



Full Force Gets A Lift

BDS Suspension Install

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Once you have decided to upgrade the suspension on your Big Bronco, choosing the right suspension system for your specific needs can be a little daunting with so many after-market suspension kits to choose from. Some things to take into consideration are: How will you be using your truck? Will you be towing heavy loads? If so, you should take into account the stiffness of your new rear suspension to figure out how the truck will ride under load. Will you be using your truck as a dedicated daily driver? Road manners will be your main concern. Do you want your suspension to perform over rough terrain at high speeds? Twin Traction Beam travel, and shock absorber

performance are critical considerations in this case. Or, is your Bronco a dedicated trail beast? You will want a tough suspension consisting of components that can take the abuse—strong radius arms, brackets that will not hang up on rocks, and springs that will allow your Bronco to flex giving your tires plenty of friction with which to climb.

Full Force is often used as a daily driver but will see more and more trail riding so we for this project, we installed BDS Suspension's four-inch, Pro-Ride Suspension System. It is the perfect balance between on-road handling and stability, and off-road flex. And if in the future we ever decide 4" is not enough, this system is easi-

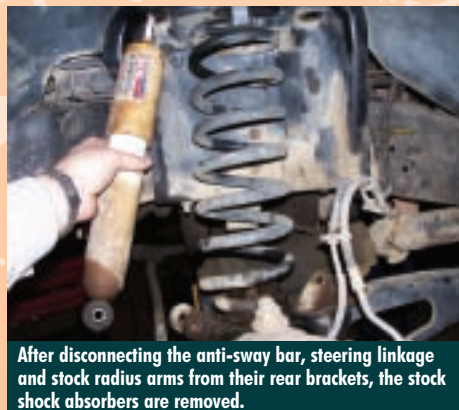
ly upgradeable to 6" with the addition of only new springs, not an entirely new lift. Very practical for the Full Size Bronco owner on a budget.

One of BDS' most appealing features is their "no fine print warranty, which states, "If you are the original purchaser of any BDS product and it breaks, we will give you a new part. Period." That's a pretty good deal. Though, we will have to be careful of how we abuse our shock absorbers as they are not covered under the "No Fine Print Warranty," but do come with a limited lifetime warranty. This article will hopefully serve to introduce you to BDS and help narrow down the choices out there. 🚗

The stock ride height of Full Force needs to be modified if it is to survive off-pavement excursions. The 4" BDS system was chosen.



The stock front suspension components are dirty, limited and tired.



After disconnecting the anti-sway bar, steering linkage and stock radius arms from their rear brackets, the stock shock absorbers are removed.



The front coil springs are then removed.



The anti-sway bar mounting bracket located below the lower coil seat on the front axle is removed to access the bolts holding the stock radius arm onto the axle.



The radius arm is then disconnected from its rear bracket and removed.



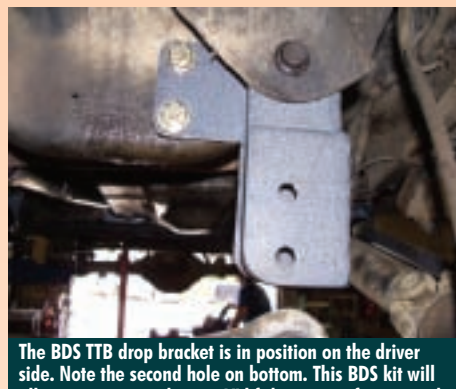
The BDS TTB drop bracket is installed on the passenger side.



The new extended radius arms are bolted onto the axle.



The stock radius arm brackets are removed.



The BDS TTB drop bracket is in position on the driver side. Note the second hole in bottom. This BDS kit will allow you to upgrade to a 6" lift by moving fittings and purchasing new springs. Smart!



After attaching the new radius arms to the TTB housing, the lower anti-sway bar brackets are placed back into position followed by the lower coil seats.



The new holes for the BDS radius arm brackets are drilled using the holes provided on the new bracket as a guide. It is important to take plenty of measurements before you begin in order to position the new brackets accurately and to maintain the front axle's original position after the new radius arms are installed.



The TTB axle now rests in its new pivot brackets. Note the 6" lift hole also in this pivot bracket.



The new springs are then mounted and attached with the spring retainers.



After disconnecting the pivot bolts and bushings, the entire TTB axle housing is lowered and the stock, TTB pivot brackets can be removed.



Some loathe it, while others love it, either way, the TTB axle sure is funny looking, especially from the back side.



The dropped pitman arm is attached then the steering components.



The new, taller shock absorbers are installed.



Moving to the rear suspension, the rear shock absorbers are removed.



Full Force had been the victim of a flood at one point resulting in major rust under the truck. Here, a rusty bolt holding on the rear leaf spring bracket is cut off. It is replaced with a bolt from the Ford dealership. While the hardware to replace all the rusty bolts removed during this setup could have been found at an auto parts store or a fastener shop, the dealer was able to provide precisely the right high quality hardware taking the guess work and hassle out of hunting down the right size bolts.



The rear leaf spring retention brackets are bolted on using the new hardware that comes with the kit. It is important to be sure and check that these bolts are still tight after the first 500 miles of driving on the new suspension.



The rear BDS suspension now sits above the rear axle (looking forward on the driver side).



The BDS radius arms are a stout upgrade from the stock arms.



Old meets new. The stock shim paired with the clean BDS leaf spring pack. This stock shim positions the rear axle to maintain proper pinion angle.



Sitting noticeably higher, Full Force is ready to flex its new springs out on the trail.



The clean new suspension components contrast with the dirty undercarriage.



The new BDS leaf spring bracket is an improvement over the old, rusty components.

Upcoming Issues...

We still have a few required fixes before we start the fun fixes:

- wheels and tires to match new lift
- many exhaust leaks but major one at back of engine (exhaust is sucked into cab).
- the engine running roughly...we learn to pull codes.
- tailgate window problems

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