

Front Spring Spreader

by Phil Lawrence



This month a front spring spreader is in the works so follow along and I'll explain how to make a handy tool to safely and easily remove your front spring. Now that you have some nice jack stand bases (instructions in last month's newsletter) you'll be able to support the weight of your "T" and take the weight off the front end assembly.

To get started you'll need to get a length of 3/4" black iron pipe 24" long, a 12" to 24" length of 3/4" all-thread rod and a 3/4"-10 nut to screw on the all-thread rod.

If you purchased a precut and threaded pipe at your local hardware store you want to cut off the threaded section at both ends. You won't need those. That will leave you with a pipe approximately 22" long.

You will need to heat up one end of the pipe to flatten it to a taper. A heat source hot enough to get the pipe a dull red will do it, that is assuming you're not using a 12-ounce hammer. You'll need a pretty heavy hammer or a lot more heat. When you're hammering you want to hit the top and then the bottom of the pipe evenly to create a wedge shape.

With the pipe done, next is the 3/4" all-thread rod. One end of it is also tapered to a wedge configuration. This is best done using a 4 1/2" angle grinder with a cut-off blade. If you like to work out to build up your muscles, a hack saw might work for you. As was done on the pipe we need a wedge-shaped end on one end only. The angle of the wedge can vary, just so long as it's uniform. (See photo #1)

Now it's time to do just a little finish work. The ends of both pieces, we shaped, can be cleaned a little and smoothed up by using the 4 1/2" angle grinder with a 36 or 60 grit sanding disk to deburr and polish up the wedges on the pipe and threaded bar. The ends or points should be blunt and smooth. You can go as crazy as you want on making it look pretty. You might want to paint the pipe to keep it from rusting. (Photo #2 shows the completed parts.)

The spreader is positioned under the spring (photo #3) to use it to support the car from under the frame as mentioned earlier. With the weight off the front spring you can now safely start to spread the spring by turning the nut in a clockwise direction. When spring shackles are loose, that is, without tension, they can be removed and then, of course, the spring.

If you are removing a spring front or back to paint or repair it, before disassembling it be sure to clamp it with a couple of large "C" clamps on each side of the center bolt. Those springs, even after being removed from the car, are still under tension. By clamping them and then removing the center bolt you can release the tension slowly by unscrewing the clamps.

Also, just a tip for you, you want to make sure the spring leaves go back together the same way they came apart. To do that, take a center punch and in a straight line from the right or left side of the center bolt, make a punch mark on each spring leaf's edge. Make the punch mark heavy enough to be clearly seen. This may just save you a major headache later.

Photos next page....

Photo #1



Photo # 2



Photo # 3

