

# Long tube headers in a Fox Body Mustang

By Jerry Grimmer

Question; why does it seem everybody has “shorty” headers in their modified Fox Body Mustangs instead of the more traditional “long tubes”? The conventional wisdom says that the latter were simply more difficult to install and the small power gains weren’t worth the extra efforts. Well if that’s all I rationalized, why not. Let’s see how that turned out.



Phase 1—Prep and Teardown: 1) Car up in the air via front ramps and rear jack stands 2) Remove existing “X” pipe and high flow catalytic converters 3) disconnect battery and electrical system 4) Remove serpentine drive belt and smog pump 5) remove factory catalytic converter air supply system hardware 6) disconnect plug wires and remove spark plugs 7) Remove existing shorty headers (which by the way just easily lifted out) 8) Remove strut tower and under car sub frame braces 9) Remove starter.

Phase 2--- Long Tube Installation : (suggest referring to attached picture for appreciation of the challenging issues) 1) Get a good and trusted mechanically inclined friend whom shares your interests in sado machism and can spend the better part of the day with you ( thank you Dan Kelly) 2) Clear the area of impressionable children to limit exposure to foul language 3) Reinstall thoroughly reconditioned starter motor 4) Initial attempt to install left header from above --- very obvious observation “ how in the heck is that gonna fit through there?” 4) Remove steering gear linkage 5) Carefully support engine from oil pan sump with hydraulic jack , remove left and right motor mounts, and raise engine to gain extra necessary clearances 6) One guy working from bottom , one from top, twist and shout (curse) the header through in a tedious process of trial and error. 7) Right header installation, again working top and bottom stations and working header from bottom position, initial attempt reveals just slightly more clearance needed around starter housing. Suggestion to top guy, Dan shoved motor to left and to our utter amazement, fresh from the lengthy left side battle the header just pops in. Great sigh of relief for the show of mercy from the car gods! 8) Install header bolts 9) Reinstall steering gear linkage and motor mounts 10) Lower engine back into place and install “H” pipe (header collectors to mufflers) 11) Fabricate oxygen sensor lead extensions and support brackets for same and install 12) Fabricate heavy rubber “X” pipe support /hangers and install 13) Install smog pump eliminator pulley and reinstall serpentine drive belt 13) Reinstall plugs, plug wires, and battery electrical connections. 14) Reinstall shock tower brace and lower sub frame brace, fabrication necessitated for header clearance.

Phase 3---- Results and Evaluation: I took on this project with the objectives of achieving gains in sound, performance, and appearance. Those whom have turned some wrenches will immediately realize that I have minimized descriptions of mechanical procedures involved and appreciate that they become even more “ interesting” working with a 23 old machine. At this writing I have only had the car out on the road once but am well pleased with the results. The combination of the long tubes and the unobstructed “H” pipe dumping directly into Flowmaster mufflers produces a deep throaty old school muscle car sound. The engine revs come up faster with very noticeable pick up in low and mid range power. The polished ceramic finish of the M A C long tubes has added a lot of bling to the engine compartment. Finally, I have personally always thought that the hallmark of any seriously modified engine was equal length tuned long tubes into good looking collectors. In conclusion, a lot of work but well worth the efforts. Hope to see you out there this season.