

# Fatman Fabrications Inc

## 1955-57 Chevy Chassis



Thank you for your interest in a Fatman Fabrication frame for your Classic Chevy. Before you begin there are a few things we would like to discuss and point out.

First, **PLAN YOUR PROJECT!!!** Know how you want it to look when it's finished. This will be repeated many times because it can't be said enough. Do you intend for it to be hi-tech or old style? Billet wheels or painted steelies? Pro street? Pro touring? Ground scraping low? Who's going to drive the car and where? Is it going to be a low mileage show car or a freeway flyer for cross country cruising? Establish parameters based on *reality* and not just wishful thinking. Blown big block motors rarely make good long-distance cruisers. Big inch wheels look awesome on some cars but tradeoff ride comfort for looks by requiring short sidewalls that don't absorb road shock. Remember, there is a tradeoff to everything, so save yourself time, money, and aggravation by planning your project.

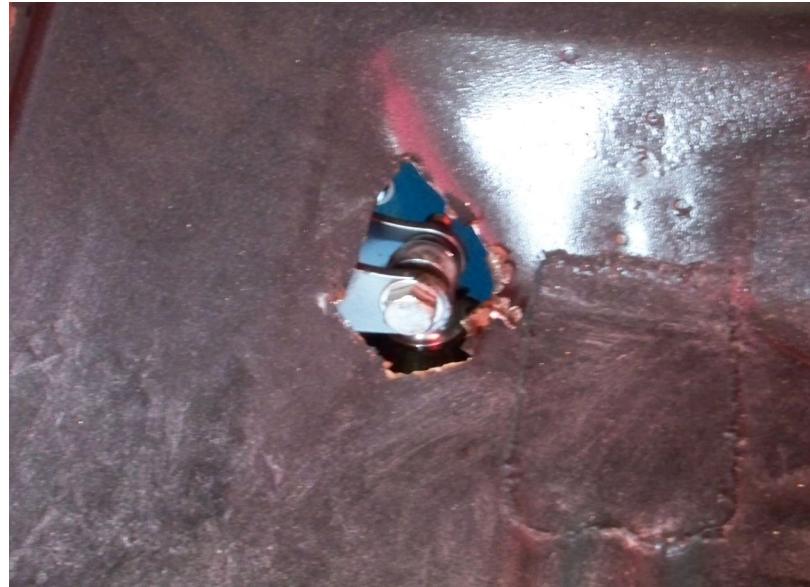
Second, keep in mind **you are building a car**. You may be using an old steel body, but factories were not as exact in the manufacturing process 50+ years ago and there are minor variations in all these old cars. Not everything is exact, and some minor modifications are likely on **every** step of the car, so plan for that and **test fit everything** before you paint or powdercoat anything. Having built hundreds of frames we have them dialed in pretty good.

All of our frames for the 55-57 Chevys are constructed of 3"x4"x.188" and 3" x 3" x .188 wall mandrel bent rectangle tubing rear kick up rails. They are made to follow the original shape and form, and to fit with original body mounts. We have built the chassis with adjustments for minor variations in body mounts. There are 5 different bumper mount bolt patterns used on these cars, so we do not drill them. You can tuck your bumper up to a tighter custom fit and drill the one set of holes that suit your car. The only modifications to the body will be a small revision of the right rear trunk floor for proper clearance of the upper Coilover/Shockwave mounts and rear sway bar mounts and removal of the factory pinion snubber. Some OE tanks will require the stamped steel corner to be removed or shortened for coilover clearance. Nomads and wagons will need the spare tire well removed and a flat floor fabbed. The stock (kidney bean style) tank is shaped in a way that interferes with the rear suspension, and a car of this caliber likely won't be using a stock tank anyway.

Expect a 2"-3" drop from stock with our standard chassis and standard spindles. Airride, and 2" dropped spindles are options to put the car radically low.

For paramount strength and rigidity so necessary for Pro Touring performance, the frame is constructed using 3 x 4 x .188 main rails with a massive X member and driveshaft tunnel. We designed our central tunnel to a fully completed circle for stress acceptance without the flex inherent in the open top tunnels seen in competitor's designs. Simply put, a circle is stronger than a "U". Clearance for 3" exhaust is provided while maintaining full strength and good ground clearance.

### **Trunk Modification**



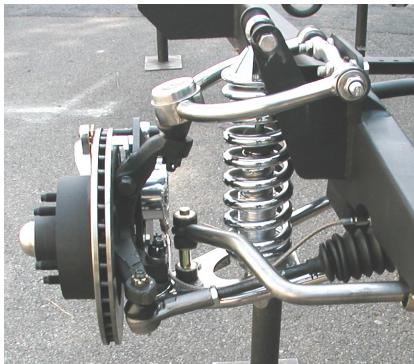
### **Front suspension**

Fatman Tri 5 frames come standard with Stage 3 Custom IFS which features nickel plated steel control arms and stainless fasteners, delrin bushings, and coilover springs. The ride height is approximately 2"-3" lower than stock height. Track width comes at 59", which is 1" narrower than stock for extra tire clearance. Shockwave by Ridetech is optional and will fit the same crossmember and shock towers. A simple swap to the correct shockwaves, modification to the sway bar mounts, and the air system are all that is required. Power steering and a front sway bar are standard. Alignment is accomplished with a shim system allowing easy adjustment without disassembly, while maintaining proper axial alignment of the pivot bushings.

Stage 3 coilovers are used for the front end to provide slight height adjustment, excellent shocks, and good looks to match the nickel-plated tubular control arms that are standard on all frames. Ridetech single adjustable coilovers with 26-way external shock adjustment are now standard on all Fatman frames.

Air ride comes in Shockwave (Stage 5). Shockwaves are similar to how a coilover looks and mounts with the shock inside the air spring. A compressor system is needed with both options.

If you want to run extra low, you can use 2" drop spindles. The drop spindles will reduce ground clearance 2" as well.



**Stage 3**



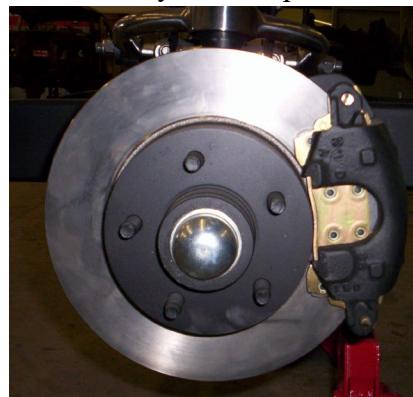
**Stage 5**

Shocks are probably the biggest factor in ride comfort and handling of a car. Shocks are the ‘brains’ of the front suspension because they control the velocity of the suspension. NASCAR teams take dozens of shocks to the track but only a couple pair of springs. Stage III and Stage V have the adjustable shocks standard.

### **Brakes**

Something to keep in mind as we discuss brakes is that some people use bigger brakes to “fill” their new big billet wheels or as a “dress up”, without thinking about the safety aspect. That is why all Fatman frames come standard with disc kits that use early GM “big” piston calipers and provide 65% more braking capacity than those that use the small piston GM calipers. These 11” disc brakes use OEM parts that are easily serviceable units using parts that are available at your local auto parts store, should you need to make emergency repairs. 5 lug 4 ½ “(Ford pattern) is standard. 5 lug 4 ¾ “(Chevy Pattern, w/ 12mm x 1.5mm metric studs) is also available but use the above-mentioned small piston GM calipers. Talk to the Fatman rep. about the options that are available for bigger brakes if using Chevy pattern.

We have several options from Wilwood. Complete Wilwood big brake kits are available that use aluminum hubs, 4 or 6 piston aluminum calipers with 11 through 14-inch rotors. Drilled rotors and polished or red calipers are options on these kits. Wilwood also has replacement aluminum calipers available to replace the standard large GM calipers which use OE style brake pads.



**11" standard**



**Wilwood drilled and polished brakes**

Keep in mind that larger brake kits require larger wheel/tire combinations. Talk to the Fatman rep about what will fit. **Remember** bigger brake options are cheaper than a new fender or grill that you will have to buy because a new Honda that you rear ended has better brakes than you! Above all, think safety first.

We use standard automotive steel brake lines for brake plumbing. Since you must retain a firewall mounted master cylinder, we will “stub” the line at a point for you to finish the connections. These are D.O.T. approved, Tin plated steel lines, show quality looking and will last a lifetime. When you see the bent lines, you’ll swear a machine did it. A simple scrub with a 3M pad and a coat of clear lacquer will preserve their fresh appearance without the safety issued related to stainless steel hard lines. We do use DOT approved braided stainless flex hoses from the frame to the calipers.

## Rear Suspension

A new Moser Engineering Ford 9"- 31 spline rear axle assembly provides the foundation of the rear suspension. A fresh 3.70 trac-loc gearset is installed along with OE style rear disc brakes featuring a functional emergency brake system. Our own fully adjustable Pro link rear 4 bar, Z bar, rear sway bar and Ridetech single adjustable coilovers control the motion of this rugged and responsive design. Rear wheels with the proper spacing, up to 10" wide, will clear the stock wheel tubs. The frame is narrow enough for more tire if the tubs are enlarged, but measure before you buy. Be aware, lowering the car and fitting modern wheel and tires will require disconnecting the rear coilovers for rear tire changes.

We often recommend the air ride on the rear due to the flexibility afforded with the variable pressure. Coilovers do not accommodate changes in load as well. The air ride can be set for a comfortable ride and proper ride height at the push of a button, regardless of the load. Don't forget a compressor fill kit is required with an air ride suspension so there is an extra cost.

## Engine/Transmissions

Mounts for Small Chevy engines and transmissions are installed. The front steer power rack gets the steering out of the way for best oil pan and exhaust clearances. All engines will require moving the radiator to the front of the core support for accessory clearance. Big block Chevy engines will require modifying the firewall for cylinder head clearance. LS series engines require an adapter plate that we can supply. They also may require the use of an aftermarket accessory drive system. We can provide assistance with selection of those proper fitting components. The newest GM LT engine will require fitment of a hydraulic power steering pump. Kits have become available for retrofitting a pump onto these new engines.

## **Finish of frames**

All frames come assembled (except air ride compressor systems and fuel tanks) and coated with a rust inhibitor. As an option *Reflections Paint and Body Shop, Inc.* (located in the same complex) has a frame priming service that includes the following steps:

1. Alcohol wash
2. Orbital sanding
3. Phosphoric acid wash
4. Etch priming
5. Epoxy priming

Epoxy primer is packaged in a variety of different colors. The black epoxy is the most popular of all the colors but will fade in the sun and eventually absorb water, so it should receive at least a coat of semi-gloss clear to seal it. When catalyzed and sprayed, the black epoxy gives the same “satin” appearance as any new sheet metal parts right out of the factory. This primer can be left as is but will hold up best if scuff sanded and topcoat painted. This paint system is recommended by the paint manufacturer and is the best undercoat system available on the market today. Remember, not everything is exact, and some minor modifications are likely on **every** step of the car, so plan for that and **test fit everything** before you paint anything.

## **Other options**

The power steering hose kit is a must have if going with power steering. This kit supplies 4 different fittings to connect to nearly any power steering pump with integral reservoir. The braided stainless hose can be cut to length for a custom fit.

The 3 U-joint steering hookup kit supplies Borgeson U-joints,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” steel rod, and heim joint. Use  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” wood dowels or plastic pipe in place of the steel rod to mockup with.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Car type \_\_\_\_\_

Engine/trans \_\_\_\_\_

Bolt pattern \_\_\_\_\_

notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Total options \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Roller frame +\$18,895

Total price \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Options

#### **Front upgrades:**

- |   |             |   |
|---|-------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> coilovers (Stg III)                  | N/C         | triple adjustable add \$1,500.00 to option                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shockwave (Stg V)                    | add \$800   | triple adjustable add \$1,500.00 to option                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2" drop spindles                     | N/C         | option  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 ½" raised spindles                 | add \$295   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chevy bolt patt.                     | N/C         | option 82-92 Camaro rotor and caliper                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zero offset brake kit                | add \$525   | hub style, large caliper, avail Ford or GM pattern        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zero offset-13 kit                   | add \$625   | " " ,13" rotor, " " " "                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood caliper only                 | add \$395   | black or red powdercoat- includes pins                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 11" kit                      | add \$725   | 4 piston, alum. hub, fits 15" or larger wheels            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 12" kit                      | add \$780   | 4 piston, alum. hub, fits 17" or larger wheels, some 16's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 12" kit                      | add \$940   | 6 piston, alum. hub, fits 17" or larger wheels, some 16's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 13" kit                      | add \$1,255 | 6 piston, alum. hub, fits " " " "                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 14" kit                      | add \$1,920 | 6 piston, alum. hub, fits 18" " " "                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kits drilled rotors    | add \$125   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kits red calipers      | N/C         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kits polished calipers | add \$55    | 4 piston, 6 piston N/A                                    |

#### **Engine upgrades:**

- |  |           |                              |
|--|-----------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> small block Chevy | no charge |                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> any other motor   | add \$500 | including Ford Coyote engine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chevy LS1/LT      | add \$125 | motor mount adaptors         |

#### **Rear Suspension upgrades:**

- |  |             |  |
|--|-------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 bar w/ coilovers          | N/C         | triple adjustable add \$1,500.00 to option |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 bar w/ shockwaves         | add \$800   | triple adjustable add \$1,500.00 to option |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stainless steel 4 link bars | add \$900   | add on to above 4 link systems             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pro street rear rails       | add \$2,200 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pro street sway bar         | add \$550   | required with pro street rear rails        |

#### **Rearend upgrades:**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tru-trac upgrade from Trac-loc      | add \$250 to Trac-loc option                                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wave-trac upgrade from Trac-loc     | add \$340 to Trac-loc option                                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> new HD Nodular case -35 spline      | Tru-trac gearset add \$850 to trac-loc gearset                     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OE style rear disc                  | N/C 11" Trans-Am rotors, Cadillac calipers w/ parking brake        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 11" rear disc               | add \$250 11" rotors, 4 piston-will fit most 15" disc brake wheels |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 12" rear disc               | add \$255 12" rotors, 4 piston with internal shoe parking brake    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wilwood 13" rear disc               | add \$1,225 13" rotors, 4 piston with internal shoe parking brake  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kit drilled rotors    | add \$125  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kit red calipers      | N/C  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> above Wilwood kit polished calipers | add \$55 on 11" & 12" and \$225 on 13" brakes                      |  |

#### **Other options:**

- |  |             |  |
|--|-------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> brake lines                                 | add \$895   | D.O.T app. steel hard lines and s/s hoses to F/W |
| <input type="checkbox"/> epoxy primer                                | add \$1,950 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Borgeson 3 joint steering hookup            | add \$395   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power steering hose kit                     | add \$155   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 way Air ride comp. kit w tank             | add \$995   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 way Air ride analog system-3 gal.         | add \$1,375 | manual operation, dial gauges                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 way Air ride digital system- 3 gal.       | add \$2,425 | Ridepro E5                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 way Airpod comp kit-3 gal. w/ cover       | add \$2,775 | Ridepro E5                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ride height sensor kit add on to E5 systems | add \$525   |  |

Other Air Ride systems are available- call for \$

1/3 deposit required with order. Personal check ok for deposit. 1/3 payment required once your frame goes into our frame jig. Balance due prior to shipment in cashier's check. Shipping cost will be added to final balance once a shipping quote is received from one of our freight carriers. No credit cards on frame orders. Shipped frames require a \$375.00 pallet fee. Shipped frames may require applicable sales tax charges for their respective states. No refunds on completed frames. Frames picked up are subject to North Carolina sales tax currently 7.25%

Once our sales team has worked with you on a basic plan, we will connect you with our frame shop specialist. He will assist you in verifying and dialing in the final version, then we'll send a written proposal for your approval. A signed copy must be returned to us before the frame is ready to be built and will assure that both parties clearly understand the chassis specifications, the way you want it!

(704)545-0369 phone  
(704)573-0401 fax

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