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Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics

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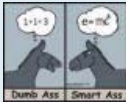


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Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics

by cohocarl » Sat Apr 26, 2003 5:58 am

*****This is a step-by-step explanation on how I installed my front sway bar. The process involves removing and re-installing significant structural and steering components on the car. Incorrect re-installment of these components could lead to steering failure, and result in serious injury to yourself and others. IF YOU ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR ABILITIES TO CORRECTLY (AND SAFELY) RE-ASSEMBLE YOUR CAR, TAKE IT TO A SHOP AND HAVE THEM DO IT!!!*****



cohocarl
Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

I did my own front sway bar install this A.M. It does take alot of time, but it actually was easier than I thought it would be.

First I loosened up the lugs on the wheels then jacked up the front and put it on jack stands, removed the wheels (and put under the car by the jackstands so if the jackstands fail....)

My Vibe is a 5-speed without ABS, so yours may have more garbage to work around.

I had read in a post that some people (including myself) was worried that the motor would need support from above, but it does not. You are removing bolts that hold a lower engine mount, but the remaining mounts hold the motor & tranny fine.

The first thing I did was look everything over, (including the instructions, but they aren't that helpful, pics are awful), and removed the 3 bolts and 3 nuts towards the middle of the "cradle". (see below)



After the above bolts/nuts removed, place a floor jack under the center of the cradle. Bring jack up close to the cradle, but don't put any pressure on it, you're only going to use the jack to lower the cradle.



(NOTE: Below, the Hotchkis instructions say to remove these 3 bolts/nuts on each side, but I have done this job twice without removing these bolts/nuts. Makes the job quicker if you don't. Just don't lower the lower cradle any further than you need to.)

Remove the 3 bolts/nut at the bottom of the spindle/lower suspension arm.



Now the most difficult part for me was loosening up the 4 bolts that hold your steering rack down to the cradle. These are accessed from above the cradle. The two on the passenger side, I removed from the engine compartment with 2 very long extensions, the driver's side front was the difficult one to get at. I believe these are also 17mm.

You only need to loosen the bolts up all the way out of the threads, but you don't need to bother removing them.



These two bolts on each side are very tight. An air impact wrench will be much safer to remove these bolts than a ratchet with a "cheater bar" because you could pull the car off of the jackstands. I have a wimpy air gun that wouldn't loosen one of them that I did carefully loosen with a ratchet. I loosened all 4, then removed the upper/more forward bolt on each side. These bolts are the only thing remaining holding up the cradle, so I loosened the rear bolts a ways, then

lowered the jack a little to see if everything was clearing.

Don't pull your car off of the jackstands removing these bolts!!!!

Carefully remove these 2 bolts on each side.

Engine cradle may now be lowered by easing jack down



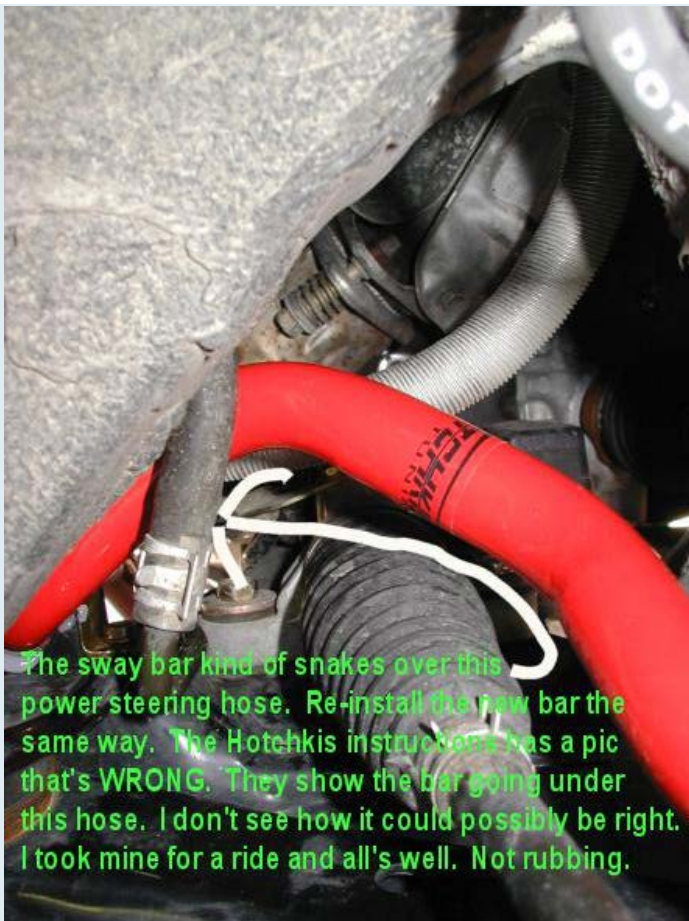
I then removed the rear bolts and lowered the cradle just enough to easily get at the 4 bolts that clamp down the sway bar, removed them, and then the bar. The passanger side of the bar snakes between a couple power steering hoses, so you need to be careful when removing/re-installing the bar. I pulled the driver's side back out of the way, then snaked the passanger's side out of the power steering hoses.

This is the farthest I lowered my cradle.

Remove the 2 bolts that clamp down the sway bar on each side and remove old swaybar.



The Hotchkis instructions have a picture of the sway bar installed under this power steering hose. The stock bar was installed OVER this hose. I attempted to install like the instructions showed, but it would not fit, so I put it over the hose like the stock one was, and it fits fine.



The sway bar kind of snakes over this power steering hose. Re-install the new bar the same way. The Hotchkis instructions has a pic that's WRONG. They show the bar going under this hose. I don't see how it could possibly be right. I took mine for a ride and all's well. Not rubbing.

I just installed the new bar in reverse order. The Hotchkis bar has two holes in each end of the bar which are two different "stiffness" settings. I put it in the rearward, inner hole which is the stiffer setting.

I was worried I'd have problems with the cradle not aligning up with everything, but I didn't have any problems. Everything bolted up just fine. I re-installed everything finger tight, then went back and torqued them down. REMEMBER TO TIGHTEN *EVERYTHING* BACK UP!! I torqued all the nuts/bolts to what the instructions indicated. (with exception to the driver's side forward steering rack bolt. It's close enough...)

I took the Progress rear bar off and put on the Hotchkis bar to keep everything balanced. See <http://forums.genvibe.com/zerothread?id=1153> for a rear bar install.

I've only took it for a few mile drive, but it seems to REALLY improve the handling of the car. Most of my daily driving is on I-75, and I was very disappointed with how the car got tossed around by the wind. It's a little windy today and I didn't even notice it, other than hearing it. 😊 This car should handle like this from the factory. 🙌 Will post a follow up after I have a chance to drive it more.

If you are thinking of doing it yourself, and you are pretty good with a wrench, I wouldn't be too afraid of tackling it. It does take alot of time. I started at 10am, and came in to get cleaned up after changing both bars at 1:45pm. If you don't have some decent jackstands, floor jack, or a safe, level, concrete place to work on it, I wouldn't recommend it though. I have an air compressor and an air impact gun which speeded up the job alot.

Take your time, and work safe. Don't forget the safety glasses also.

Carl

04 Saturn Vue 2.2L Ecotec, 5-speed,
01 Stratus R/T Coupe 5-speed (wife's car)
85 Corvette 268 CompCam, 882 heads, FlatTops, 24lb injectors, Hooker Aerochamber true duals, 58mm TB, Holley AFPR, Siamesed intake base, Polished TPI.



Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)



by rasermon » Sat Apr 26, 2003 6:53 am

Good job done and great post. 🍷
Coho, sorry I wasn't around to give you a hand with your install. Was down state helping TritonGT install his CAI.



rasermon
Posts: 2157
Joined: Mon Jul 29, 2002 10:07 am

Satellite 03 GT

Retirement ----> Moderator for Genvibe.com 2002 - 2007

A fact of life: After Monday and Tuesday even the calendar says (removed)



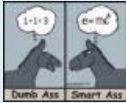
Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (rasermon)



by cohocarl » Sat Apr 26, 2003 6:57 am

Quote:

Good job done and great post. 🍷
Coho, sorry I wasn't around to give you a hand with your install. Was down state helping TritonGT install his CAI.



cohocarl
Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

The wife took the boy down to her mother's this a.m., so I thought I might as well give it a shot while I had the time. Let me know the next time you are heading over this way and you can take it for a spin and let me know what you think.

Carl

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars,
04 Saturn Vue 2.2L Ecotec, 5-speed,
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Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)



by Lorin » Sat Apr 26, 2003 9:49 am

Wow! This post rocks! Makes me (almost) feel like doing this myself! I think I may still let that local speed shop do it for "a bill and a quarter" (They all talked with their hands like on supr-tunr tv!). While they do the work, I'll sit in their (very nice) waiting room and prepare for a network install (billable hours to the customer of course! 😊) I'll come out ahead of the game financially while keeping my eye on them as they work.
Cohocarl - did you have any trouble getting the u-shaped brackets with the bushings mounted back on the car? The speed-shop said they had trouble on the last one they installed.

Lorin
Posts: 270
Joined: Tue Jan 21, 2003 11:31 am

Lorin
2003 Pontiac Vibe GT, Neptune-mono, moons & tunes, power package, side impact airbags, rear seat covers, bumper protector, cargo mat.
Mods installed: TRD exhaust, TRD stb,
Mods removed: TRD CAI - annoyed by CEL

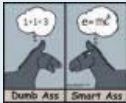


Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (Lorin)



by cohocarl » Sat Apr 26, 2003 10:18 am

Quote:



did you have any trouble getting the u-shaped brackets with the bushings mounted back on the car? The speed-shop said they had trouble on the last one they installed.

None. I put on a little of the grease they supply, and the polyurethane bushings slipped over the bar fine, and the u-shaped bracket fit bushing and the mounting holes fine.

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars, **04 Saturn Vue** 2.2L Ecotec, 5-speed, **01 Stratus R/T Coupe** 5-speed (wife's car) **85 Corvette** 268 CompCam, 882 heads, FlatTops, 24lb injectors, Hooker Aerochamber true duals, 58mm TB, Holley AFPR, Siamesed intake base, Polished TPI.



cohocarl
Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)

by Hawke » Sun Apr 27, 2003 12:28 am

Excellent Post! This post made me add a pole to the suggestions for genvibe. This is one of the best posts on genvibe and I thought that it should be put into a different section that is more visible so that it can be referenced more. I think it would improve genvibe by gathering these first hand, well documented posts into one area. Hopefully only a moderator would be able to move the posts there.

<http://forums.genvibe.com/zerothread?id=3799>

Hawke
Posts: 74
Joined: Sun Sep 01, 2002 4:04 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (Hawke)

by rasermon » Sun Apr 27, 2003 12:38 am

I agree with you Hawke. I'm sure Nick or Derek will make this a sticky. 😊
OT: Cohocarl would make a excellent moderator for this forum (Handling, Suspension & Brakes).

Satellite 03 GT

Retirement ----> Moderator for Genvibe.com 2002 - 2007

A fact of life: After Monday and Tuesday even the calendar says (removed)



rasermon
Posts: 2157
Joined: Mon Jul 29, 2002 10:07 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)

by nfrosty » Sun Apr 27, 2003 1:23 am

Exellent post. Wish it would have been up before I started installing my front bar. Would have saved me some time. Your right the instruction from Hotchkis are weak at best.

One suggestion though. I found it much easier to get the rack and pinions 4 bolts off if you disconnect the 2 end bolts of the sway bar first. This allows the sway bar end to pivot up and down making it a little easier to get at the steering bolts behind it.

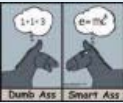
nfrosty
Posts: 6
Joined: Sun Mar 30, 2003 4:42 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (silverawd26)

by cohocarl » Sun Apr 27, 2003 7:01 am

If someone brings out some decent struts, I may invest in them and some springs, but it seems to be fine for now. I just took it down to Menards with a 4x8 trailer and picked up a new sandbox and 200lbs of sand and it handled great. 😊

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars, **04 Saturn Vue** 2.2L Ecotec, 5-speed, **01 Stratus R/T Coupe** 5-speed (wife's car) **85 Corvette** 268 CompCam, 882 heads, FlatTops, 24lb injectors, Hooker Aerochamber true duals, 58mm TB, Holley AFPR, Siamesed intake base, Polished TPI.



cohocarl
Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics

by [Lorin](#) » Sun Apr 27, 2003 9:44 am

Only three days remaining on the current sale Hotchkis has going on and I'm still undecided.....
Cohocarl - let us know how it works on the x-way.... if its a "little" better, "somewhat" better... or "killer!!! 🐾 "

Lorin
2003 Pontiac Vibe GT, Neptune-mono, moons & tunes, power package, side impact airbags, rear seat covers, bumper protector, cargo mat.
Mods installed: TRD exhaust, TRD stb,
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[Lorin](#)

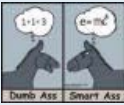
Posts: [270](#)
Joined: Tue Jan 21, 2003 11:31 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (Lorin)

by [cohocarl](#) » Sun Apr 27, 2003 9:48 am

Quote:

Only three days remaining on the current sale Hotchkis has going on and I'm still undecided.....
Cohocarl - let us know how it works on the x-way.... if its a "little" better, "somewhat" better... or "killer!!! 🐾 "



[cohocarl](#)

Posts: [1478](#)
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

O-Tay! I'll post A.S.A.P. I'd like Rasermon to take it for a spin for a 2nd opinion also.

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars,
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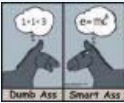


Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (silverawd26)

by [cohocarl](#) » Sun Apr 27, 2003 10:25 am

Quote:

I know I was impressed with his GT and CAI he installed.



[cohocarl](#)

Posts: [1478](#)
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

Sounds pretty sweet doesn't it🐾

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars,
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Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)

by [Vibe](#) » Sun Apr 27, 2003 10:50 am

Very well done job not only on your Vibe but a great post as well.
I would recommend that you have your wheel alignment checked since everything was disturbed from the factory set position.
At my automobile plant (Cadillac) .Whenever a cradle is dropped for an after build problem or repair --the car always goes to be Re Toed.
Because everything does have a little leeway slop.
I hope to talk to you personally and see your job at the Michigan get together. James



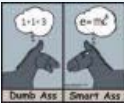
[Vibe](#)

Posts: [633](#)
Joined: Sun Sep 29, 2002 6:05 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (Vibe)

by [cohocarl](#) » Sun Apr 27, 2003 5:45 pm

Quote:



I would recommend that you have your wheel alignment checked...

Yes, I thought about that. You are removing and re-installing the framework of the front of the vehicle, and it could change the alignment when re-installed.

Quote:

I hope to talk to you personally and see your job at the Michigan get together. James

I'm on mandatory O.T. at work, trying to get my house fixed up so we can list it for sale, purchasing a new house, AND a very active 19 month old boy, but I've already discussed the meet with my wife and she's O-tay with me going 😊😊😊 I'm looking forward to meeting everyone also.

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars,
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cohocarl

Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)

by Psychobroker » Tue Aug 05, 2003 5:28 pm

Sorry to bump and old thread, but it's an awesome reference tool (thanks again cohocarl). Mods should sticky this post. Unfortunately, none of the images came out...do you still have them somewhere coho? thanks again. This makes 2 DIY posts of yours I intend on using, starting w/ your speaker install this weekend 🙌

★ 2003 Vibe GT ★



<http://www.cardomain.com/ride/522631>



Psychobroker

Posts: 2492
Joined: Wed Jul 16, 2003 6:09 am

Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (Psychobroker)

by cohocarl » Tue Aug 05, 2003 5:55 pm

Quote:

This makes 2 DIY posts of yours I intend on using, starting w/ your speaker install this weekend 🙌

Thanks, glad they come in handy!

I don't know why the pics aren't coming through on your end, they seem to be coming through fine here. Could have been a temporary problem with the server they are on.(?) Still not seeing them?

Sold 6/16/04 **03 Vibe** 5-speed, Hotchkis Sway Bars & Springs, Hooker Aerochamber, Panasonic Stereo, Hitch, Silverstars,
04 Saturn Vue 2.2L Ecotec, 5-speed,
01 Stratus R/T Coupe 5-speed (wife's car)



cohocarl

Posts: 1478
Joined: Mon Jul 01, 2002 9:45 am

85 Corvette 268 CompCam, 882 heads, FlatTops, 24lb injectors, Hooker Aerochamber true duals, 58mm TB, Holley AFPR, Siamesed intake base, Polished TPI.



Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics (cohocarl)



by JSart » Fri Nov 02, 2007 1:37 am

I know this is an old thread, but it helped me with my front sway bar install last night. Took a little more then 2 hours, but hey I'm slow. Results - great. Car rides better even in a straightline. Cornering is up and more stable. More noticable control. GM should sorce out these bars for every car. Installed the rear bar the other day but the real difference is felt after one installs the front bar. Thanks for all you help on the thread.
Joel



JSart

Posts: 5
Joined: Fri Jul 27, 2007 12:14 am

by StephenC » Wed Oct 06, 2010 10:53 am



Wow, thanks for the post. An amateur like me can do this by myself. Thanks man, keep posting instructions that amateur like me can easily get it like this post for Sway Bar.



StephenC

Posts: 7
Joined: Mon Oct 04, 2010 6:20 pm



Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics



by davhamm » Sun Aug 04, 2013 6:35 pm

Anyone know if these are still available somewhere?

davhamm

Posts: 2
Joined: Sat Feb 09, 2013 8:02 pm



Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics



by RustyIndian » Wed Jul 20, 2016 9:27 am

Hey guys, newbie to forum, great stuff and thanks for sharing this daunting job!

Question --- my rusty and dusty Vibe is slowly (as my deflated wallet allows) coming back from the previous owners neglect -- the sway bar install caught my eye -- is it possible to sneak in new bushings (not including the bar removal) with out dropping quite so much of the engine cradle?

Thanks big --

RustyIndian

Posts: 1
Joined: Wed Jul 20, 2016 7:43 am



Re: Front Sway Bar Installation w/ pics



by jolt » Fri Jul 22, 2016 12:42 pm

Yes, the inner stabilizer bar bushes should be slit on the side and can be removed from the bar and new ones install. This is shown in the factory manual.

jolt

Posts: 305
Joined: Sun Mar 02, 2014 2:07 am



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