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Bolt-In Steering Column Swap - Full Tilt

A True Bolt-In Steering Column Swap

By Kev Elliott

Following on from last month's "Try Chevys" article, we figured we'd show you an example of just how well the aftermarket accommodates the '49-54 Chevy. The folks at Walton Fabrication already offer rear leaf spring kits, firewall-mount power pedal assemblies, and engine and trans mounts, and their latest offering—a bolt-in kit comprising a modified ididit tilt steering column, universal joints, and double-D shaft—is the perfect complement to the Total Cost Involved IFS they also offer for these [cars](#).

Of course, this installation assumes you have already fitted an IFS in your [Chevy](#), but, with that done, bolting in the column will take less time than prepping and painting it to match your car! Plus, you'll enjoy the benefits of a tilt column, smoother shifter operation (assuming you opt for a new column so equipped), and whatever steering wheel takes your fancy.



Here's the complete kit available from Walton Fabrication. The firewall-mount plate is tack welded to the column on this prototype but will be finish welded on production versions.





It's a different car, we know (the guys had already removed the stock column before we arrived at Walton), but here's a stock '49 column and its mount, which incorporates a hole for the column shift rod to pass through. The kit includes a replacement mount.



Once the stock column and steering box had been removed, the new column mount was attached to the dash using this plate to replace the stock '49 version.



With the mount in place, it was simply a matter of feeding the lower end of the column through the stock hole in the firewall and installing the Allen bolts. Don't tighten 'em all the way just yet, though.



Here's the lower section of the column coming through the firewall. Again, you can see the tack-welded plate.



The holes in the plate lined up with the stock firewall holes (arrow), making locating and securing the firewall plate a snap.



This particular '49 Chevy had already had Walton Fabrication engine mounts installed, along with a Total Cost Involved IFS and steering rack. The new universal joints supplied in the kit were installed on the rack and the column before the double-D shaft was installed and secured.



Here's the completed install at this end of the column. Now, let's get back inside the car.



The dash mount bolts are tightened before the steering wheel is fitted. It will be clocked at alignment time.



In '51-54 models, the new column can be installed with a simple U-bolt at the dash, as with this body color-painted column in a '53 woodie.

