

We start with pulling the bed off, then jack the truck up and secure it on jack stands. I put two in the front just behind the front tires. And two at the extended cab just before the frame curves up. Finally, two more at the very rear of the frame rails.

The first measurement you will need is the axle centerline. This is critical! This is the most important measurement on this install. If you do not get it right then the axle will not sit in the notch properly when the truck is lowered. Measure the distance from the rear of each frame rail to the axle. Mark this measurement on each rail. This is called axle centerline. And will be referred to as such in the rest of the article.

Now turn your attention to the notch plates. Measure across the top of the side plate and find center, mark that as well. With all four side plates marked center you are ready to place two side plates on the frame and clamp. Line up the center line of the side plate to the axle centerline. I used a square to line up the two marks. The bottom of the side plates should be flush with the bottom of the frame rail. (Fig. 1)

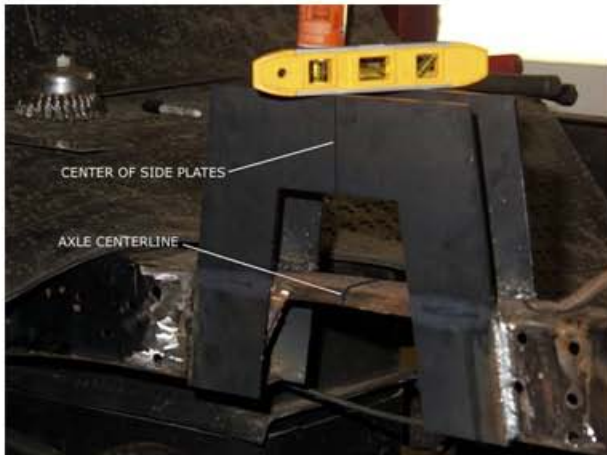


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

With a level check level across the two side plates shown in above picture. Once the two side plates are level across the frame rail now check level vertically on both side plates. (Fig. 2)

Once they are level in both directions you are ready to weld them to the frame rail. When the six welds on each plate are completed let the rail cool for a few minutes while you get ready to install the top cap. With the top cap in hand set it on the outside frame rail side plate. And mark the top cap where it contacts the top of the frame rail and trim to fit flush on the frame. Place the top cap on the frame now and position where it needs to be welded in. And weld the top cap to the side plates. (Fig. 3)

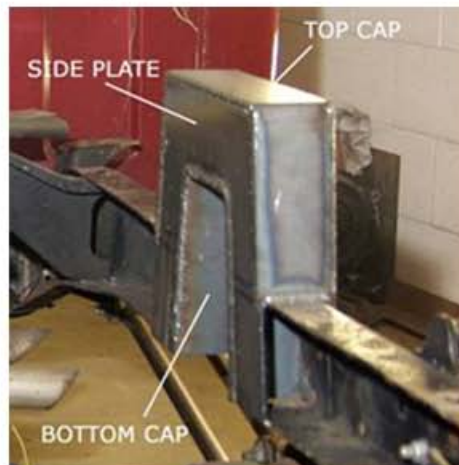


Fig. 3

After the top cap is welded in you are ready to cut the stock frame rail out. We used a Plasma cutter, but a customizer's best friend (saw-z-all) will work just fine. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 4

After you cut out the stock frame rail you can install the bottom cap. You may need to grind a little of the stock frame away for the bottom cap to fit properly. When the bottom cap sits flush against the side plates clamp it tight. Weld the bottom cap to the side plates. Upon completing this weld you are ready to clean up all the welds on the notch, and move to the other side and repeat the process.