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JUNKYARD BUILDER

A Budget LS Truck Accessory Bracket Mod

By Jeff Smith / Photos: Jeff Smith

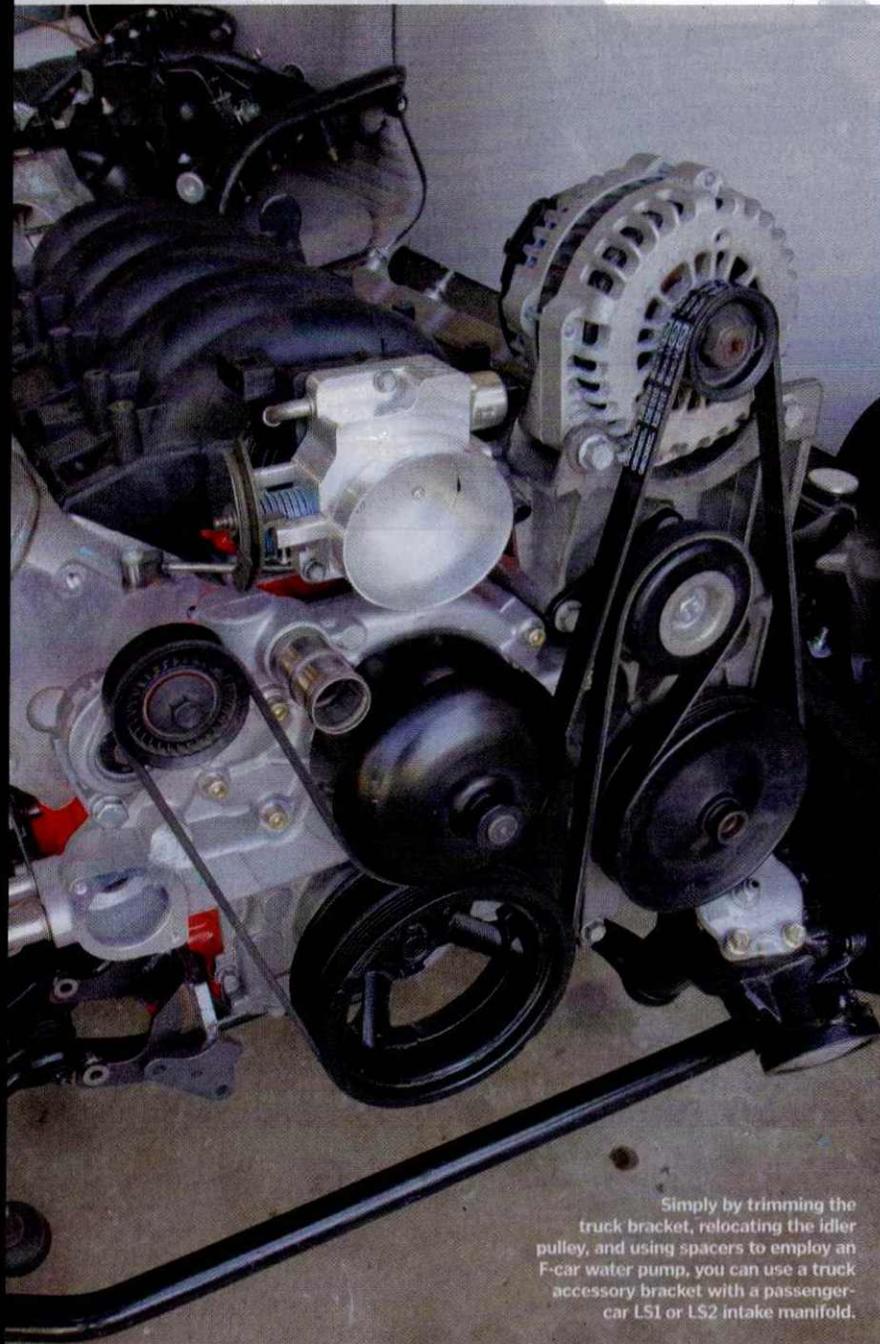
By now, most car crafters probably know the drill around LS engine accessory drives. There are three basic configurations: the Corvette drive

having the shortest depth, the older F-car (Camaro and Firebird) system that was next longest, and the truck accessory drive having the greatest

depth and the tallest configuration of alternator and power-steering pump. There are a few other offshoots, but these are still the three main drives. The truck systems are by far the easiest to obtain and the least expensive. While the truck version is admittedly tall, it will still fit under most muscle-car hood lines when doing a budget LS engine conversion. One major limitation with the truck drive is that it won't combine with an LS1 or LS2 Camaro/Corvette factory EFI intake. The low inlet on these intakes collides with the truck accessory drive's idler pulley and the water pump. If you use a carbureted-style intake, this wasn't a problem, but if your plan is to use a factory-style intake, the pulley and water pump prevented this—until now.

We were surfing the web for parts the other day when we ran across LSBrackets.com, owned by Darrin Gartrell. The one product that immediately jumped out at us was an idler-relocation bracket that, with a little aluminum trimming, positions a new location for the idler pulley. This modification, along with a new F-car water pump and spacers, creates the room to use a Camaro/Corvette intake with the truck accessory drive. The best part is that it's a simple conversion. While the initial bracket is only \$30, you will need an early ('00 model year) F-car water pump, spacers, a new belt, and an F-car tensioner. These parts do add up to roughly \$250 (plus shipping), but it's an easy conversion and much less expensive than a custom system. For us, the simple ideas are always the best.

LS Brackets also makes a pure aftermarket bracket that mounts the alternator and power-steering pump much like the factory Corvette accessory drive with the power-steering pump below the alternator. This kit is adaptable to any of the current depth configurations just by changing the length of the spacers. If you're looking for an inexpensive way to use either a factory truck accessory drive or a completely standalone aftermarket system, you should check out LSBrackets.com.



Simply by trimming the truck bracket, relocating the idler pulley, and using spacers to employ an F-car water pump, you can use a truck accessory bracket with a passenger-car LS1 or LS2 intake manifold.



We trimmed the stock truck bracket using a bandsaw. You could use a hacksaw or a cut-off wheel, but the bandsaw leaves a much cleaner cut.



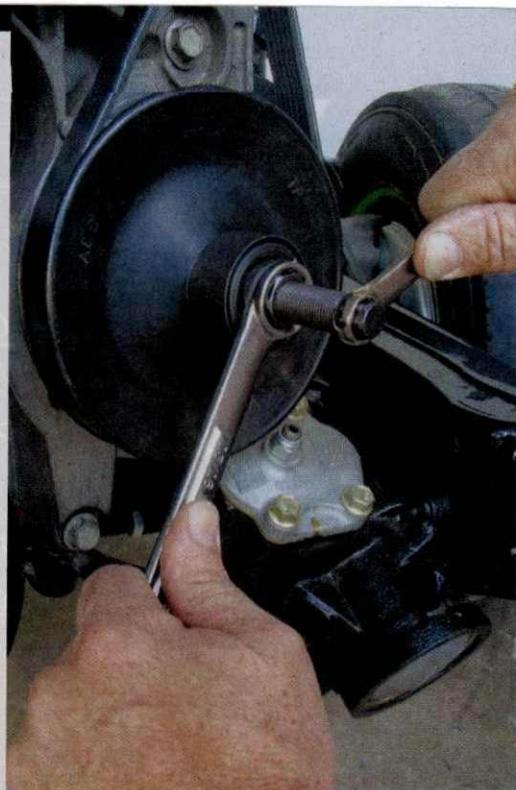
This is the new idler pulley mount and spacer kit from LS Brackets. It locates using two of the stock truck bracket bolts.



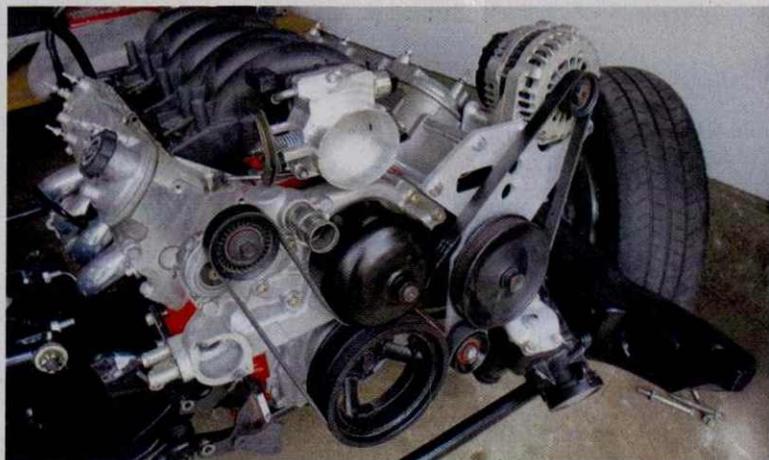
The truck's water-pump outlet is also an obstruction, so LS Brackets offers this water-pump spacer kit complete with new gaskets and longer Allen bolts. The spacers relocate the F-car water pump to align the pulley with the deeper truck orientation. This also requires an F-car tensioner. We obtained both the water pump and tensioner from RockAuto and saved more than \$75 compared to our local auto parts chain store price, even with the shipping cost.



LS Brackets supplied a belt, but we discovered ours was just a touch short because our engine was equipped with the larger-diameter, 145-amp alternator. LS Brackets listed a 1/2-inch-longer belt, which we obtained from RockAuto. While the F-car manifold is a tight fit, it does clear and offers a low-budget alternative to more expensive custom serpentine systems. We discovered the stock power-steering pulley is too large to clear a Chevelle steering box. A smaller pulley can be used to clear the box, which will require a shorter belt.



You will need a power-steering pump pulley/installer tool to remove and install the power-steering pump pulley. This is necessary because it is nearly impossible to access the pump bolts unless the pulley is removed. This is Harbor Freight's tool that we've used several times with great success.



LS Brackets offers several complete kits for truck engines that will create a Corvette accessory orientation while retaining the truck balancer and allow the use of a passenger-car-style intake. Beyond the LS Brackets kit (PN 0203), you will need an F-car water pump, belt tensioner, and a new belt. This is what the kit looks like on our 5.3L in a Chevelle chassis. **END**

PARTS LIST

| DESCRIPTION | PN | SOURCE | PRICE |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Truck idler relocation | LS-0202 | LSBrackets.com | \$30.00 |
| F-car water-pump spacer kit | LS-0214 | LSBrackets.com | 85.00 |
| Belt for kit LS-0202 | K061005 | LSBrackets.com | 32.00 |
| LS truck accessory drive kit | LS-0203 | LSBrackets.com | 235.00 |
| 70mm idler pulley for 0203 | NA | LSBrackets.com | 20.00 |
| Bosch F-car water pump | 99175 | RockAuto.com | 84.79 |
| Gates F-car tensioner | 38195 | RockAuto.com | 32.79 |
| Gates longer belt for LS-0202 | K061010 | RockAuto.com | 22.79 |
| Power-steering pulley tool | 40749 | Harbor Freight | 19.99 |
| Belt for LS-0203 kit, long | K060735 | RockAuto | 22.79 |

→SOURCES

Harbor Freight; 800/423-2567;
HarborFreight.com

LS Brackets; 978/571-9763;
LSBrackets.com

Rock Auto; 866/762-5288;
RockAuto.com