

Rackin' A Model A

A friend gave me a rack out of a rabbit, which started this little project. It was very easy. Here is the list of materials:

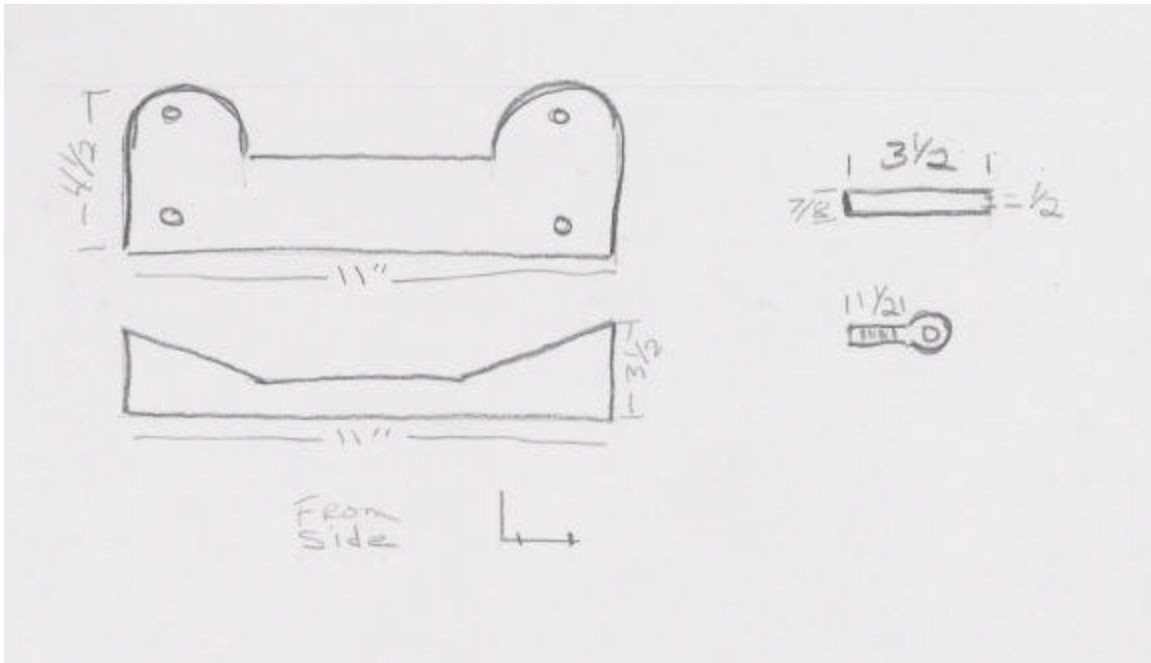
- Volkswagen Rabbit Rack and Pinion, mine came from a 1978 gas Rabbit.
- Two pieces of 3/16 or 1/4 Flat Stock. One 11 inches long and 4 1/2 inches wide. The other 11 inches long and 3 inches wide.
- You also need about 7 inches of pipe that is 7/8 outside diameter and 1/2 inside diameter.
- Heim joints (this is how mine was set up prior to the rack). If you do some measuring you might be able to use the stock VW tie rod ends, depending on the steering arm on the backing plate).
- Flaming River U-joint (one side to slip on the splined end of the rack and the other a Double-D).
- Long piece of Double-D rod (might want to measure how much you need before buying, because of the wide varieties in steering columns used).

Steps I took:

1. The first thing I did was take out all of the old steering. Then I set the rabbit rack on the jack and set it under the car where I thought I would like it. First try looked good, it set in there nice and high and out of the way.
2. I centered the rack in relation to the pan on the motor and took a few measurements.
3. I took the piece of flat stock that fit under the rack, about 11 inches long and 4 1/2 wide. There is also a piece that goes on the frame, which is 11 inches long and about 3 inches wide.
4. I measured back from the tie rod ends and cut the rack arms off. I cut the 7 inch piece of pipe in half, and drilled one end to 9/16 and threaded the other end of the pipe, about 1 1/2 inches down, to match the heim joints. The tap for the heims is 5/8 on the ones I have. If you go to a sprint car shop they have lots of heim joints at a good price. The heims are 1/2 inch holes, you will have to drill out the tapered hole in the steering arm that comes off the backing plates, then use a shoulder bolt.
5. Then I drove each half of the pipe onto the ends of the rack. Welded the pipe to the ends of the rack and threaded the heim joints in.
6. I had to reroute the steering shaft from the steering wheel. Now it fits nicely along the pan so I only had to buy one flaming river joint and a long piece of double d rod.

So far I have driven the car a few times to Snohomish and Monroe. It steers like a dream and no bump steer. It's a hundred times better than the Corvair box I took out. The total cost was about a hundred and twenty five dollars, 60 bucks for the flaming river joint and 40 bucks for new rack and pinion boots. I also had to Buy one heim joint at about 20 bucks. The flat stock was only about 5 bucks worth. If you have any questions you can e-mail me at tnga@att.net.

Here is a quick drawing of the flat stock configuration, pipe and heim.



Ok, here are a few snapshots of the Rack once it was prepped, painted and in.



