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Tailgate Hinge Reinforcement Brackets Install Instructions

'18–present Jeep Wrangler JL & Wrangler Unlimited JL



These brackets tie the base of each tailgate hinge to the tub with two additional bolts per hinge. They strengthen the fixed side of the hinge and take load off the tub. They add strength on their own and are best paired with our Heavy-Duty JL Tailgate Hinge Set.

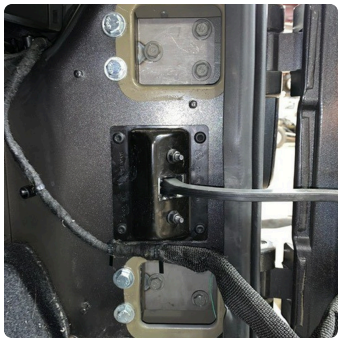
Included: one pair of brackets, made from 3/16" steel with nuts welded to the back, and (4) 3/8"-16 x 1" grade 5 bolts with washers. They ship bare; paint them before final installation (step 7).

You'll need: tools to remove the factory hinge bolts, a tape measure, a marker, a center punch, a drill with a 7/16" bit, paint and touch-up paint.

> **Hidden install:** everything installs inside the cargo area behind the carpet, so nothing shows once the carpet is back in place.
>
> **Factory bolts:** each hinge is held to the tub by three factory bolts. They're reused through the bracket.

Before you begin

Park on level ground, set the parking brake, and put an automatic transmission in Park or a manual transmission in gear. Keep the tailgate closed and latched while you work, so it stays supported while each hinge's bolts are out. Read these instructions all the way through before you start, and call us with any questions. Under Cover Fabworks assumes no liability for accidents from the use (proper or improper) of these instructions.



Both brackets installed: three factory bolts inside each opening, two 3/8" bolts through the panel beside it.



Upper bracket close-up.

Installation

1. Inside the cargo area, pull the carpet back from the rear corner behind the tailgate hinges. Peel back the stickers covering the two access openings, one for each hinge. Inside each opening you'll see the factory bolts that hold the tub side of the hinge to the body.
2. Before you install a bracket, measure on it from the edge of the plate to the center of each welded nut. Write the measurements down.
3. Work on one hinge at a time. Remove the three factory bolts from the hinge.
4. Set the bracket into the opening with its flange offset toward the front and the center of the vehicle. Reinstall the three factory bolts through the bracket and snug them.
5. **Mark the holes.** The bracket's flange now sits behind the inner panel, right next to the opening. Using your measurements from the edge of the opening, and looking at where the flange sits, mark the two hole locations on the panel.
6. Remove the bracket so you don't drill into the nuts. Center-punch the marks and drill them with a 7/16" bit. Clean up the burrs and touch up the bare metal with paint.
7. **Paint before final installation.** Reinstall the three factory bolts in the hinge so the tailgate stays secure, then paint the bracket and let it dry before it goes in for good. (You can drill both sides first and paint both brackets at once.)
8. Remove the three factory bolts again, set the painted bracket in place, and reinstall the bolts through it, tightened to factory specifications.
9. Install (2) 3/8"-16 x 1" bolts with washers through the panel and into the bracket's welded nuts. Tighten them to 33 ft-lb.
10. Repeat steps 3–9 on the other hinge.
11. Open and close the tailgate to check that it swings freely and latches. Then press the stickers back over the openings and put the carpet back in place.

That's it. Thanks for choosing Under Cover Fabworks. Call or email us with any questions.