

## Bum Steer

I had to replace some front end pieces about a year ago because I had hit a curb that managed to bend my lower control arm on the passenger's side. Since I had to go that deep, I replaced all of the following items as needed on the front end assembly: upper control arm, lower ball joint, upper ball joint, the struts and strut bolts, and the shocks. I also did the brakes and installed new wheel bearings. Of course, at the very end of all that work, I did an alignment, or rather had it done, as most people do.

This all seems like a fairly straightforward, almost simple, though expensive, list. It can be, I'm sure, but not if you run into some of the problems I did. The main one was caused by a replacement of the strut which acts as the hinge for the upper control arm. Shims are placed between this strut and the shock tower to adjust the caster and camber. I had someone else do this work for me and they replaced the strut and strut bolts with non-Ford aftermarket parts. The difference is that the Ford design has the bolts threading into the strut whereas the aftermarket pieces are press-in, with knurling which is supposed to keep the bolts from turning when one tightens the nuts on the back side of the shock tower inside the engine compartment. However, under heavy torque or under the force of an impact wrench, the knurling will not hold and the bolts will turn in the strut. This makes it very difficult to find someone who is willing to align the front end because it now requires two men to complete the job, one to tighten the nuts and one to hold the bolts from turning. To add to the problem, it is very hard to get a wrench on the bolts when the car is sitting on its wheels and of course this is the necessary attitude when doing an alignment.

The moral of this story is always to use original Ford parts when replacing the upper control arm strut and strut

bolts. You could use care when tightening non-Ford strut bolts, but not many of us do our own alignments and even if you tell your mechanic not to over-torque these fasteners, chances are he will forget and use that impact wrench anyway. Here's hoping that this tip will save someone else the agony I suffered.

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## Different Color Horse

I recently picked up a set of high-back bucket seats for my 1969 Mustang at a right price, but there was a problem: they were green and I wanted black. I checked around and found a body shop nearby which sells vinyl dyes for automotive use. I later was told that you can find these dyes in some parts stores, automotive paint dealers, etc. They are available by mail, too.


I ended up quite happy with my job, as the color was a perfect match to the rest of the interior. The dye soaked in great, even on the round trim or beading around the seat cushion and backrest. Of course, on the '69s, you have to use the original plastic seat trim be-

cause the dye will not stick to them.

Before using any type or brand of vinyl dye or color, it is very important that the upholstery to be sprayed be as clean as possible. Many professional vinyl redyers use lacquer thinner to clean and soften vinyl to be dyed. Be careful with this as it can oversoften the material as well as melt and craze other interior trim. Take a toothbrush to the seams and folds to get all of the dust and crumbs out, too. If there are a lot of folds and creases, it will help to have someone stretch them out as much as possible while spraying. Apply as thin a coat as will do the job and keep the panels stretched for as long as your arms hold out. If you let the folds close, the dye (which is really vinyl paint) will tend to glue them shut.

No upholstery recoloration or dye job will last forever. Three to five years wear out of a seat that is used regularly is about the limit. Buying the best dyes you can find will help the longevity of the finished job; don't be cheap and don't expect discount house products to last very long. Properly done, a vinyl dye job can meet your high standards and give a decent service life.

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 <p><b>Ford</b> <b>TECHNICAL</b> <b>SERVICE</b> <b>BULLETIN</b> SERVICE DEPARTMENT FORD DIVISION</p>	<p><b>INCREASED TORQUE UPPER CONTROL ARM ATTACHING BOLTS</b></p>	<p><b>3001</b> SUSPENSION MAINT. &amp; DIAG. FALCON - MUSTANG Article No. 55</p>	
	<p><b>SUBJECT</b> IMPROVED BOLTS AND HIGHER TORQUE WILL PREVENT THE LOSS OF CASTER-CAMBER SHIMS</p>	<p><b>SUMMARY</b> 1964 FALCON AND 1965 MUSTANG</p>	<p><b>AUGUST 3, 1964</b></p>
	<p><b>MODELS AFFECTED</b></p> <p>If while checking the front wheel alignment the caster-camber shims are found to be loose or missing, the attaching bolts should be replaced with new bolts (379329-S) and torqued to 90 to 120 ft. lbs. On April 9, 1964 production began using the new improved bolts and higher torques.</p>		