

TACOMA

magazine



IS AN OFF ROAD
TRAILER FOR YOU?



2012 TACO



**RELENTLESS
STEEL MONSTER**

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A silver Toyota Tacoma is shown from a side profile, equipped with a roof rack. It is parked on a dirt surface.

A custom wheel with a multi-spoke design and a 'TRC' logo in the center. The wheel has a metallic finish.

18-19 | New Products

A silver Toyota Tacoma is shown driving on a rocky, off-road trail. The driver's side door is open.

A blue Toyota Tacoma is shown parked on a dirt trail in a wooded area.

6 | Reader Rigs

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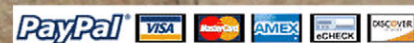


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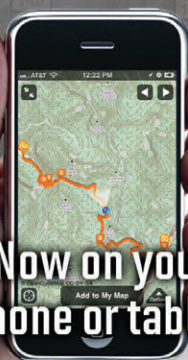
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EDITOR's NOTES

Happy Holidays from the Tacoma Magazine crew! This issue is a little behind schedule due to a few problems with contributors. We want to extend a big thanks to Kurt Williams of Cruiser Outfitters (<http://www.cruiseroutfitters.com>) for coming through for us on very short notice. I think all the readers would agree that he writes great articles. It has been a great year for us here at the magazine and we are excited for the next year as well. Keep the good ideas coming. We'll see you on the trail!

Until next time, Tread Lightly, Stay The Trail, and HAVE FUN!

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In The News

This brand new 2012 Tacoma is the BIG TUNA! Being one of the first modified 2012's around we thought it was worthy of showing off. Some of the options include:

2012 Toyota Tacoma w/ TRD Off-Road and Entune/JBL System

Lift kit is Fabtech 6" stage III Kit with all dirt logic shocks/coil-overs

Tires are Nitto, Trail Grappler M/T's 35x12.50x18's on Chrome XD Rims





Reader Rigs

Parker's Tacoma



Shrockworks front bumper
Shrockworks sliders
17" Tacoma Sport rims painted gunmetal grey
285/70/17 BFG KM2
Spidertrax 1.25" wheel spacers
AEM cold air intake
Grey wire mod
Donahoe/Icon coil-overs
4crawler 1" BL
CBI cutbed rear bumper
Bud-Built skids
Inchworm e-locker skid
UWS toolbox
Trasharoo
Custom dents and pin striping
In the process of re-gearing

Larry's 06 Taco



2006 TRD Sport Access cab 4x4 6 speed

- Icon Ext Travel Coil-overs
- Total Chaos UCA's
- 5125 rear shocks
- All Pro Expo springs
- KMC 17x9 Addicts
- Goodyear MTR w/ Kevlar 285/70/17
- Relentless front plate bumper & sliders
- ATO high clearance rear bumper
- ATO full skids
- Bay Area Metal Fab diff skid.
- ARB front and rear air lockers

- Marlin 4.70 "Taco" box
- Twin stick FJ T-case with Rock Solid Toys short throw shifters

- Hella 16 gang AUX fuse block
- 2, Hella 4 relay, relay banks.
- back up lights recessed in rear bumper, yellow dust light
- PIAA 510's & 520's ATP pattern
- DDM 55w 4500K HID's
- Rock lights - 4 Ozinum LED fogs and 4 12" LED strips 100% waterproof
- OTRATTW 6 gang switch bank
- VIAR 480C OBA kit with 2.5 gal tank.

- DT Y-pipe
- DT long tubes
- Dynomax catback
- URD MAF calibrator
- URD O2 SIM's
- AFE drop in filter
- Wet Okole seat covers
- Grom AUX input kit
- Cobra 19 CB in center console

- Safari Snorkel
- Axe and Shovel mounted in the bed
- Bottle opener on rear bumper
- Tiregate brand tire gate.
- 4xRac mounted Hi-Lift in bed
- Smittybuilt XRC8 comp edition winch w/ synthetic rope and in cab control
- Full ARB recovery kit
- 2 recovery and Hi-Lift notches on both bumpers
- Toolbox full of spare parts, fluids, and enough tools to disassemble the truck

Things to come

- Nitro 4.88 gears
- Currently prepping for 35"s

New & Noteworthy



The BR-TYTCM-1-0 Toyota Tacoma Second generation rack (2005-2011) mounts directly on the factory threaded inserts (located underneath the plastic strip) for greater load capacity and lower profile. Finally something useful to put on top of your truck! The rack includes 2 tabs in the back to mount rear lights and it only adds 6.5" of height to your truck making it a low profile solution.

Specs:

Frame: 1" (25.4mm) and 1/2" (12.7mm) Steel tubing

Top Wind Deflector: .062" (1.57mm) 5050-H32 Aluminum

Bottom Wind Deflector: .062" (1.57mm) 5050-H32 Aluminum

Finish: Zinc primer with black powder coating

Rack weight: 49Lb (19.05Kg)

Weight Capacity: 200Lb (90.6 kg)

Measurements: 48" (1219.2mm) Wide x 60" (1524 mm) Long x 5" (127mm) tall

Mounting method: Mounting Brackets (4 total)

SOURCE:

www.bajarak.com/toyota-tacoma-series

NEW! TRD 17" Forged Aluminum Alloy Single Wheel (PTR45-35010)

The race-inspired TRD-branded 17-inch forged off-road alloy wheels offer drivers a distinctive upgrade, along with the higher strength-to-weight ratio that's inherent to one-piece, hot-forged aluminum wheels. Wheel features a gunmetal grey painted finish and machined outer lip with beadlock styling.

6 on 139.7mm P.C.D. 106 mm Center Bore. Sold separately is the Lug Nut kit, 12mm TRD Spline-Drive Conical-Seat Lug Nut Kit (PTR27-89100). All TRD Wheels are designed for use with 20 degree OE wheel sensors and fit kits. 20-degree sensors are already on OE Alloy wheels if equipped.



WILL AN OFF-ROAD TRAILER WORK FOR ME?

THE OFF-ROAD TRAILER CONUNDRUM



By Kurt Williams

CRUISER OUTFITTERS
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Similar to my Roof-Top-Tent article that appeared in a recent edition of Tacoma Magazine, I hope to explore the thought process and logic behind an off-road trailer and specifically help those on the fence decide if they really need to buy or build a trailer. Let me preface this by saying my experience with off-road trailers doesn't hold a candle to those pioneer explorers that have been hauling off-road trailers around in the wilds of this world for many decades. I have been fortunate to venture all over parts of Utah, Colorado and Nevada with my trailer in tow for the last six years now, my opinions and thoughts are based solely on those experiences. While this isn't meant to be an end all article on off-road trailers, I hope it gets your brain moving and helps fine tune your decision making process.

First, let's define the type of trailer we are discussing here. My reference relates to off-road trailers designed to be towed by your 4-wheel drive vehicle to and from remote places not possible with a standard utility trailer. Based on that requirement, they will likely

have tires at or near the size of your truck. They will have hitch setups that don't inhibit motion or articulation, and are generally built to make your camping and travel experience more comfortable by allowing you to haul more gear. I am not referring to your standard pop-up tent trailer, whereas they can be beefed up for towing into the back country, my dialogue is aimed at commercially built trailers such as the modern Adventure Trailers offerings, the variety of home built trailers based on the popular military surplus M416 platform, or completely custom constructed setups. It is my opinion that if the trailer can't be cleanly pulled through a trail such as Moab's popular White Rim Trail or even something

an off-road trailer under the broader terms of 'overland' or 'expedition' use if it isn't highway friendly and capable of being towed at speed limits and for long distances with little encumbrance on the tow rig. The specifications and benefits of the numerous commercially available off-road trailer options on the market vary so greatly that I have no intention of covering the product selection with this article



so much as the need and uses of such trailers.

more difficult like the famous Rubicon with zero damage and reasonable added driving and spotting effort, it can't really be considered an 'off-road trailer'. On the same note I don't think a trailer warrants the definition of

My involvement in trailers started in 2000. I was building my second Land Cruiser and had stumbled across a pile of Australian 4x4 Magazines that the previous owner of my business (Cruiser Outfitters) had collecting dust in the shop office. Keep in mind the Aussie's are and always have been building vehicles similar to the current 'expedition' trends we are seeing here in the US since 4x4 vehicles first came about in their country, to them it's not a new trend and surely isn't the nov-



Left:
Taking a Break Along the Blue Notch Trail
Photo by Kurt Williams

elty we've seen it become in our market today. In those magazines were a scattering of pictures and advertisements marketing the variety of dedicated off-road trailers and accessories available at dealers throughout the country. These trailers have amenities ranging from sinks and stoves to tents and fridges. I must admit my needs at the time surely didn't warrant such a device so I was as guilty of the 'novelty' train of thought as any other. What it did do was start me thinking about how I would want to build a trailer. We had an old fiberglass FJ40 tub kicking around the shop and all the frames and axles I could possibly want, being a broke college student pretty much dictated I would

Lets back up a bit, my Land Cruiser build up was finished and I was daily driving a '96 Extra-Cab Tacoma. Camping for a day or two was easy enough out of the back of the Land Cruiser or sleeping in the bed of the Tacoma for my wife and I but after a few long weekend camping/4-wheeling trips we were soon feeling

ing beyond cramped with the space and amenities available. I was faced with simple choices, come up with a different rig such as a full-size wagon Land Cruiser or finish the off-road trailer that I had always

envi-

build my own and at the time I was beyond excited to do so. I fabricated the front tub enclosure and mounted it to the back half of an old FJ55 Land Cruiser frame, still running the Land Cruiser axle underneath it. I bent the frame in front to create a tongue and later towed it home where it would sit for several years while I collected parts and brainstormed build plans. When the time came to get serious with the build I laid out all my wants and needs on a sheet of paper and slowly implemented them as time allowed, within a few months I had a trailer ready for the trails. But I digress; this article is about the personal need for an off-road trailer. So back to the subject at hand, how my needs made the use of the trailer a reality and my current thoughts on off-road trailers in general.

sioned solving this problem. Finish the trailer it was. I tried to envision every scenario that was cumbersome or inconvenient on a trip and design an answer to said problem into the trailer. Lack of storage, power, accessible water storage, spare fuel, etc... All the things you typically think of when you consider a trailer right? I built many of these factors into my trailer and it really has worked out great for me. At the time I was super busy with school and still trying to head

**Left Background:
Base Camping in the Nevada
Desert
Photo by Kurt Williams**



**Slow Moving With the
Trailer in Tow
Photo by Richard Dyatt**



**Winding Through Eagle Canyon
Photo by Richard Dyatt**

to the mountains and deserts of Utah as much as possible, it was nice to just 'hitch up and go', leave everything but food in the trailer so getting out of town is less of a production.

Fast forward 7 years and I've really bounced around with the trailer. First, I am a big fan of the multiple vehicle setup, that is to say I think that it is impossible to build one vehicle to adequately cover the different types of off-roading I like to enjoy. In fact I think it would take a half dozen different builds but my budget and space don't allow so I must be content with my current setup. When building my FJ40 I wanted it to work for the majority of the off-road travel I enjoyed, which could be a Pritchett Canyon trip or a several hundred-mile trip around the Great Salt Lake. Given the varied needs, the trailer was a natural fit. In the more recent years I've built a second Tacoma (2004 Double Cab) to serve as my long range camping vehicle when the miles will exceed the difficult trail opportunities. So with my current vehicle situation its likely that I would have never built a trailer, not that I couldn't have put it to good use on occasion, just that it would not have been a priority. With some discretionary

Common commercially available Off-Road Trailers:

Adventure Trailers: <http://www.adventuretrailers.com/>

Afrispor Trailers: <http://www.afrisporoffroadtrailers.co.za/>

Bushman Trailers: <http://www.bushmantrailers.com/>

Bushwakka Trailers: <http://www.bushwakka.co.za/>

Campa Trailers: <http://www.campausa.com/>

Conqueror Trailers: <http://www.conqueror.co.za/>

Haul Tent Trailers: <http://www.haultent.com/>

Jurgens Trailers: www.jurgenstrailers.co.za/

King Kampers: <http://www.kingkampers.com/>

Merlin Trailers: <http://v2.douglassmotors.co.uk/merlin.asp>

Offroad Trailerz: <http://www.offroadtrailerz.com/index.html>

Outlander Trailers: <http://outlandertrailers.us>

Predator Trailers: <http://www.offroadtrailers.co.za>

Sierra 4x4 Trailers: <http://www.sierra4x4trailers.com>

Tentrax Trailers: <http://www.tentrax.com/>

Track Trailer: <http://www.tracktrailer.com.au/>

Note: these are just the common names, there are literally dozens of other smaller, re-badged or out of business manufactures/brands not to mention the countless custom built units. Some of these are not available in the US but I've added them just to show you some of the options and help you brainstorm

Operation Basecamp Photo by Kurt Williams



packing and well thought out gear it could be done sans trailer. That said even behind my double cab Tacoma the trailer gets used, add a couple of passengers or our 100 lb German Shepherd and the cab of the truck is stuffed, the bed quickly fills so along comes the trailer. In the case of the Tacoma, do I use it because I really need it or use it because it's just easier? Likely more of the latter, but the fact is 'easier' is the selling point right?

Now to the real question at hand, do you need one?

Lets start with a quick run down of the basic pros and cons. They are in no particular order; users will weigh them differently based on their personal and family travel needs. I hope running through this basic list of pros and cons will inspire more pros and cons that pertain to your personal wants and needs.

Pros

- Added space. Bring more things and have less stuff in the cab. Allows for less discriminative packing and more comfortable things to be brought along.
- Set & Forget. Leave the trailer loaded and accessorized with your standard gear. All you have to do is add food, water, fuel, and you're off for your next 4x4 adventure.
- Fast camp setup. The trailer prevents you from having to partially unload your vehicle, particularly when paired with a RTT (Roof Top Tent).
- Makes an ideal platform for a RTT, the lower height makes the RTT much easier to open, close and use versus a true roof height mount.

Continued on Page 20

Left:

**Taking a Break Along the Blue Notch Trail
Photo by Kurt Williams**



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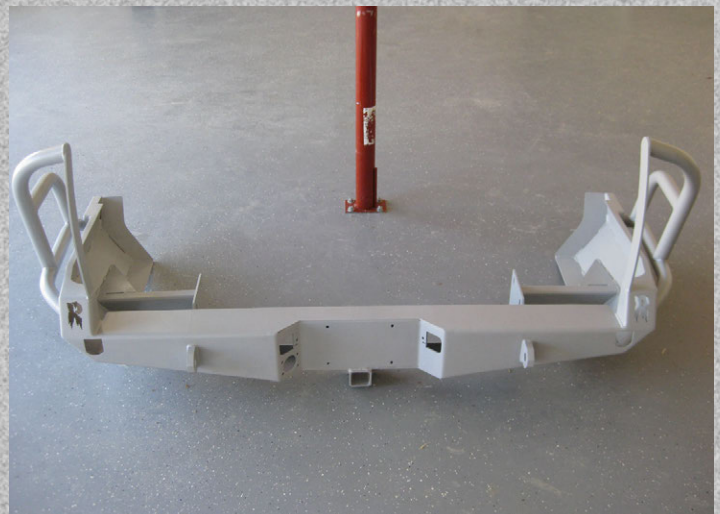
MONSTALINER

BY JEFF BLACKWELL

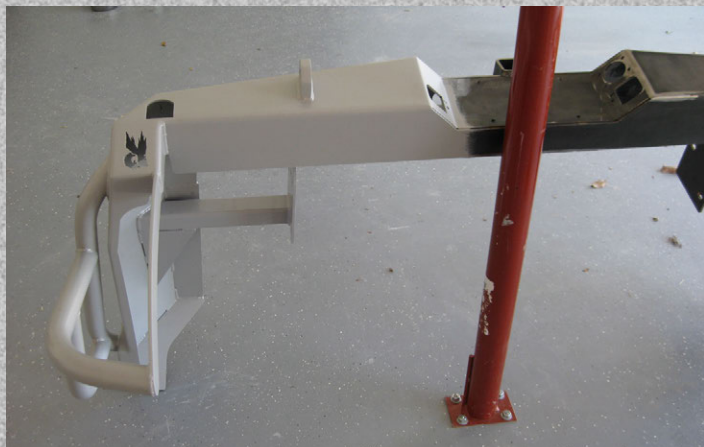
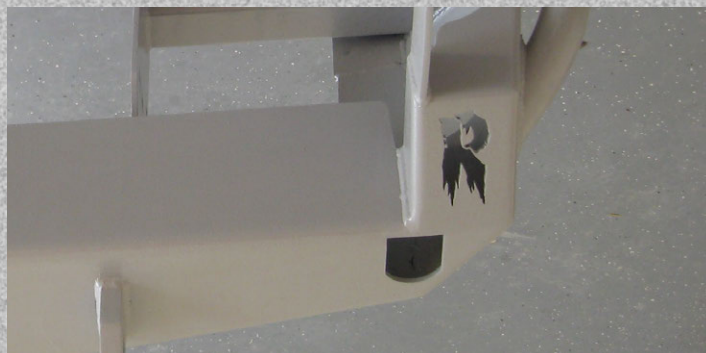
So you have this new piece of armor that was shipped to you fresh off the end of the welder, bare steel. You're thinking, "I could give it a good covering with some rattle can," but you want something that will brave the elements a little better than a thin coat of Rust-Oleum. DIY bed liner! Wait, which one should I use? By the title of this article, you should now know the brand we like. Monstaliner had everything we were looking for in a tough permanent coating for a project like a rear bumper. And, it doesn't get much better than a product coming from a company renowned for their rust protection coating "Chassis Saver."

Monstaliner is a unique protective coating that is 100% UV stable and covers evenly with no texture additives. As Monstaliner is applied, texture is pulled up from the coating and the surface cures with a unique raised texture that almost looks sprayed. Being as we started with a bare steel project, we opted to use their Magnapoxy as our primer/undercoat as recommended by the guys at Monstaliner. This sets up a perfect surface for the Monstaliner to adhere to and also gives us a nice rust barrier.

The finished product is spot on with how everything was portrayed to be. However, for a bumper the size of the one we were working with, it was a stretch to make one quart of Monstaliner cover everything. So, when ordering your Monstaliner and Magnapoxy primer, take into account the size of the job that is about to be covered. For example, The bumper we were covering used every drop of primer to cover all surface areas and could have used a bit more than a quart to cover 2 coats of bed liner.



After one trip out on the trail with Monstaliner protecting the Trail Limo's rear, I can vouch for it holding up well to being smashed into an oak tree and scraped on a couple rocks. It has yet to have been dropped hard onto the surface to truly test the product, but something tells me it will do just fine. Get the look you want including a tough, 100% UV stable and reliable coating.



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Relentless Steel Monster



By Jeff Blackwell

This monster is your new best defense. The sort that will serve and protect while eating for lunch any unwanted harm in everyday driving and off roading. The Relentless Fabrication rear bumper is a work of art in it's own right. The design, welds, and obvious strength demand respect. When it first arrives on the pallet one will think to themselves, "Well, how am I going to manage to get this monster painted and installed?" While the thought is a little daunting at first, the task is not impossible.

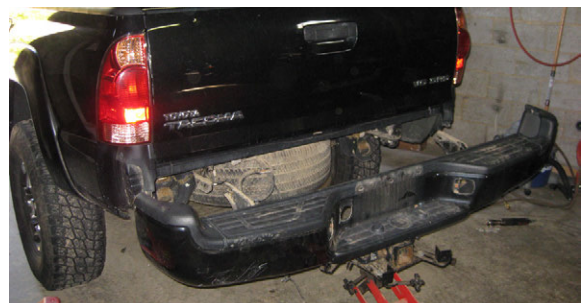
As you have read previously, prep and painting can take some time to do correctly. The direction I took is certainly not the only way to do it and definitely not the fastest painting process, but it is done well and looks really good. I was at a big advantage having a shop at my disposal to do the install. Tools like an air powered body saw and transmission jack made this job a lot easier and enabled me to complete the install by myself in one afternoon.

To get started, go ahead and take off your license plate and two lights that illuminate the plate at night. You can see that I had previously relocated the 7-pin out of harms way. Also remove it at this time. (pic rf1)

There are five bolts on each side of the truck that will need to be removed to lower the stock bumper. The model pictured is equipped with Toyota's optional towing package. If your model does not have the towing package, it should still look similar but obviously there would be no hitch present, instead just the bumper bracket. Before removing all bolts, remember to unclip the wiring inside the bumper so it is not strained when trying to lower the bumper off of the truck.



With a buddy or a transmission jack, carefully remove the rear bumper by fully removing all ten bolts. Then you must lift up and slide the bumper rearwards to clear the holding pins incorporated into the brackets for safety.



Now that the stock bumper has been removed, it is time to tape out the cut line on each side of the bed. The object is to get as straight of a line across the bed as possible, even with the bottom of the taillight. I feel like I must have taped and then re-taped about five different times on each side before I was happy with the line being straight. Even when it was all said and done, I cut more to make things straight and even on each side. It is a little tricky to get the tape to lie even when going around the bend that transitions the bed's sheet metal to the plastic fender flare. You can see in this image that the flare portion is sloping downward from rear to front. This is what I went back and fixed after the initial cut.



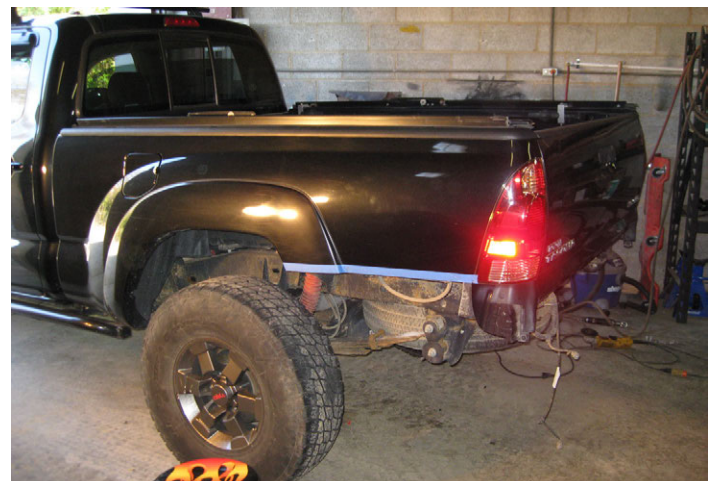
So you're happy with the cut line you just taped? Now it's time to start cutting. Begin by starting the cut on the fender at the forward edge of the fender flare closest to the tire. You want to get the plastic flare out of the way so you can make a better cut on the sheet metal. (I did use an angle grinder with cut off wheel to make the cuts in each fender flare.) Once the flare is out of the way you have full access to the big cut across the bedside sheet metal.



Be careful and take your time with the big cut. This is the part that, if you mess up, will be highly visible along the straight edge of the bumper. In the image you will see all the leftover sheet metal below the taillight that I left on from the initial cut. You will need to trim some of this off. Cut across from the bottom of the plastic piece then in a diagonal line from bottom to top about a half inch behind the bottom front edge of the taillight. You will also remove two screws that hold the support bar to enable you to fully remove your freshly cut scrap metal.



Repeat the process for the other side of the truck. In both instances be careful to not cut any Diff Breather hoses or wiring behind the sheet metal. Also be aware when using an air saw it is possible to cut into the bed storage boxes depending on how long your blade is. On each side I also cut the inner fender plastic at even height to my sheet metal cut line. Then drill a 1/4" hole in the fender liner and a rib on the bottom of the bed to Zip-Tie and hold the liner in place.




Now that the cutting is done, you can raise the bumper into place. Doing the job by yourself will require a jack and two jack stands to slowly inch the bumper up and into position. If you are doing it with a couple friends, choose a few who you trust to hold about 140 lbs. above your head while you put the bolts into place. I would imagine it could be done with one friend also, but would be heavy to hold one side and insert the bolts at the same time.




The mounting holes on the bumper are elongated to allow for some adjustment. Line things up how you desire and torque each bolt to 100#. Reinstall the license plate lights with the supplied stainless hardware; you will need to remove the rubber ring around the bottom of each. Then plug in each wire connector. Also, at this point, I rewired my 7-pin into its new location. The final step is to clean up the edge of your bedside cut with some black door molding from the local parts store. Job well done.


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MIDLAND 75-822

CB TRANSCEIVER



When thinking about a CB, there were three important factors that would determine which unit I would use. First off, I didn't want a unit that would be large and always in my line of site or in the way of passenger space. In the 2nd Gen Tacoma, there just doesn't seem to be a great place to put one of the more permanent, large boxy units. Secondly, I wanted a CB that was versatile. And third, I knew it could be very helpful to have a unit with a NOAA weather band while out camping.

The CB that was finally decided on was the Midland 75-822. This radio fit all of my criteria and was really easy to install. The worst part was deciding exactly what antenna set-up to use. After lots of reading about SWR tuning and ground planes, I stubbornly went the following direction with surprisingly good results.

The antenna is a Wilson 2ft tunable tip style antenna mounted to my front bumper with a basic stud mount. The 2ft antenna was chosen because I did not want an antenna that would be waving all about and hitting the truck. Easily drill one hole in the bumper and mount the antenna. In this location there is about two inches of space in any direction before the antenna would come in contact with the surfaces of the truck.

Everywhere I was researching was recommending 18ft of cable. Come to find out, mounting the antenna on the passenger side front bumper is the perfect location to run 18ft of cable without having to bundle or hide extra cable for my needs. You can see I ran the cable from the antenna mounting location, up, and around the back of the firewall, following the existing wiring harness. The 18ft of coax that I used had the ability for



bumper mount (2ft antenna)

the interior end to be taken off the cable, so it was easier to feed inside the cab through the firewall. Once inside the cab, run the coax cable behind the kick panel and under the doorsill. The long piece of plastic easily comes off with a little force and there are existing loops under it to hold the cable securely. I ran the cable straight out and under the seat. At this point I ran it under the center console to where I would locate the end to connect to the radio.



18ft cable



mounted through firewall

Once the cable was where I wanted it I did not like it just flopping around down there. This is where a screw in Zip-Tie finished up the job and secured the cable end just where it was needed.



ran cable under door sill

From here you are all set to tune your CB. For this you will need an SWR meter for fine-tuning. This is the literature I used to help fine-tune my CB: http://www.firestik.com/Tech_Docs/Setting_SWR.htm (Thanks for the link Rich!)



secured cable end

Remember that VERY small adjustments on the tuning tip will make a lot of difference when tuning. Don't get discouraged and take your time. Once fine-tuning has been completed you can safely use your CB without harm to its electronics.



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For more information, visit www.treadlightly.org

Off Road Trailer? (continued from page 11)



Exiting the Fremont River Ford Photo by Perry Loughridge

- Ideal for a base camp setting. You can leave your trailer and gear secure at camp while off exploring in the Tacoma.
- Ability to be towed behind different rigs, buy a new rig and you don't have to swap everything or share it between friends and family.

Cons

- Cost and storage, simply put. Lets face it, you won't ever use it as much as you would like and when its not in use its sitting on the side of your house taking up space. A setup off-road trailer can cost anywhere from \$1000-\$10k+, not a small investment given the numbers of times they usually get used.
- A literal boat anchor on the trail. You grow used to it being back there but without fail it will limit your travels to some degree and make you think a little harder about where you are going to turn around, where you are going to park and how you are going to maneuver through a tight section.
- Must have vehicle capable of towing. Some vehicle setups are not up to the task of moving themselves with big tires let alone a trailer in tow. While they can be built rather lightweight (well under 1000 lbs for example) its still going to slow you down and impact your fuel economy. Your Tacoma's suspension, gearing, and rear bumper selection will need to accommodate the trailers weight and coupler setup.

- Complexity. There is a lot to be said for just getting out there in a simple fashion. While it is nice to have the room to bring the kitchen sink this can lead to a backwards direction in which you over-complicate camp and take so much time setting up everything you bring that you defeat the purpose.
- Size issues. Even for a large family with a smaller vehicle, the trailer might not be enough. Perhaps it might be time to make that leap from a single cab to a double cab.
- Added maintenance. While there is relatively low upkeep compared to a vehicle, you will need to need to keep an eye on bushings, bearings, seals, etc.

So you decide, is a trailer really for you? Will it really make your camping experiences any better or worse? Will it slow you down in a fast moving group or leave you seeking an alternate route? Do yourself a favor and write your own pros and cons list, you might be surprised how easy it is to fill the cons list while really struggling to justify the pros. I know I often have doubts myself. Not so much doubts when I am using it but doubts the other 350 days a year when it sits.

This past summer I gave it a bunch of thought as I embarked with a passenger on a 4 day 300+ mile self supported trip through the desert in my 40 Series Land Cruiser. Not only did I leave the trailer behind but also I left home all modern camping amenities such as my Freezer-Fridge

Camp Overlooking Good Hope Bay Photo by Bryson Tsujimoto



and roof top tent. While the event (RelicRun.com) mandated the old-school simplistic approach I had the time of my life, one of the more fun trips I have been on. It was simple, it was low-key and the Cruiser was packed tight to the ceiling. Our food was warm on the last day and a handful

of rigs in our group ran out of gas. All part of the adventure I suppose. However if we would have had a 3rd passenger or my dog, it never would have happened, the trailer would have been an absolute necessity. So for my needs, the trailer is here to stay, but I will be the last person to recommend them as a 'standard' need as they just are not. Good luck with your decision!

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Red rock camping ~ Photo by BenEdmonson.com for Equipt Expedition Outfitters (Equipt1.com)



Photo by Eric Sandusky

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