



CONTRACTOR SERIES INSTALLATION MANUAL



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HercuLoc covers are heavy and must be handled with care. Short bed covers weigh about 160 pounds and long bed covers weigh about 200 pounds.

If you do not follow the procedures in this manual, you may drop the cover off of the truck, possibly causing a serious injury. You may also damage both the cover and the truck.

You will need either a shop crane or one or more helpers who are capable of lifting 100 pounds up and over the truck bed.

Follow the step-by-step installation procedures in this manual to safely install the Contractor Series HercuLoc.

Notice to the Installer:

Professional installation is essential. Thacker Manufacturing, Inc. will not indemnify or warranty problems resulting from failure to follow these installation instructions. Any problems or damage resulting from not following these instructions are the responsibility of the installer.

If you do not follow the steps of this instruction manual, you will risk dropping the cover off of the truck, possibly causing a serious injury. You may also damage both the cover and the truck.

Bed Liners, Bed Rail Caps and Tail Gate Caps:

Do not install a HercuLoc Secure Bed Cover with any part of a drop-in plastic bed liner interfering between the HercuLoc and the truck bed. If a drop-in bed liner is to be used, trim the bed liner away from where the HercuLoc bolts onto the bed. The HercuLoc must be bolted to the truck bed without any plastic bed lining between the HercuLoc and the bed. With a HercuLoc installed, the plastic bed liner may be impossible to remove for cleaning.

Spray-in bed liners are excellent. We recommend having the liner sprayed in before installing the HercuLoc.

Always leave factory bed rail caps in place (such as on Fords and 2007-up Tundras). On GM and Dodge trucks, after-market bed rail caps may be left in place at the option of the customer.

We do not guarantee that the HercuLoc will fit over the extra wide tail gate caps on some GM and Dodge trucks. The narrower tail gate cap may be required; these are available in the after market.

Place the headboard rail and bed rails into the truck bed:

On the 1999-2006 and 2007 “Classic” GM trucks (GMT800), there is a slight convex and upward curvature in the truck bed rails from front to rear. The HercuLoc bed rails are formed in a press brake, and will need to be forced to fit this curved surface. When you start to install the mounting rails at the front of the bed, make sure the HercuLoc bed rails are fitted flush to the top of the pickup bed. At the rear of the bed, you will have to force the rear end of the HercuLoc bed rail downward (by hand or with a clamp) to achieve a proper fit.

1. If the truck is not new, check the integrity of the headwall of the pickup bed. A load may have hit the headwall, bending or breaking it out of position. Check where the headwall is welded to the bed sides and make sure these welds are not broken. Correct any alignment problems before proceeding. **This step is essential to ensure that the HercuLoc will sit squarely in the truck bed.**
2. Place the headboard mounting rail loosely in the front of the truck bed, with the mounting ears extending toward the rear of the truck.
3. Place one of the HercuLoc bed rails onto the truck bed, and bolt it to the headboard rail with two 5/16”-18 x 3/4” bolts and 5/16”-18 nylock nuts. Make sure the bed rail is tightly fitted to the headboard rail (as shown in the nearby photo) then tighten the bolts.
4. Repeat the process with the other bed rail.
5. Do not drill or bolt anything into the truck bed at this point.



Make sure the headwall is not broken out of position. Correct any alignment problems before proceeding.



The bed rails fit on the outside of the mounting ears on the headboard mounting rail. Install the 5/16”-18 x 3/4” bolts and nylock nuts.



Make sure the bed rail is tightly fitted at its front edge to the headboard rail. Tighten the 5/16” bolts.

Center the headboard rail into the truck bed.

The Contractor Series HercuLoc bed rails are dimensioned to be narrower than the bed rails of the truck. This design feature has the following benefits:

- The HercuLoc is transferable to other trucks with similar bed lengths.
- The HercuLoc will tolerate bed flexing that destroys most other truck caps.

You should now have both bed rails bolted to the headboard mounting rail, and loosely sitting on the truck bed. Proceed as follows:

1. Center the headboard mounting rail to the headboard of the truck bed. Measure it; do not guess or eyeball it. **This step is essential to ensure that the HercuLoc sits squarely in the truck bed.**



At each front corner of the headboard mounting rail, there is a gap that will later be caulked shut. Center the headboard mounting rail, making sure the gap is the same on each side of the truck bed.

2. With the headboard mounting rail centered, clamp it into place. On GM trucks with the slight convex upward curvature in the bed rails, make sure the mounting rails are tightly fitted to the front of the bed rails.
3. On each side of the headboard rail, drill three 1/4" holes through three of the 1/4" holes where the headboard rail meets the truck bed.
4. Do not install the rivets at this time.



With the headboard rail centered, clamp it into place.



Slip a piece of hose over the drill bit to keep it from hitting the back of the cab.



Drill three 1/4" holes on each side.

Caulk and fasten the headboard mounting rail into place.

You should now have the headboard rail centered and six holes drilled through the head-wall of the truck bed. Proceed as follows:

1. Remove the clamp that held the headboard mounting rail in place, and slide the headboard and bed rails back about 1-2 inches.
2. Run a bead of RTV sealant (supplied in the installation kit) across the top of the truck bed headboard, as shown in the photo.
3. Push the headboard mounting rail up against the headboard of the bed.
4. Fasten the headboard rail to the bed with three 1/4" steel rivets on each side. You will need a "Big Daddy" or similar riveter to do this. Do not use aluminum rivets; they are soft and will not last.
5. There is a gap at each front corner of the headboard mounting rail. Caulk them shut with the RTV sealant.



Pull the headboard rail back, and run a bead of RTV sealant across the inside of the truck headboard.



Install three 1/4" steel rivets on each side of the headboard rail. Do not use aluminum rivets.



At each front corner, caulk the gaps shut with the RTV supplied in the installation kit.

Attach the rear ends of the bed rails:

Bed flexing destroys most other truck caps. You can readily see the problem if you take a shoe box, put the lid on and flex the box. Flexing is why camper shells break in the corners and the rear doors fall apart. Trucks with box section frames are stiffer and flex less than trucks with C-channel frames, however all truck beds flex.

The flexible rear mounting of the Contractor Series HercuLoc allows the bed rails to move laterally at the rear, so the HercuLoc will tolerate bed flexing. Failure to mount the bed rails as instructed will void the warranty. Proceed as follows:

1. Remove the tail lights. Look inside and at the four 5/16" holes in the mounting rails and determine the best places to drill holes.
2. On GM trucks with the slight upward curvature in the bed rails, be sure the mounting rails are tightly fitted to the truck bed. You may have to force the back ends of the rails down and hold them with a clamp.



Remove the tail lights and determine the best places to drill the holes. Leave the tail lights out for now.



Drill a 5/16" hole through one each of the top and bottom holes in the bed mounting rail.

3. Drill 5/16" holes through one each of the top and bottom mounting holes in the mounting rails, into the tailgate opening of the bed.

4. For each of these holes, one 5/16"-18 x 2-1/4" bolt is supplied in the installation kit. With each of these bolts, you will use ten rubber washers, one steel flat washer and a 5/16"-18 nylock nut. You will install some of the rubber washers between the mounting rail and the truck bed, and the balance of the ten washers (with a steel washer) will go inside the tail light area. The HercuLoc Contractor Series is transferable between trucks of different makes and models, and the dimensions of the tail gate opening vary between truck models. Arrange the rubber washers to make the mounting rails of the HercuLoc parallel from the front to the rear of the bed. This rubber mounting also has the benefit of allowing the HercuLoc to move laterally at the rear when the bed flexes; this protects the cover from the damaging effects of bed flexing.



For each mounting hole in the tail gate opening, use this hardware. The 5/16"-18 x 2-1/4" bolt installs through the outside of the mounting rail. All ten rubber washers are used at each hole; some go between the mounting rail and tail gate opening, the balance must go inside the tail light area. The steel flat washer and nylock nut go inside the tail light area.



Dimensions of the tail gate opening vary between truck makes and models. Use whatever number of rubber washers inside the tail gate opening and from inside the tail light area to make the mounting rails parallel from front to rear. This rubber mounting allows the mounting rails to flex horizontally at the rear, enabling the HercuLoc to withstand bed flexing.

5. The left and right bed mounting rails must be parallel to each other. The outer dimension of the bed rails is 68-3/4" at the front, and must be the same at the rear. Adjust the placement of the rubber washers and the torque of the 5/16" bolts as required. The following photos will help explain how to do this.

In the front, the outside-to-outside dimension of the mounting rails is 68-3/4". The mounting rails must be this same dimension at the rear.

The truck should be sitting on a flat surface, so that the bed is not flexed during the installation.



At the rear, the outside-to-outside dimension of the mounting rails must also be 68-3/4". Adjust the placement of the rubber washers and torque of the 5/16" bolts as required. With the rubber mounting, you should be able to push the mounting rail side-to-side about 1/8" to 3/16". This allows the HercuLoc to tolerate bed flexing.

The HercuLoc is solidly mounted to the head-wall of the bed and flexibly mounted into the tailgate opening. When the bed flexes, the rear of the HercuLoc will move side-to-side.



Keep the gaps at the tail gate opening the same on both sides.

Leave the tail lights out until you are nearly finished. You may need to adjust the torque of the 5/16" bolts.



Mount the lower right legs.



WARNING: If you do not follow this procedure, you risk dropping the cover off of the truck, possibly causing serious injury. Dropping the cover will damage the cover and/or the truck.

1. Install the nyliner bearings into the clevises on the right mounting rail. The nyliners have shoulders; these shoulders go on the outside of where the lower legs will bolt into place. Put a drop of oil on each nyliner when you first install it. Nyliners do not require lubrication, however this initial application of oil helps the bearing seat and polish for a long life.



Install nyliner bearings in the mounting clevises. The shoulders of the bearings go on the outside of where the legs bolt in.



Put a drop of machine oil on each nyliner at the initial installation. This helps the nyliner seat and polish for a long life.

2. All four of the lower legs are labeled “Right Front”, “Right Rear”, etc. It does matter! Install the right lower legs as shown. Do not install the lower left legs at this time.



Install the lower right legs as shown. Leave them extending over the inside of the truck bed.

Place the cover onto the truck.

1. First, lower the tailgate. You will need to crawl inside the bed with the cover on the truck.
2. Place some shop rags or other padding over the headboard rail and bed rails to keep from marring the paint on the cover.
3. With as many helpers as required (or a shop crane), place the cover onto the truck.
4. Crawl inside the truck bed and latch the right rear striker bolt (on the right rear leg) into the rotary latch of the cover. There is a “Z” bracket inside the rear of the cover; you will need to lift the rear of the cover slightly to get the long arm of the cover above the “Z” Bracket (or have a helper lift the rear of the cover from the outside, while standing on the tail gate). You can then get the striker bolt into the rotary latch.
5. Crawl up to the front of the bed, and push the right front leg up to where the striker bolt latches into the rotary latch of the cover.
6. Check to make sure both right striker bolts are latched into the cover and exit the pickup bed.



With the tailgate down, place the cover onto the truck. Note that the tail lights are still removed.



From the inside of the bed, lift the rear of the cover (or have a helper lift from the outside). Get the long arm of the right rear leg above the “Z” bracket (on the far right). Make sure the striker bolt is latched in the rotary latch of the cover (on the lower left).



Crawl up to the front of the bed and latch the front right striker bolt into the rotary latch in the cover. There is no “Z” bracket at the front.

Install the upper leg assembly:

With the cover securely latched on the right side, you can now raise the left side of the cover without the risk of it falling off of the truck.

1. Using the 4-foot long 2x4 provided with the installation kit, raise the left side of the cover and brace it up with the 2x4.
2. Install nyliner bearings into the tubes welded into each front corner of the cover. Put a drop of oil on the nyliners. The shoulders of the nyliners go toward the outside of the cover, as shown.
3. Both of the upper leg assemblies are the same and fit into either side of the cover. They go in with the concave sides of the legs facing outward. Install an upper leg assembly into the left side, using the 1/2"-13 x 2-1/2" bolts supplied in the installation kit. Wrench the bolts into where they are bottomed out.
4. Install the nyliner bearings in the lower tubes of the upper leg assembly. The shoulders of the bearings go on the outside of the legs. Put a drop of oil on each nyliner for the initial installation.



Install a nyliner inside the front corners of the cover. The shoulders of the nyliners must be toward the outside of the cover. Put a drop of oil on the nyliner.



Install the upper leg assembly with the concave sides facing out. Wrench the 1/2"-13 x 2-1/2" bolts into where they are bottomed out.



Install nyliners into the lower tubes in the legs, with the shoulders facing outward. Oil the nyliners.

Install the lower left legs and torsion springs:

1. The lower legs are marked according to where they will go. As shown in the photos below, the torsion springs are installed in their “at rest” position. Insert the spring sleeve (made of electrical conduit) inside the torsion spring. Align these parts with the upper and lower legs, and insert a 1/2”-13 x 10” bolt. Wrench the bolt into where it is bottomed out.
2. Rotate the lower leg toward you and against the spring pressure, far enough to insert a stop assembly (3/8”-16 x 2-1/2” bolt, heavy hose, 3/8” whiz nut and nylock nut) into the long arm of the lower leg as shown below (this is the **lower** of the two holes).
3. On the rear legs only, install a stop assembly into the upper most hole of the of the long arm of the leg. As shown in the photo, this stop assembly points toward the rear and engages the “Z” bracket inside the cover.



Assemble the spring sleeve, torsion spring, 10-inch bolt and legs as shown. Wrench the bolt into where it bottoms out.

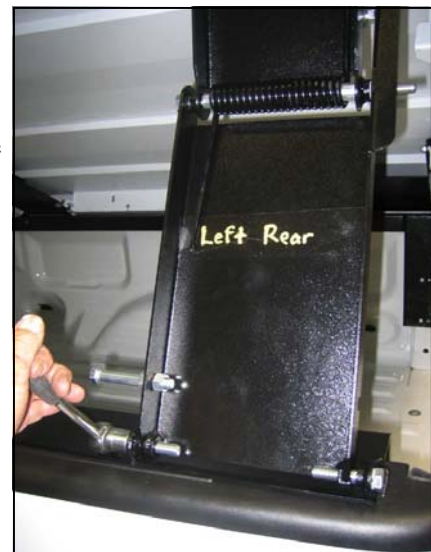


Rotate the lower leg around against the spring pressure and install a stop assembly as shown.



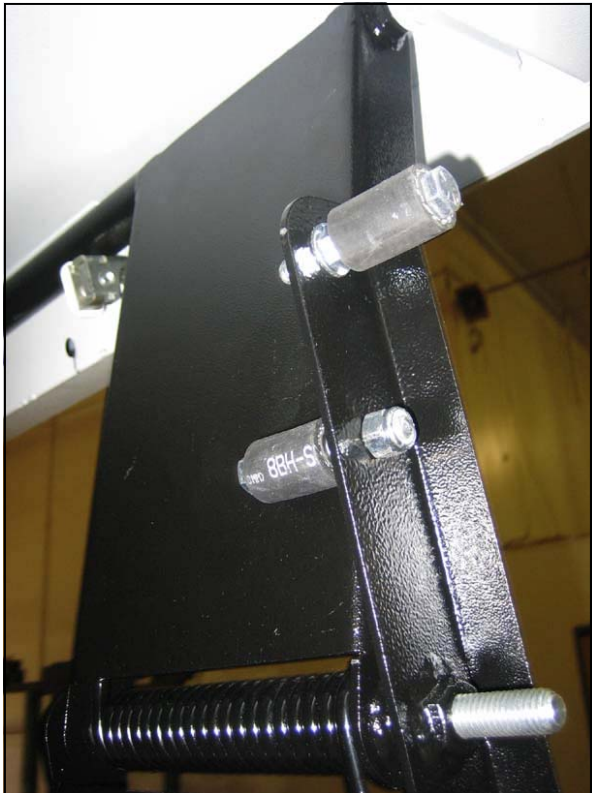
On the rear legs only, install a stop assembly on the long arm as shown. This engages the “Z” bracket inside the cover.

4. Install nyliner bearings into the clevises on the mounting rails (shoulders oriented outward from the lower legs) and apply a drop of oil on each bearing.
5. Bolt the lower left legs to the mounting rail as shown in the photo at the right. Wrench the bolts into where they are bottomed out.



Install the right legs:

1. On the left side, remove the 2x4 and close the cover.
2. On the right side, open the cover and brace it up with the 2x4.
3. Unbolt the lower right legs from the mounting rail.
4. Assemble the legs as you did on the left side.



Proper installation of the stop assemblies in the right rear leg. The lower stop limits the rotation of the torsion spring. The upper stop engages the "Z" bracket inside the cover, ensuring good alignment of the striker bolts and latches.



James Turney of Thacker Manufacturing, Inc. closes the cover.



James assembles the right legs of the HercuLoc.



WARNING: Do not raise both sides of the cover at once before the cable stays are installed. The cover will fall over sideways, possibly causing serious injury.



WARNING: Do not raise both sides of the cover at once before the cable stays are installed. The cover will fall over sideways, possibly causing serious injury.

Install the cable stays at the front of the cover:

1. With one side only of the cover open, go inside the bed and install the 1/8" cable stays. The upper and lower hardware differs; refer to the photos to see the differences.
2. Where the cable stays bolt to the headboard rail, the cable eye should rotate around the bolt. This helps the cable fall into the bed as the cover is closed.
3. Make sure the cables are properly installed (left side of the cover is cabled to the right side of the headboard rail, and vice versa).
4. Raise both sides of the cover and check for a tight fit of the cables.
5. If the cables are too loose, slack can be taken up at the upper eyes of the cables. With the opposite side of the cover closed, loosen the 3/8"-16 x 1" bolt at the cover and re-tighten the bolt and fender washer against the cable eye, with it the cable positioned for a shorter length.



Attach the cable stays to the cover with a 3/8"-16 x 1" bolt, fender washer and nylock nut. If the cable needs to be shortened, make that adjustment here by clamping the cable eye at a shorter length under the fender washer.



The cable stay attaches to the headboard rail with a 3/8"-16 x 1-1/2" bolt, fender washer, flat washer, 3/8" nut and a nylock nut. The cable eye should rotate around the bolt after installation.



Make sure the cables are in this "X" orientation before you raise both sides of the cover at once. These cable stays keep the cover from falling over sideways.

The Finishing Touches:

1. Install the grab handles (don't forget the filler plugs over the bolt holes). Install the cover plates on the inside of the cover where the handles bolt on.
2. Check the dimension of the mounting rails at the rear. Adjust the 5/16"-18 x 2-1/2" bolts and/or rubber washers as required (page 8).
3. Install the weather strip. If one-inch high weather strip is provided in the installation kit, use this around the perimeter of the cover. We provide enough material to also seal the tail gate opening of the bed; use the 3/4" tall weather strip for this.
4. Check the closing and latching of the cover. We ship the HercuLocs with the striker bolts in their upper most positions; as the weather strip seats some downward adjustment may be required.
5. Re-install the tail lights.
6. Install the short pieces of 1/2" hose over the exposed 1/2" bolt threads of the leg assemblies as shown in the nearby photo. This is to keep anyone from getting injured by the bolt threads.
7. Blow the metal chips out of the bed and wipe off any greasy hand prints.
8. Deliver the truck and HercuLoc keys to the customer.
9. Ask the customer to fill out the warranty form and mail it to us.



The exposed bolt threads at the center hinge points of the legs could hurt someone. Keep that from happening by installing the short pieces of 1/2 hose over the threads. Use RTV to keep the hose from falling off.