



ON THE LEVEL

INSTALLING FABTECH'S 2-INCH LEVELING KIT

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THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS TO LIKE ABOUT THE FORD F-250 SUPER DUTY PICKUP: IT'S BIG. IT'S POWERFUL. IT'S BUILT LIKE A TANK, AND DIESEL FOLKS LIKE ITS POWER STROKE POWER. IT ALSO HAS A CURIOUS ATTITUDE. NO, WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT ITS MENTAL Demeanor; WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE FRONT END SITS LOWER THAN THE REAR WHEN UNLOADED. YES, DEPENDING UPON THE SUSPENSION OF A PARTICULAR F-250, IT CAN HAVE A DECIDEDLY "STINKBUG" APPEARANCE WHEN SITTING ON LEVEL GROUND. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY GREAT IF YOU ARE RUNNING AROUND WITH A LOAD IN THE BED, BUT UNLOADED IT IS A LOOK THAT NO ONE WANTS. THANKFULLY, THE CURE FOR THIS DROOP IS AN EASY ONE, AND AN UPGRADE THAT THOSE AT HOME CAN EASILY CORRECT.



01. Simplicity is the key with the Fabtech 2-inch spacer leveling kit. Note that the new Fabtech shocks do not come with the leveling kit, only the spacer and related hardware, but they are highly recommended as a replacement for the stock units.

SOURCES

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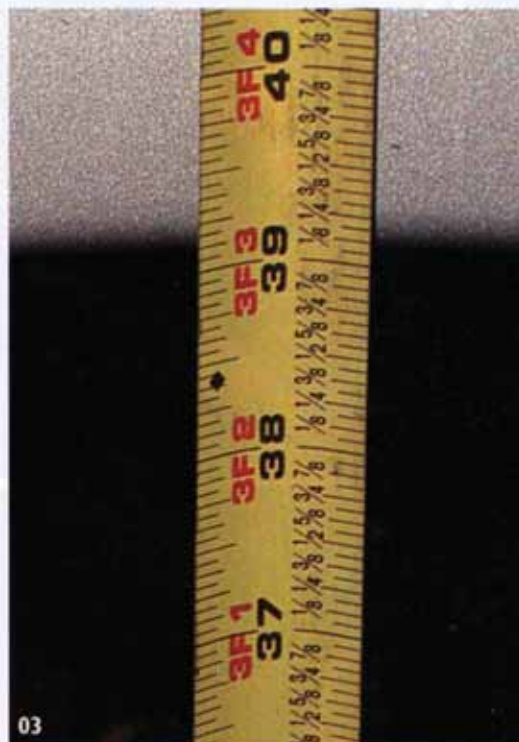
4 WHEEL PARTS PERFORMANCE CENTERS
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Fabtech Motorsports is a big name in aftermarket suspension systems, especially in off-road circles. Although its lift kits are not an off-road-only upgrade, Fabtech probably sells as many systems that see only street use as it does serious off-road systems to help you get to places you didn't even know existed. In short, Fabtech lift kits are a must-have for many truck owners. For those of you who simply want to get your new Ford on the straight and level, the company also has what you need.

Fabtech's solution to this problem is what the company calls its 2-inch spacer leveling kit. As stated, it is easy to install, even for those of you who have limited tools. All it takes is a large floor jack, a pair of sturdy jackstands and the basic tools that most garage mechanics have on hand. But note that care must be taken, as the Ford



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02 There is no doubt that the big Ford is sturdy, but it also has a bit of a nose-down attitude. To relieve that stinkbug look is easier than you would think.

03 The tale of the tape shows that from the ground to the upper edge of the wheelwell measures 39 inches exactly.

is a large vehicle, and it's much heavier than any car you would be working on in the driveway, so approach your work accordingly and with the correct support. Remember, any time coil springs are removed, there is the chance of one getting away from you, so if you do not have a spring compressor, rent one. If you are going to do this job yourself, be aware of what can happen, be cautious and, above all, use the right tools.

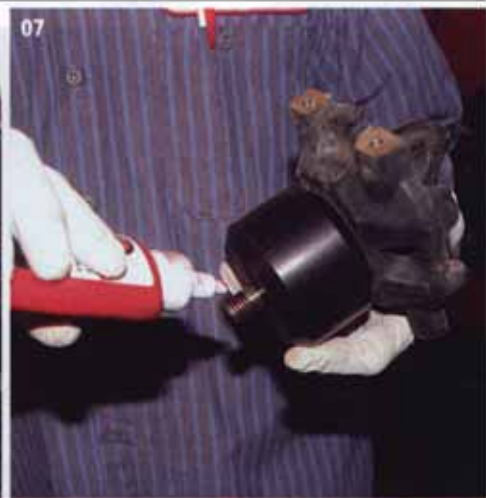
On the other hand, you can have the install done at a capable shop, such as your local four-wheel specialty shop or any one of the many 4 Wheel Parts Performance Centers. We were on hand at the Santa Ana, California, location as Chuy "Bizarro" Pizarro installed the Fabtech 2-inch spacer leveling kit on a customer's vehicle. He has a lot of experience with this type of work, so he had the install done in short order. As much as we like lying on a cold garage floor with a couple of tons of truck suspended over our heads, you at home may want to go the route of having a pro do the work.

Anyway, follow along as Pizarro gets the Ford to ride on a level playing field. **DB**



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04 *IT'S TIME TO GET WRENCHIN'. THE FIRST STEP IS TO REMOVE THE SHOCKS AND THE END LINKS FOR THE ANTISWAY BAR. FABTECH ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE BRAKE CALIPERS BE REMOVED, BUT THE INSTALL SHOWED THAT THIS ISN'T REALLY NEEDED. IF YOU DO REMOVE THE CALIPERS, BE SURE TO HANG THEM WITH ZIP TIES FROM THE FRAME OR SOME OTHER FORM, BUT DO NOT ALLOW THEM TO HANG FROM THE HOSES AS DAMAGE COULD OCCUR TO THEM OR TO THE FITTINGS.*



05. The electrical wire for the antilock brakes is also removed from its support mounts. This is to allow better access and to keep any harm from coming to the wire. **06.** With the arms lowered the spring can come out, although caution should be taken whenever the springs are worked on so that they don't fly out and cause damage to the walls (not to mention you). **07.** For safety's sake, a few drops of Loctite or other thread-locking compound should be used. **08.** The assembly is installed. **09.** Fabtech says that the hardware should be torqued to 80 lb-ft. **10.** The stock hose mount is attached to the new bracket. **11.** A new bracket is also supplied for the upper hose mount. It seemed to be easier to mount the new bracket to the hose mount first. **12.** With the A-arm lowered the spring is installed. Note that it may take a pry bar to get the spring back in place. **13.** There is a "stop" that the end of the spring needs to be aligned to. This is important, so make sure that the spring is in the proper position.



14. IN ORDER FOR THE NEW FABTECH SHOCKS TO FIT, A SMALL PIECE (ABOUT 1/4 INCH) OF THE OUTER EDGE OF THE LOWER SHOCK MOUNT NEEDS TO BE REMOVED.



15. A die grinder equipped with a cutting wheel makes quick work of this, but for those of you at home a Sawzall can be used. 16. Always be sure to hit the cut area with a coat of paint. This will keep any rust from forming on the exposed metal. 17. Fabtech recommends that for a stock look its FTS7192 front shocks be used for this application, although there are also longer shocks available for those who want to add a few inches of lift. 18. A spacer is put in place between the shock eyelet and the outer mount. 19. With the reattachment of the antilock brake wire, the end links and the caliper, the job is done. Note that the easiest way to reattach the end links is for the truck to be back on the ground, where the weight will get them back into position. 20. The job is done. In a few hours all of the Fabtech pieces have been installed.



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A quick measurement with the tape shows that the Fabtech kit did indeed add 2 inches to the height of the vehicle.

22. WITH THE TRUCK BACK ON THE GROUND AND THE END LINKS ATTACHED, THE NOSE-HEAVY LOOK OF THE FORD IS GONE, AND IT NOW SITS LEVEL AND TRUE.

