

Long Tube Header Installation Notes

OK, you've made the decision to upgrade your existing headers or exhaust manifold on your 94-up 3.8L V6 Mustang to long tubes. First, let's dispel some common concerns regarding long tube installation. You do not have to remove the engine, you do not even have to loosen the motor mounts and jack the engine up. It's really more simple than you think. OK, long tubes for the 3.8 Mustang must be MAC because no one else makes them. A couple things about MAC headers. Some good, some not so good. First, they will make power, and that's the main thing, right? Second, they use individual primary flanges at the heads. That tends to make installation easier, but it also makes these headers prone to annoying and noisy leaking. A couple other things. The headers tend to hit the rear of the driver's side K-member. This can be corrected by taking a saw or grinder to the K-member. Also, the collector flange on the driver's side tends to hit the floor pan due to the way it is clocked at the collector. This is not so easy to remedy. Unless you want to cut and reweld the flanges with better clocking, you'll have to take a good hammer to the floor pan if yours is problematic.

OK, enough of that, let's get started. First, disconnect the battery. Remove the air inlet system on the passenger side and disconnect the fuel lines with your Snap-Loks to make as much working room as possible. Work safely because when the fuel lines are disconnected there is gonna be some fuel laying around. Soak it up with some shop towels. Spray all the header bolts/studs, the collector bolts/studs, and the big EGR nuts with PB Blaster to ease their removal. Remove all 6 plugs and take a good look at them while they are removed. Jack the car up. Pay attention here. Using tall jack stands, jack the car up starting in the front and then the rear. Remember to leave the car in gear with the e-brake set. Now, loosen the header collector nuts on both sides. Depending on your exhaust system, you may need to drop the intermediate exhaust section, cut it off, replace it, etc to make room for the headers. If you are cutting the stock catalytic y-pipe, we recommend cutting between the front and rear converters.

Let the car back down. Loosen the big EGR nuts and remove the EGR tube. Loosen the header bolts/studs and remove the headers on both sides. Check the gasket surfaces on the head; they will usually be clean. If the header gaskets were the multiple layer stainless steel type, they are reusable if they are in good condition. Otherwise, replace them with new Ford or Fel-Pro gaskets.

Now, jack the car back up in the front and rear. Drag the headers under the car and feed them up through from the bottom. They go up from the bottom. It helps if you have some assistance here at least to hold them and get a bolt or two in. With them just temporarily mounted, check for clearance issues at the rear of the K-members, the steering shaft, starter motor, transmission, floor pan, etc. If all is clear, put the gaskets in and tighten them down. Make any clearance adjustments now. Reinstall the EGR tube, the spark plugs, the fuel lines, and the air inlet.

A word about the O2 sensors. You'll transfer the O2 sensors over to the new headers, but you'll find that the connector on the sensor pigtail won't reach to the connector of the wiring harness. What to do? Either extend the four wires or purchase a set of O2 sensor extension harnesses. On certain model years, you may also have to extend one of the rear sensors.

Now, connect the battery and finish the exhaust system as required and you are done.