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Forum Technical (VW & Audi) Suspension Tuning How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV

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Thread: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV

RabbitsKin • 05-09-2005 08:54 AM [Reply](#) #1

Member
Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003
Location: Winchester, VA
Posts: 9,372
Vehicles: Various VWs

How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV

I did some searching and couldn't find what I was looking for, so here is a how-to on replacing the hydraulic-bonded rear axle bushings in a MKIV.

Why do this at all: Some MKIVs came with an oil-filled bushing which can crack and leak over time, causing clunks and poor handling. Mine weren't leaking, but they were cracked and the car is pushing 100K miles. I was adding bigger rear brakes and a sway bar at the same time, so I decided to just remove the axle from the car. I can't see how this could be done with the axle still in the car, but some people claim to have done it.

Why do this yourself: I already had the axle out of the car, so I figured it would be no sweat to have the machine shop press out the bushings. I was wrong. They took one look at it and said they'd never be able to maneuver it the right way in the press. I called the VW dealership and they said they farm the work out to another local machine shop. I called them and they claimed they'd never done one. I figured I better do it myself since I don't have all month to get this done. If you have access to a place that is willing and able to press them out / in for you, I would recommend it.

Replacement Part: Originally this was a non-replaceable item, just get a new beam if you need new bushings 🤦. Now the replacement part is: 1J0501541C. I ordered mine from <http://www.worldimpex.com>, I think they came to around \$60 for the pair. I asked about different versions of the bushing, i.e. an Audi TT bushing or a 337 bushing. The part number listed above is the same for all MKIVs, including the TT. It is a "bonded rubber mount", has no oil inside, and looks like this:



Tools you will need for this job:

- 1) A decent-sized cold chisel, and a Big Hammer, like this:



- 2) A garden-variety hacksaw with a removable blade, like this:



- 3) A drill with about a 1/4" bit
- 4) basic hand tools, air is nice, but not necessary
- 5) I didn't think I would need this, but it turned out to be the case -- a Big Honking C-Clamp, this one has at least an 8.5" throat. Oh, and a couple of scraps of wood:

**Remove Axle:**

- 1) Jack up car and remove wheels, obviously. Don't forget jack stands.
- 2) Disconnect brake lines, e-brake cables, and shocks (I left them dangling from the top mounts). Rotate the axle down and rest the rotors on the ground. Coil springs should almost fall out at this point.
I removed my calipers, rotors, and stub axles also, because they are getting replaced. This made handling the axle beam easier, but not necessary if you are just doing the bushings
- 3) Remove pivot bolt and nut, which goes through each bushing. The inner fender liner is in the way, but you can bend it back rather than removing it. You might want to support the axle in the center with a jack so it doesn't come dropping down as you take out the second bolt.

Remove Old Bushings:

- 1) With the axle on the ground, drill a couple of holes in the bushing to drain out the oil. Let it all drain out, you don't want it splattering around when you're using your Big Hammer.
- 2) With the chisel and Big Hammer, go to work on the lip of the bushing, driving it in the direction of the bushing on the other side, like this:



After a couple of hits it will start to look like this:



Keep driving it until you have it out. No need to burn it out with a torch, making a huge mess in the process.

3) Now you have to remove the metal sleeve that was around the bushing. It looks like this:



Take apart the hacksaw, put the blade through the hole, and cut one slot in the sleeve *carefully*. With the axle standing up, the bushing housing is angled perfectly for this type of easy cutting. You want to cut through the sleeve, but not into the housing:



4) One slot is all that is needed to relieve pressure on the sleeve, allowing you to pound it out with the chisel:



Here is what the old bushing and sleeve look like:

And the empty housing:

5) Repeat on the other side, stand back and admire your work. My axle looked like a mess, so I borrowed a friend's sand blaster and went to work. After blasting and priming, it looked like this:



Just a little inspiration for you in case you're wondering why you tackled this job :biggrin: .

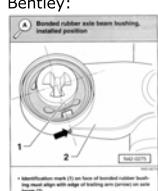
6) Go put your new bushings in the freezer.

Install New Bushings:

This part turned out to be a lot more difficult than I anticipated. I'm not sure if freezing the bushings did any good at all. Maybe the freezer wasn't cold enough or they weren't in there long enough.

1) Take new bushings out of the freezer. Try to fit them into the housing to see if they are even close. Mine were tantalizingly close, and I thought I could just tap them in with a hammer. Ha.

2) Check their orientation according to the diagram from the Bentley:



3)
The problem is, the new bushings are rubber with a plastic sleeve, so the hole is too large and gives and reboounds while

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his form, especially after the difficult putting in the new bushings. I have read where the front ones freeze on bushings just slightly.

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[Reply](#)
[With](#)

Banditt007 ◎

Member
Join Date: Oct 22nd, 2002
Posts: 9,015

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

05-09-2005 09:09 AM [Reply](#) #2

nice write up!

[Reply With Quote](#)

grootja ◎

Member
Join Date: Jul 19th, 2004
Posts: 3,468

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

05-09-2005 11:40 AM [Reply](#) #3

Great job!

[Reply With Quote](#)

Banditt007 ◎

Member
Join Date: Oct 22nd, 2002
Posts: 9,015

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (Banditt007)

05-09-2005 11:48 AM [Reply](#) #4

looks pretty easy too. i have to replace my rear axle b/c its bent, wanted to know if you knew if the axle can be shifted similar to the subframe or is it bolted in one place (the hangers?) also are new bolts always used? torque spec super high or what. thanks.

[Reply With Quote](#)

RabbitsKin ◎

Member
Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003
Location: Winchester, VA
Posts: 9,372
Vehicles: Various VWs

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (Banditt007)

05-09-2005 01:03 PM [Reply](#) #5

Quote, originally posted by Banditt007 »

looks pretty easy too. i have to replace my rear axle b/c its bent, wanted to know if you knew if the axle can be shifted similar to the subframe or is it bolted in one place (the hangers?) also are new bolts always used? torque spec super high or what. thanks.

I didn't remove the body brackets that the axle mounts to, so I don't know if the holes are slotted to allow adjustment or not. There is definitely no adjustment in the pivot bolt. I plan on re-using the bolts, as they didn't seem to be a critical one-use part like the axle nuts. Torque specs aren't super high, I got mine loose without an impact gun.

[Reply With Quote](#)

enginerd ◎

Member

Join Date: Dec 14th, 2001
Posts: 6,345


Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

05-10-2005 04:11 AM [Reply](#) #6

Next time try hitting the beam with a heat gun and putting the bushings in the freezer. This is how I did bushings before I got a press. From tantalizing close, to dropping right in.
Btw the factory brackets that bolt to the car are slotted so that you can adjust even toe on each side.

[Reply With Quote](#)

RabbitsKin ◎

Member
Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003
Location: Winchester, VA
Posts: 9,372
Vehicles: Various VWs

05-10-2005 04:31 AM [Reply](#) #7

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (enginerd)

*Quote, originally posted by **enginerd** »*

Next time try hitting the beam with a heat gun and putting the bushings in the freezer. This is how I did bushings before I got a press. From tantalizing close, to dropping right in.
Btw the factory brackets that bolt to the car are slotted so that you can adjust even toe on each side.

By the time I thought of the heat gun, I already had it painted. Well glad to know there is another method for people to try.

[Reply with](#)

tdigearhead 

Member



Join Date: Mar 7th, 2004
Posts: 226

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

06-14-2005 10:12 AM [Reply](#) #8

Exceptional! Thanks for your work on a topic sorely needing documentation. I just ordered a 6-ton shop press for the rear LCA bushing (mines cracked). Thanks,

[Reply With Quote](#)

Kaimera 

Member



Join Date: Sep 26th, 2004
Posts: 123

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

06-14-2005 12:02 PM [Reply](#) #9

thx for the write up , im gona do mine next week ,

[Reply With Quote](#)

paramedick 

Member

Join Date: Mar 12th, 2003
Location: Versailles, KY
Posts: 191
Vehicles: 2004 Jetta Wagon TDI, 2009 Jetta TDI, 2003 Jetta TDI

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (Kaimera)

06-14-2005 10:02 PM [Reply](#) #10

Instead of the freezer, get some dry ice. Works great and cools/shrinks quickly. Preferred method to replace bushings in the aviation industry.
Many welding supply houses stock dry ice. It's cheap. Take a cooler with you to pick it up.

Modified by paramedick at 2:04 AM 6-15-2005

[Reply With Quote](#)

Ei Romano Loco 

Member

Join Date: Sep 7th, 2000
Posts: 4,414

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (enginerd)

06-28-2005 01:52 AM [Reply](#) #11

Perfect. Someone asked the same question I was gonna ask, and then answered too! I love the search option, I would of never found this.

I took my car in for an alignment and they told me my right rear left wheel has excessive toe-in, and the right one toe-out 😞
This is causing the whole car to sway back and forth at high speeds(autobahn mind you). He told me he had never seen this and that I needed a new rear axle... I priced one for \$600+.

But know if you say that there is an adjustment, then I will damn look and see what I can do before spending all that money...

Thanks 😊

Adrian

[Reply With Quote](#)

AutoXMan 

Member

Join Date: Aug 7th, 2002
Location: Rockford, IL
Posts: 2,094
Vehicles: 2010 UG GTI

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (Ei Romano Loco)

06-28-2005 04:35 AM [Reply](#) #12

Sweet! 🎉

[Reply With Quote](#)

RabbitsKin 

Member

Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003

07-19-2005 06:11 PM [Reply](#) #13

Location: Winchester, VA
Posts: 9,372
Vehicles: Various VWs

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (AutoXMan)

UPDATE: Here are some pics I snapped of the finished and installed rear suspension. Too bad it won't stay this clean 😊 :





Modified by RabbitsKin at 8:22 AM 12-4-2008

Modified by RabbitsKin at 11:37 PM 4-14-2009

**Reply
with**

VR6MKIV

Member



Join Date: Feb 21st, 2003
Posts: 212



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

08-07-2005 01:41 AM #14

Just wanted to say thanks for the writeup. I just did this tonight and even with a press, it was still a pain in the ass. It took me six hours to complete but I was taking my time. Anyways, a word to the wise, if you are going to use a press, make sure you have a buddy with you. I left my rotors, calipers, and sway bar on and the whole unit probably weighed in at around 80-90 lbs. This is a difficult thing to hold up by yourself. The whole process was not difficult but god do I hate doing brake flushes.

Reply With Quote

Jopn

Member

Join Date: Oct 22nd, 2004
Posts: 529
Vehicles: 72 240Z L28ET, 81 Scirocco VR6, 90 CQ 20vt, 01 GTI APR Stg 3



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (VR6MKIV)

10-10-2005 04:50 PM #15

does that website still have this product? because I can't find a site that does.

Reply With Quote

RabbitsKin

Member

Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003
Location: Winchester, VA
Posts: 9,372
Vehicles: Various VWs

10-12-2005 09:41 AM #16

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (Jopn)

Just call them, they can look it up. Ask for Justin.

[Reply With Quote](#)

Jopn ◎

Member

Join Date: Oct 22nd, 2004
Posts: 529
Vehicles: 72 240Z L28ET, 81 Scirocco VR6, 90 CQ 20vt, 01 GTI APR Stg 3



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

10-19-2005 03:24 AM [Reply](#) #17

I don't have a heating gun, and the only thing i have is an acetylene torch or propane. Would this get it to hot causing the plastic on the bushing to melt?

[Reply With Quote](#)

crazymoforZ ◎

Member



Join Date: Jan 18th, 2006
Location: LA, OC
Posts: 1,868
Vehicles: 01 jetta 1.8T



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (El Romano Loco)

08-04-2006 10:47 PM [Reply](#) #18

*Quote, originally posted by **El Romano Loco** »*

my right rear left wheel as excessive toe-in, and the right one toe-out 😕 This is causing the whole car to sway back and forth at high speeds

i have the same problem, but my car pulls to the left and my steering wheel is about 35 40 degrees to the right so i could keep the car straight. also my tires have major cuppage. 🚗 im glad that someone had pointed this out so ill go under my car tommorow to see if there is any adjustment.

IM FANCY
United Motorsport Software available at 4SeasonTuning
Clutch, Cams, Engine Tuning, Coilovers etc. Call (714)997-5842
www.FourSeasonTuning.com

[Reply With Quote](#)

pair o' dubs ◎

Member

Join Date: Oct 27th, 2001
Posts: 656

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (crazymoforZ)

01-26-2007 10:19 PM [Reply](#) #19

These bushings are the last thing to install. I've replaced all other suspension bushings so far... but need to drop the rear beam - and I've never done this before.
Thanks for the write up.
m.

[Reply With Quote](#)

briang ◎

Member



Join Date: Mar 9th, 1999
Posts: 6,665

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

01-27-2007 08:47 AM [Reply](#) #20

awesome write up!

[Reply With Quote](#)

Silverbullet1980 ◎

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

02-15-2007 01:07 PM [Reply](#) #21

03-11-2007 08:57 AM [Reply](#) #22

VgRt6 ◊

Moderator



Join Date: Mar 7th, 2002
 Posts: 16,008



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV
 (Silverbullet1980)

To anyone who has done this, did the new bushings make much of a difference?

[Reply With Quote](#)**9** ◊

Member



Join Date: Apr 29th, 2001
 Posts: 2,616



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (VgRt6)

04-19-2007 09:19 AM [Reply](#) #23

so can you drop the axle enough to press the bushings out without removing the hard brake lines?

[Reply With Quote](#)**jamesb** ◊

Member

Join Date: Mar 13th, 2001
 Location: MD
 Posts: 9,693
 Vehicles: Lots



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (9)

04-19-2007 11:22 AM [Reply](#) #24

Just have to disconnect those short pesky flexible lines from the chassis to the axle.

[Reply With Quote](#)**9** ◊

Member



Join Date: Apr 29th, 2001
 Posts: 2,616



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (jamesb)

04-19-2007 11:38 AM [Reply](#) #25

by disconnect you mean unclip? or disconnect and ill have to rebleed the system?

[Reply With Quote](#)**bpederndern** ◊

Member



Join Date: Nov 25th, 2002
 Posts: 1,073



Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (9)

04-21-2007 10:53 AM [Reply](#) #26

you have to disconnect them.....or you risk damaging them if something slips and weight comes down on the lines. here's a trick i alway use.....when you disconnect the lines, twist one of the rubber bleeder caps into the female opening.....it's a tight fit, but can be screwed in with a little force. this keeps all the brake fluid from gravity bleeding while you have the axle off....and makes less of a mess. This usually only requires a quick bleed of the front and then the rear. just my experiences and i have not had any problems with doing it this way. Ymmv.

[Reply With Quote](#)**XM_Rocks** ◊

Member



Join Date: Jan 29th, 2005
 Location: Dallas, TX
 Posts: 6,743
 Vehicles: XJ 4X4 and '10 Golf

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV
 (bpederndern)

05-16-2007 10:48 AM [Reply](#) #27

Any other feedback on how hard this job is to drop the axle?

[Reply With Quote](#)**abawp** ◊

Member

05-16-2007 11:00 AM [Reply](#) #28



Join Date: Nov 30th, 2005
 Location: Everett, WA
 Posts: 11,499
 Vehicles: 2010 Subaru Impreza 2.5i, 2006 Kawasaki Ninja 500R

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (XM_Rocks)

Quote, originally posted by XM_Rocks »

Any other feedback on how hard this job is to drop the axle?

I would like to know as well. It seems pretty straightforward to me though.

Unbolt brake line
 Unbolt shock
 Unbolt axle beam from body (where the bushing is)
 lower axle beam

Am I missing anything?

[Reply With Quote](#)**rono1** ◎

Member
 Join Date: Apr 23rd, 2002
 Location: tallahassee, fl
 Posts: 2,664
 Vehicles: 96 GTI VR6, 01 TT 225 quattro

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (VgRt6)

05-16-2007 03:19 PM [Reply](#) #29*Quote, originally posted by VgRt6 »*

To anyone who has done this, did the new bushings make much of a difference?

X2

[Reply With Quote](#)**mescaline** ◎

Member



Join Date: Jul 15th, 2005
 Posts: 3,356

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (VgRt6)

05-17-2007 12:56 AM [Reply](#) #30

are there any aftermarket bushings instead of using OEM ones? Some that will hold a little better? 😊

[Reply With Quote](#)**Mr Black** ◎

Member
 Join Date: Jan 19th, 2002
 Posts: 3,278

Re: (mescaline)

05-18-2007 04:31 PM [Reply](#) #31*Quote, originally posted by mescaline »*

are there any aftermarket bushings instead of using OEM ones? Some that will hold a little better? 😊

Aftermarket bearings...from Shine Racing or Bildon I think.

PS shouldn't you be using some sort of grease instead of WD40? WD is penetrating fluid, NOT lubricant. I used WD to slide poly bushings onto a swaybar and it was a nightmare. Realized my mistake, switched to white grease and it slid on like a charm.

[Reply With Quote](#)**Luke9583** ◎

Member
 Join Date: Mar 17th, 2005
 Posts: 1,164



Re: (Luke9583)

05-18-2007 06:27 PM [Reply](#) #32

Nice write up. It's a lot more different from the mk2/3 than I thought!

[Reply With Quote](#)**RabbitsKin** ◎

Member
 Join Date: Feb 11th, 2003
 Location: Winchester, VA
 Posts: 9,372
 Vehicles: Various VWs

Re: (Luke9583)

07-16-2007 04:30 AM [Reply](#) #33

As far as how to do this without dropping the axle....guys, I just don't see any way around it. The bolt that goes through the bushings is what is holding the axle to the chassis. I suppose you could take out the bolts and drop it down a few inches, but then you'd be working upside down and have no leverage for, say, swinging the hammer.

By the way, whoever suggested using a big bolt and some washers to draw the bushing into the housing -- that's a great idea! Wish I would have thought of it, but the C-clamp method still works.

[Reply With Quote](#)**davey_boy** ◎

n00b
 Join Date: Aug 4th, 2007
 Posts: 1

Re: How to: DIY rear axle bushing replacement, MKIV (RabbitsKin)

08-04-2007 01:55 PM [Reply](#) #34

Awesome write up, wish i'd have seen it before taking this t**t of a job on. I did everything same as but used a set of spring compressors to pull the little bleeders in. I have to admit i didn't line up the bushes as per your diagram, does anyone know why the bushes have to be orientated like this apart from the obvious, 'cos it says so in the book'. Thanks

[Reply With Quote](#)

dremhmrk2 

Member



Join Date: Sep 19th, 2003
Location: Fort Lauderdale FL
Posts: 13,815
Vehicles: 2001 Mojave GTI GLX



May be doing this soon, any update on sources of new bushings?

08-21-2007 05:21 AM

[Reply](#)

#35

"Turning right in fifth gear from the left hand lane into the wrong end of a one-way street while indicating left, if at all."
All the custom, none of the cool.
[FavorMeBoutique](#) - Couture Baby Accessories
"Trying to be the cool kid is so cool." - MkIV Scene

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