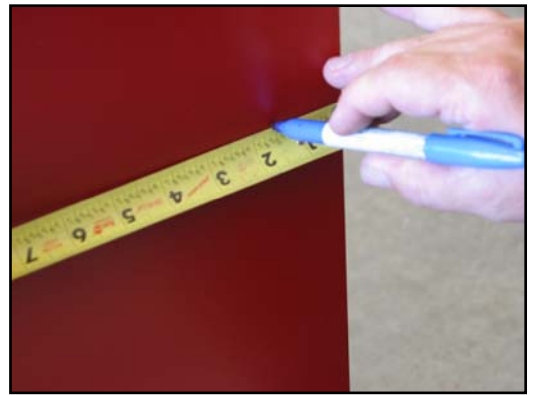
9. Insert the link assembly into the slotted hole. Attach the link assembly to the tailgate with two 1/4-20 x 3/8" button head screws. Tighten the screws with a 5/32" Allen wrench. It is important to notice that there is a left and right link assembly due to the pivot bracket of the link assembly. The offset part of the bracket where the rivet is should be at the bottom. This is the passenger side link shown installed.



10. Now you need to position the upper pivot for the link assembly. Fold the link assembly as it would be when the tailgate is shut and lift the tailgate to the closed position. The link should be hanging vertical. Using a 3/8" diameter bit in a drill, place the drill bit through the slotted end of the link assembly as shown. Lift the drill bit to the top of the slot. Lightly drill the bedside with the drill bit just to leave a mark. Do this for both bedsides.



11. Lower and support the tailgate once again. Measure in from the back edge of the bed side 1-9/16" at the same vertical position as the drill mark and make a mark. Center-punch this position. Drill this position on each bedside with a 1/4" drill bit. Now drill this hole to a final size of 17/32".



12. Test fit the threaded insert into the 17/32" diameter hole. Use a round file to enlarge the hole if the insert will not fit. Often, a drill will not make a perfectly round hole in sheet metal. Use the file to make the hole round. The insert must be installed so that its' flange is against the sheet metal surface of the bed side.



13. Special tools are available to squeeze the threaded inserts but we will show you how to do this without these special tools. Obtain the 5/16"-18 x 1-1/2" bolt and 5/16 hex nut supplied in the kit. Thread the hex nut about 1" onto the bolt. Place the bolt through the supplied flat washer and then through the 5/16" diameter hole at the bottom of the marking template from step #3. Next thread the insert onto the bolt with the flange of the insert towards the template finger tight against the template.



14. Place the insert into the hole in the bed side. Make sure to hold the insert flange tight against the bed side. Allow the template to rotate downward to the hinge area of the tailgate. This template will act as a handle to keep the insert from rotating when the nut is tightened.



15. While holding the bolt head steady with a 1/4" Allen wrench and continuing to hold the insert flange tight against the bed side, start turning the nut off of the bolt with a 1/2" wrench. This will pull the bolt outwards and start compressing the threaded insert. The hex nut will be fairly hard to turn, so be prepared to exert some force on the nut. Turn the nut until it will not turn any more and the insert will be fully installed. Now remove the bolt, hex nut, washer, and sheet metal handle.



When repeating this procedure on the driver's side, the template will be positioned against the base of the bed side. Protect this area with a scrap piece of cardboard or wood. If you need further explanation of this procedure, go to [www.mar-k.com](http://www.mar-k.com) and click on the Installation information on the home page. Scroll down to "Other helpful information" and click on "Threaded insert Information".

16. Supplied in the kit are 5/16"-18 shoulder screws and washers to act as upper pivots for the link assemblies. Place the bolts through the slotted end of the links. Then place the washer on the bolt. Thread these bolts into the threaded inserts. The washer keeps the link from scraping the bed side. Tighten these bolts with the 3/16" Allen wrench.



17. Raise the tailgate slowly to the closed position. The links should fold smoothly downward while closing. Supplied in the kit are two self-adhesive bumpers. Attach these bumpers where the link assembly will contact the tailgate when closed.



You have successfully installed the link assemblies. At final assembly, use a thread locking compound on all threaded areas to prevent them from coming loose. This kit is greatly complimented with our hidden tailgate latch which is Part # 102884 shown already installed.

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