

Volkswagen Cabriolet DIY Guide

Replacing the Front Struts & Mounts

This how-to was originally posted on ToplessRabbit.com/forums by "briano1234":
<http://www.toplessrabbit.com/forums/viewtopic.php?t=1783> .

Tools needed:

- Jack & jack stands
- Lug wrench
- 22mm deep socket and socket wrench
- 13mm deep socket
- Vise-Grips
- Spring compressor
- Punch and hammer

Step 1

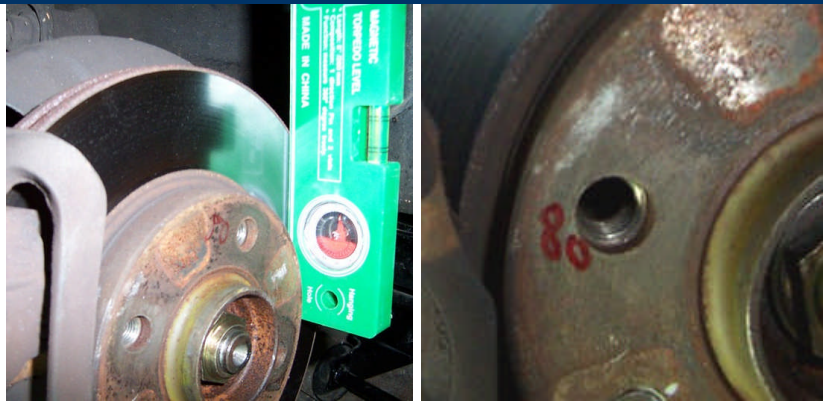


Loosen the lug bolts.

Jack the front of the car up and support it with jack stands.

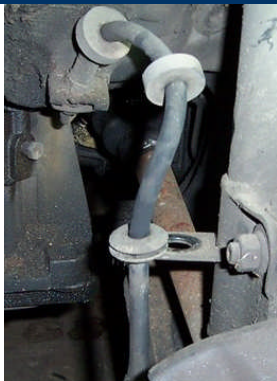
Remove the front wheels.

Step 2



Take your measuring tool for angles and record the angle of camber and write it on the disc in Sharpie, or on the tool.

Step 3



Remove the brake line from the holder. DO NOT PULL ON THE HOSE, pry it off.

Use the jack to support the suspension and brake assembly (when removing the strut, if these components are not supported, they will fall, potentially damaging these parts).

Step 4



Break the two camber strut-to-hub bolts loose.

Step 5



Remove the two 13mm bolts on the top.

Step 6



Break the torque on the top strut bolt, but **DO NOT REMOVE IT (LOOSEN ONLY)**.

Step 7



Take the two lower bolts out; you may have to persuade them a bit by leaving the nuts on and smacking the bolts out. If the bolts haven't been out in awhile they can corrode.

Step 8



Pull the strut assembly out of the car.

Step 9



Put your spring compressors on, 180-degrees apart.

Tighten them equally and when you can put a screwdriver between the top spring seat and the spring, and it moves freely, then you can start to remove the top nut.

Step 10



Strut assembly; good strut mount; bad strut mount.

Step 11



Remove the spring and set aside. To remove the strut cap nut, if you don't have a vise: Place the strut on the ground and with a drift-punch, hit the notched collar counter-clock wise. A few good smacks and the collar will come off.

Step 12



This car had an original strut, with the oil-filled cartridge.

Step 13



Thoroughly clean the strut tube; be sure to clean the weep hole (arrow) and threads.

Step 14



Insert the new cartridge in to the strut tube.

Step 15



Place the centering collar over the piston, and seat it against the cartridge.

Step 16



Screw the strut nut on and hand-tighten as tight as you can get it. Then, punch the strut nut in a clockwise direction until it stops moving.

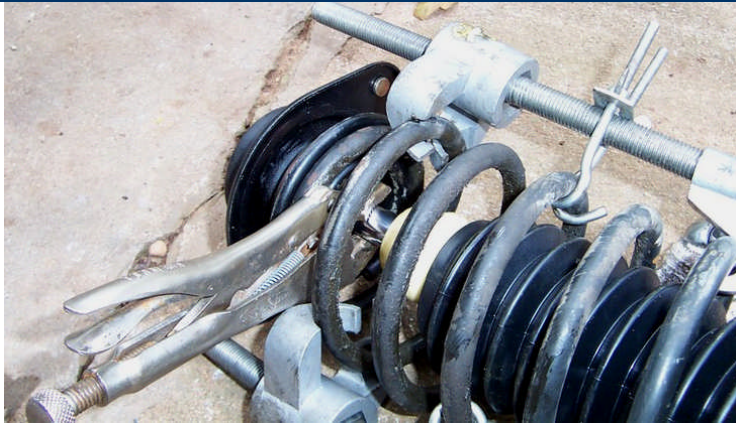
Step 17



Put the spring on.

Put on the top spring seat, followed by the strut mount; insert the bushing, then the washer and, lastly, place the nut on the piston and tighten until you can't turn it any more without spinning the piston.

Step 18



Release spring compressors equally and remove them.

Then pry the bump stop and dust cover down the shaft, this will allow you to place a pair of Vise-Grips at the very top of the shaft to hold it tight against the ground; this is in an area where the shock piston never reaches.

With the Vise-Grips firmly on the top-most of the shaft, you can now tighten the top strut mount to the 59 ft/lbs of torque that you need.

Step 19



Insert the assembly into the tower, and supporting the assembly with one hand, position the strut mount in the holes, and pushing up, spin a nut on a few threads. Then place the other nut on the strut mount and tighten fully.

Re-install the strut cap. If it's too loose, work a couple of O-rings around the center. This will lock them into place; works great if they are cracked too.

Step 20

- Place the bottom two bolts in and tighten a bit.
- Place your angle finder back on the rotor and adjust the top camber bolt to the desired angle of degree that you measured. Once you are there, hold the head of the bolt and tighten the nut being careful not to move the angle. Once that bolt is tight, then tighten the bottom bolt. I always insert the bolts in the direction of travel; I know that it is a bitch to adjust for the alignment guys, but that is what I have always done. Once you have the bolts tight, set the torque to 59 ft/lbs on each; be sure to double-check the angle.
- Replace the brake hose back into the slot. Place the wheel on the hub and tighten all the bolts. Jack the car up and remove the jack stands. Lower the car, finish tightening the lug bolts, replace the center cap, and clean up.

**** Remember, you are responsible for working on your car; Cabby-Info.com, "briano1234", ToplessRabbit.com, VAG, VWoA, or anyone else are not responsible if anything goes wrong while you are working on, in and under your car! Use this information at your own risk!****