



## “Low-Bed” Pickup Easy To Load, Unload

Richard McNiff, Franklin, Neb., cut down the sides of the box off a 1961 Chevrolet 3/4-ton pickup and also unbolted the bed and mounted it down between the wheels of his 1972 Chevrolet 3/4-ton pickup.

The sides of the bed are only 10 in. high, and the floor is only 28 in. off the ground compared to the 38-in. height of the truck's original bed.

“The bed's low floor and sides make it much easier to use than the bed on a conventional pickup,” says McNiff. “I can reach halfway across the bed to pick up or place tools.”

McNiff left the front end of the bed alone. To shorten the sides, he cut through a seam that ran even with the top of both fender wells (the seam divided double wall steel at the bottom from single wall steel above it). He shortened the tailgate by cutting an 8-in. high section out of the middle, then welding the top and bottom sections back together.

“I get a lot of comments on it wherever I go. People look and look and look at it,” says McNiff. “I got the idea because at one time I had a 1954 Chevrolet pickup with a low bed and sides, and I liked it a

lot. “Because I use the pickup mainly to haul fencing materials, tools, motors, etc, I don't need sides more than 10 in. high. I use a 2-wheel trailer behind the pickup to haul bigger items. I didn't want a flatbed because you can't haul anything on them without it falling off on corners. I keep three toolboxes in the bed - one ahead of each fender well and another one behind one of the wells.

“I can mount a shop vise and a manually-operated, swing-out boom on the floor. The vise mounts on a steel plate that's welded to the top of a 2-in. dia. steel pipe. The 2-in. pipe slips inside a 2 1/2-in. dia. pipe that goes through the bed floor to a steel plate that bolts onto the pickup's frame. I can slip off the pipe to remove the vise and replace it with the 5-ft. high boom which also mounts on a pipe. I use the boom to load big electric motors, car engines, etc. I made a stand to put under the side of the pickup so that it won't sag under the weight of the boom load.”

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## Pickup Flatbed Slides Backward For Loading

Here's a nifty way to load and unload ATV's, garden tractors, snowmobiles, etc., on pickups - a sliding flatbed.

“I took a 1970 1/2-ton International 4-WD pickup and lengthened the frame 1 1/2 ft.,” says Dale Fisher, Moses Lake, Wash. “I built a sub-frame out of 3-in. channel iron and mounted an 11 1/2 by 7 1/2-ft. bed on top of it. Then I made another sub-frame, also out of 3-in. channel, to slide inside the first. I used rollers from a Hesston swather reel between the channel iron as guides so the frames don't bind on each other when they slide. I put teflon strips on the flange of the channel iron so the frames slide smoothly.

“I made a 5-ft. (2-in. dia.) cylinder to push the bed back 5 ft. I use two smaller cylinders off a cab-over Freightliner to raise and lower the bed. I use a small Vickers hydraulic pump with electric clutch to run the hydraulics, and I put a joy stick on the two valves. Controls are on the right-hand side below the bed.”

To load up, Fisher simply slides the bed back 5 ft. and raises it to a 22° angle. He can raise the bed up to a 45° angle for unloading, if needed.

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## Kit Helps Repower Ford 8N With V-8 Truck Engine

When Ron Stauffer began repowering an old Ford 8N tractor with a V-8 truck engine last winter, he had no idea he'd wind up with marketing rights to a key piece of equipment that made the job a snap.

“The key to success is the adapter plate that couples the back of the V-8 to the original 4-cyl. engine's transmission bell housing,” says the Portland, Ind., Ford enthusiast and dealer. “I had seen Ford 8N's repowered with V-8's to use in terracing contests during the late 1940's and early '50's, but I had no idea such an adapter kit ever existed.

“Early-on in the project, however, I spotted an ad for just such a kit in an antique tractor magazine. After making some inquiries, I learned it had been invented by South Dakota farmer Delbert Heusinkveld. It had even been manufactured for a time by the Funk Aircraft Company of Coffeyville, Kan. I tracked down Delbert and he told me he no longer wanted to be involved in selling the kits, so he and I agreed I would market them.

“Response has been unbelievable. I've sold 27 kits, which sell for \$750 apiece, since last winter. One went as far as Australia.”

There's good reason for interest in the kits, too, says Stauffer, since putting a V-8 engine in an old Ford tractor would be a difficult job without it.

“If you have this kit, the hardest part is the fine-tuning - installing the throttle and governor and hooking up the gas tank,” he says.

Stauffer's adapter kit consists of a 1 1/2-in. thick steel plate 2 ft. in dia. The adapter plate is drilled and tapped so the bolt pattern on the back of the engine matches the

front of the transmission bell housing. He also supplies a steel frame that runs from the plate and wraps around the front axle of the tractor to help support the bigger engine.

Stauffer first used the kit to repower a 1951 Ford 8N with an overhauled flathead Ford V-8 truck engine manufactured between 1949 and '53. The 100 hp 239 cu. in. engine replaced the tractor's original blown 25 hp, 4-cyl., 112 cu. in. engine.

“Once I got the engine installed, I had to lengthen the steering rods by 4 1/2 in., the distance the bigger engine adds to the overall length of the tractor,” Stauffer explains. “I also had to move the radius rods forward because they help support the axle.

“I also needed a bigger radiator to keep the engine cool. I used one with two outlets on the top and two on the bottom because of the twin water pumps on that old Ford V-8 engine.

“I added triple vertical exhaust stacks, the tops of which are about 5 1/2 ft. above the ground, just for show. If you wanted to do any kind of farming with it, you'd definitely want mufflers on it.”

Stauffer says his Ford 8N will do 35 mph, thanks in part to a Sherman step-up transmission he installed with the engine. The transmission now offers 8 forward and 2 reverse gears.

Including \$2,000 for the tractor, Stauffer says he has about \$7,500 invested in the project.

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## Hydraulically-Adjustable Grader Blade

Anyone who's done much grading with a 3-pt. mounted grader blade, knows it's not easy to do a good job. That's why B.L. Uhnken, Jacksonville, Ill., decided to make a hydraulically-adjustable, tow-behind frame to hold his blade.

It consists of a “wishbone” hitch, made from heavy angle iron, that extends back over the blade to a pair of rubber-tired wheels. Each wheel is fitted with a hydraulic cylinder for precise depth control. Cutting angle of the blade can be made more or less aggressive by moving the hitch on the tongue up or down. The blade simply tows off the tractor drawbar.



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