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Power Assist Steering For Your Ford F-100 Pickup.

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Text and photos by Earl and Diane Davis

Factory production Ford F-100 pickups were equipped with "Armstrong" power steering in the form of a 17.5-inch steering wheel and 16 to 1 steering gear ratio. Some long-time owners (who look like Popeye the sailor man from the waste up) tell how they would rather get a ticket than attempt to park their trucks in a parallel parking space.

Hand-over-hand right turns from the passenger's seat are common and a steering knob can be a lethal weapon when the steering free-wheels back to center after a turn. Needless to say, straight front axle trucks need power steering.

Our search for two-finger power steering lead us to Classic Performance Products in Buena Park, CA. Follow along as we install a Classic Performance Products' power steering assist kit on an F-100.



1) Classic Performance Products' F-100 power steering assist kit (part number 5356PSK) includes a new tie rod, pitman arm and drag link. The directional valve is part of the drag link assembly and the slave cylinder is attached to the tie rod. This is a power assist system similar to the factory units installed on mid-year Corvettes and early Mustangs.



4) Loosely install the new tie rod with the free end of the slave cylinder pointing toward the passenger's side of the truck. Then remove the rear U-bolt that holds the axle to the leaf spring.



8) Adjust tow-in by rotating the tie rod tube. Tighten all fasteners and install safety cotter pins in each steering joint. Then "center" the rod-end of the slave cylinder using a measurement included in the installation instructions. With the wheels straight, the rod should be extended a distance equal to 1/2 of its full travel.



9) A shim kit and installation instruction included with the kit is needed to lower the operating pressure of a stock GM pump to acceptable tolerances.



2) The first step is to remove the factory tie rod from the truck. Then adjust the rod ends so the new tie rod is the same length as the original making sure the tube is centered between the rod ends.



3) The factory drag link and pitman arm are removed and separated. The original ball joining the two (ARROW) must be used to connect the new drag link to the new pitman arm.



5) Next attach the slave cylinder anchor plate to the axle using the long U-bolt included in the kit.



6) The ends of the U-bolt are trimmed flush with the nuts to keep the installation neat and clean.



7) The new pitman arm and drag link replaces the original assembly in like fashion. If you disconnect the hoses from either the directional valve or the slave cylinder, make sure they are reconnected in their original locations. These are LEFT and RIGHT steering hoses and therefore cannot be crossed.



An optional adjustable proportioning/bypass valve available from CPP is mandatory if you are powering the system with anything other than a factory GM power steering pump. However, the adjustable prop valve is a recommended option for all systems. The valve controls the amount of power assist by allowing a varying amount of fluid to bypass to sump. Mount the proportioning/bypass valve in an inconspicuous location inside the engine compartment. Make sure the hoses are a safe distance from the exhaust system or other heat source. The pressure and return hoses leading to the directional valve are connected to one side of the adjustable proportioning valve as shown. The pressure and return hoses leading to the power steering pump are attached to the opposite side of the valve. A power steering pump is not supplied in the kit. The proportioning/bypass valve will allow the system to be connected to any factory production power steering pump.

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