

1955-57 FLOOR SHIFT COLUMN CONVERSION FOR 605, 670 & DELPHI POWER STEERING INSTALLATION



Randy Irwin - Technical Writer

Randy has been involved in the Chevy parts business for over 25 years. He is a wizard at creating, making and modifying custom parts for Chevys.

When an aftermarket power steering box like a 605, 670 or Delphi has been installed on a Tri-Five Chevy, you run out of room for the required flex coupler between the steering column and the steering box. An ididit aftermarket column is designed so that when it is installed it is flush with the firewall giving plenty of room for the coupler, but not everyone wants to install an aftermarket column. The original steering column mast jacket protrudes through the firewall into the engine compartment about 3-1/2". In order to use the original column it must be shortened. If the original column is going to be used with an automatic transmission and column shift, kit P/N 53-400 may be used. Refer to August 2005 Chevy Classics magazine or www.classicchevy.com for instructions. If the column is going to be used with a floor shift automatic or manual transmission, kit P/N 53-401 is just the ticket. This kit may be used with original automatic or manual transmission steering columns.



Parts Needed:

53-401 Floor Shift Steering Column Conversion

53-160 Steering Shaft For Shortened Column

53-104 Lower Steering Column Clamp Assembly

To order parts call 1-800-456-1957 or visit ClassicChevy.com

Tools Needed:

Welder
3/8" Wrench
1/2" Wrench
File
Saw

Time Frame:

2-Hours



Photo #1: With the power steering box and coupler installed there is only about 1" of clearance between the coupler and firewall.

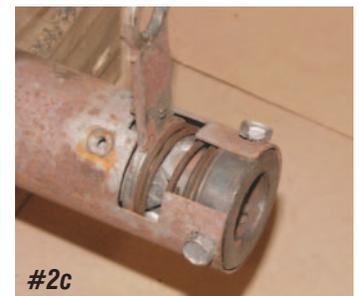


Photo #2a & 2b & 2c & 2d & 2e: The mast jacket may be removed from the car as an assembly. For a "how-to" on the mast jacket refer to the instructions for part **53-22** or **53-23** at www.classicchevy.com. With the top half of the mast jacket disassembled we can now move to the bottom end. Remove the shifter detent which is held to the mast jacket with two small bolts. Next remove the three larger bolts that hold the lower bushing into the bottom of the mast jacket tube. Remove the large spring and the shift tube from the mast jacket.



#3a



#3b



#3c



#3d

Photo #3a & 3b & 3c & 3d: The mast jacket and shift tube both need to be shortened to the same length. Using a chop saw or band saw, cut the bottom of the mast and shift tube off to exactly 27-1/4" overall length.



Photo #4: After cutting the shift tube and mast jacket, use a file and remove any burrs. The new bushing in the kit must fit true into the mast jacket and around the shift tube.



#5a



#5b

Photo #5a & 5b & 5c: The steel bushing in kit P/N 53-401 will fit tightly around the shift tube and into the mast jacket. This will center the shift tube perfectly, making the shift collar at the top of the mast jacket align correctly.



#5c



#6a



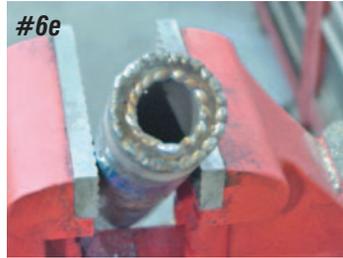
#6b



#6c



#6d



#6e

Photo #6a & 6b & 6c & 6d & 6e: First, weld the bushing to the outer mast jacket tube. Next, install the shift tube from the top of the mast jacket and into the new bushing. With the shift tube flush at the bottom of the mast jacket it should

also be flush at the top. Before welding the shift tube to the new lower bushing, install the shift collar at the top. This will make sure the shift tube is true inside the mast jacket.

Photo #7: Using a grinder and file, clean up the welds on the mast jacket and shift tube. Just a little body work and the new shortened mast jacket assembly are ready to be reassembled.



#8a



#8b



#8c

Photo #8a & 8b & 8c: With the mast jacket shortened, the new steering shaft P/N 53-160 is used to connect the steering box coupler to the steering wheel. This new shaft will protrude out the bottom of the mast jacket the proper amount to connect to the steering coupler at the bottom and out of the top of the mast jacket to connect to the steering wheel. This shaft will also prevent you from having to destroy an original steering box in order to rob the shaft from it.



Photo #9a & 9b & 9c: The mast jacket will now be flush with the firewall. The stock mast jacket clamp that was bolted on the front side of the firewall will no longer work. **P/N 53-104** lower mast jacket clamp bolts to the inside of the firewall to hold the lower part of the mast jacket in place.

Photo #10: With the mast jacket in place, steering shaft **P/N 53-160** may be installed. This shaft is held to the lower flex coupler with a set screw and lock nut. With the shaft attached to the coupler, the steering wheel may be installed.



Photo #11a & 11b: Since this car has a floor shifter, the shift collar is fully inoperable. If you wish, you may remove the old shift handle boss from the collar and with a little body work it can be made to look like a shift lever was never there. Good luck! 