

# Exogate™ Oversize Tire Carrier Installation Instructions



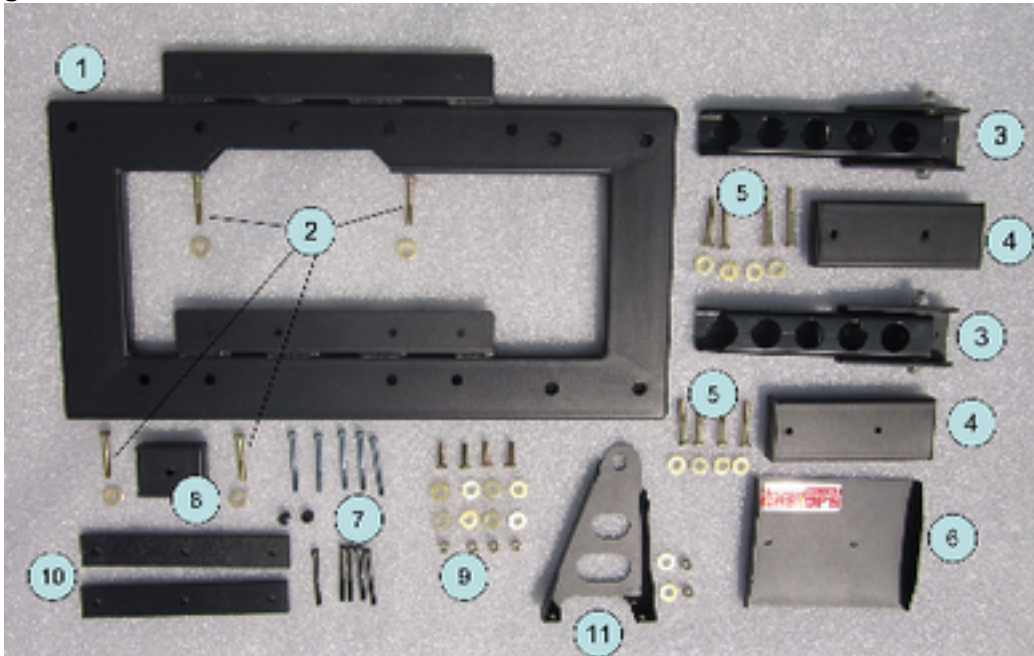
## Tools & Equipment:

- ½ inch socket & driver (extensions can be helpful)
- Phillips head screwdriver
- Small flat screwdriver(s)
- Torx 27 screwdriver or small bit/extension/ratchet (for tire bumper removal)
- Torx 40 bit (early model Wranglers with Torx tailgate hinge screws)
- Torx 45 or 47 bit (for installing the sport bar bracket, size depends on year)
- Torx 50 bit (for adjusting the tailgate striker pin if necessary)
- 3/16" or 5mm Allen wrench (for the tire bumper installation, depending on Wrangler model year)
- ½" open end wrench (for installing the sport bar bracket)
- Automotive detail spray or soap & water (optional, but highly recommended)
- Wax (optional, but highly recommended)

### Notes Before Installation:

- A. Read all instructions before beginning installation and identify all parts.
- B. Given that the spare tire and carrier make washing around and behind them difficult, we recommend cleaning and waxing the tailgate as you move through the install process. Spray detailer works well. Some customers have even found little to no paint behind the stock hinges on the tub and/or tailgate.
- C. It is possible, in some configurations, to reuse of the center high mounted stop light (CHMSL), also called the third brake light. Due to the wide variations in backspacing/tire sizes/rim sizes/etc. it is up to the owner to handle any modifications needed or to source/install an alternative.

### Exogate Parts:



- 1. Tailgate frame (this shows the frame in the orientation for installation: angle brackets pointing up and closer to the left end of the tailgate as you look at it)
- 2. Frame mounting hardware (also used for carrier if keeping carrier in the stock location/not raised)
- 3. Rebuildable, greaseable heavy-duty hinges
- 4. Hinge spacer blocks (for tub side of hinges)
- 5. Hinge mounting hardware (the two longer bolts are for the top hinge, tub side, to allow for installation of the reinforcing bracket, #11)
- 6. Load spreader plate for lower hinge
- 7. Tire bumper mounting bolts (two sets for different model years)
- 8. Lower tire bumper spacer
- 9. Carrier mounting hardware when using the raised positions
- 10. Carrier spacer blocks
- 11. Roll bar tie-in bracket

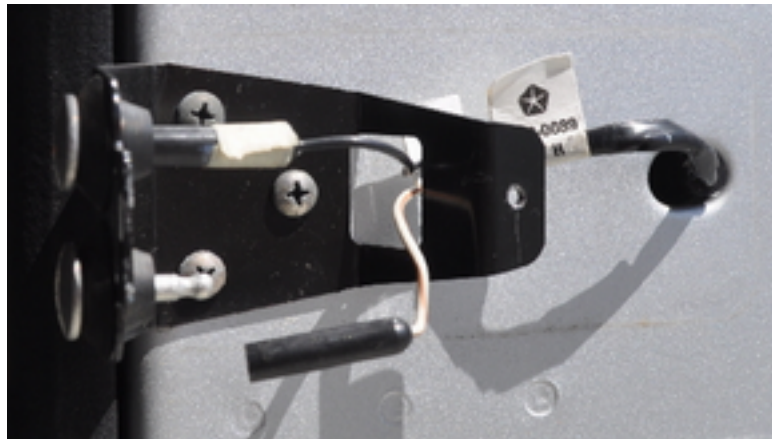
Note: parts shipped may differ slightly in appearance from those pictured.

### Disassembly:

1. Remove the spare tire from the stock carrier.
2. Unscrew the rubber tire bumpers using a T-27 Torx bit/screwdriver.
3. Open the tailgate and remove the plastic cover on the electrical contacts by removing the Phillips-head screw and prying gently around the edges.



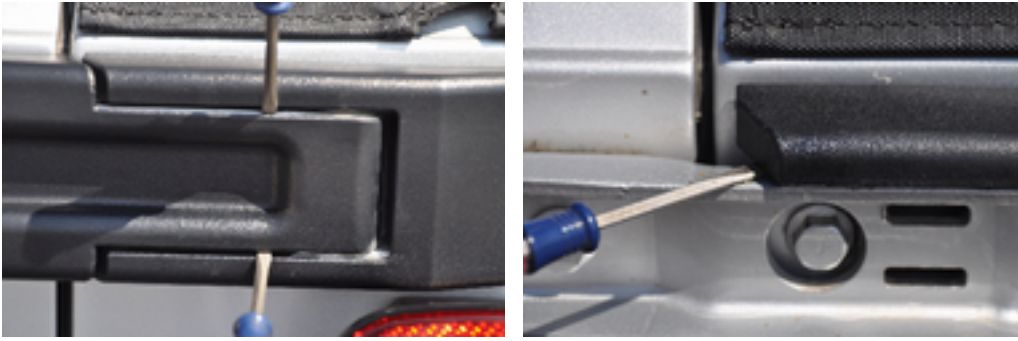
4. After making note of which one is on top (if you are planning on reusing the CHMSL) pull the plugs loose from the contacts.



5. Squeeze the outside edges of the rubber bushing on the CHMSL wires to push it through tailgate, remove the CHMSL wires.
6. Close the tailgate and unbolt the spare carrier from the tailgate.

Note: be gentle with the covers in this next step if you want to keep the stock pieces. It is possible to break the tabs on the covers if too much force is used. If the cover is not coming off easily, try repositioning the flat-head screwdrivers, don't pry harder.

7. Using small screwdrivers, pry the plastic covers off both sides of the hinges.



8. With the gate closed/latched, unbolt the factory hinges. The tailgate should stay in place but be careful to support it regardless.

Note: Later models have hex head bolts which require a ½” socket; earlier models have Torx flathead screws and require a T-40 Torx bit. (Note on loosening the early model Torx screws - these screws are installed using a thread-locking compound at the factory, and sometimes can be difficult to remove, possibly resulting in stripped Torx heads. If a propane torch is used to heat the screw head for approximately 30 seconds, the thread locking compound can be softened, making the screws much easier to remove.)

#### **Installation:**

Note: these instructions are laid out for leaving the gate closed and latched on the Jeep during installation. These steps can be done after removing the tailgate from the Jeep, but a second pair of hands is recommended for aligning the parts for final reassembly. You will need to familiarize yourself with the final location of the components and adjust your installation order accordingly.

1. Clean and wax area under hinges on tub and tailgate (recommended)
2. There are two sets of some of the hardware for the tire bumpers to account for variations in the different years, identify the correct bolts for your Jeep by testing in the stock holes.

#### **Carrier Mounting Location Selection:**

There are three sets of mounting holes for the spare carrier on the Exogate frame: one in the stock location and two higher sets to accommodate larger tires. One of the higher sets is offset towards the passenger side to provide better access to the tailgate paddle handle with larger tires, however clearance between the taillight and the tire when the tailgate is opened must be checked. Some combinations may cause the tire to hit the light before the gate reaches its stop, which will break the light.

Due to variations in bumpers and tire/rim sizes, test fitting may be needed to determine the best position.

#### **Tire Bumpers and the Optional GR8TOPS Spacers:**

For the tire bumper that mounts to the tub, below the tailgate opening, one steel spacer block is supplied that should work for near-stock sized spares. GR8TOPS also offers two additional sizes of plastic spacers for use behind the tire bumpers, if needed, when

installing an Exogate (see [www.gr8tops.com](http://www.gr8tops.com) for more information and ordering). These allow you to space out the other tire bumpers as needed to more securely hold the tire against the tailgate when it is closed.

Due to the infinite combinations of tire diameters, tire widths, rim sizes and backspacing, it is impossible for GR8TOPS to provide one kit with all of the spacers that might be needed. For large spares, on the passenger side, it is possible that the tire will sit against the long arm of the hinge and not the bumper, we still recommend keeping the bumper as the bolt in the bumpers add strength to the overall installation.

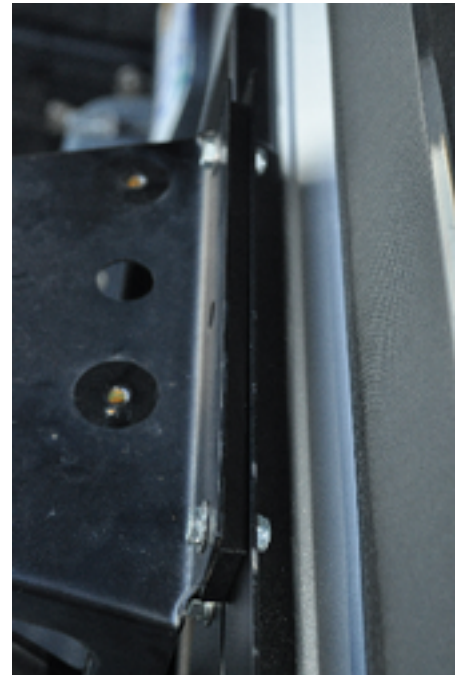
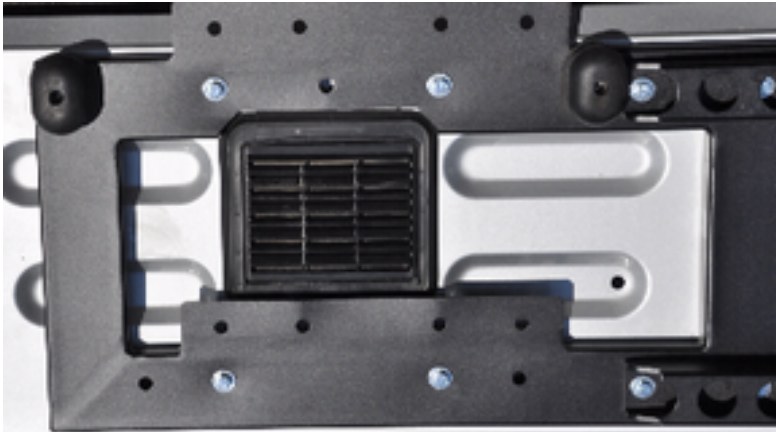
Therefore, we recommend completing the install with no spacers on the tire bumpers to then measure the spacers that are needed, if any. You can then order the exact sizes and quantities of spacers needed from [gr8tops.com](http://gr8tops.com). This allows us to keep the kit cost lower for everyone.

1. Place the Exogate frame against the tailgate and align holes in frame with the various holes in the tailgate.
2. The factory tire bumpers go back in their original locations, just on top of the frame, using either the 1/4" or the 6mm Allen head screws, depending on the model year. Early models use the 1/4" and later models use the 6mm screws; also, later models only have three bumpers while earlier models have five. Use either a 3/16" or a 5mm Allen wrench depending on which screws are appropriate for your model year. Install the tire bumpers snug to hold the frame in place. If you have a later model Jeep that only has two snubber bumpers mounted on the upper part of the tailgate, you'll find two small black hole plugs in the hardware packet you can use to fill in the unused snubber bumper holes on the lower part of the Exogate frame.
3. Replace the tire bumper on the tub below the tailgate with the spacer block behind it. This spacer is most often necessary.

Note: The tire bumpers play a key role in reducing the stress on the factory spare carrier by reducing movement of the tire on the carrier, so it is highly recommended that the bumpers be adjusted with spacers as necessary to properly restrict tire movement. GR8TOPS will not warranty Exogates that do not have proper spacers installed.

### Spare carrier mounting:

4. One set of rectangular spacers for the spare tire carrier are provided in the kit. For tires not close to stock size but on stock rims, these spacers are generally needed to ensure the lugs reach out through the holes in the rim. For tires on non-stock rims, the tire width and amount of offset in the rim will determine if these are needed. You can mount the carrier with the hardware snugged and hold up the tire to see if you need the spacer; however, be sure not to put the weight of the spare on the carrier until all hardware is fully tightened.
  - a. *If you are using the stock holes for the carrier:* Bolt the spare carrier and tire bumpers back on with the longer hardware provided and the spacers (if necessary/desired).
  - b. *If you are using the higher holes for the carrier:* Use the longest bolts with washers/lockwashers in the stock carrier mounting holes to secure the frame to the tailgate, then bolt the spare tire carrier to the higher holes in the frame using the short hardware provided.



### Frame mounting orientation

**Upper mounting  
location showing  
spacer usage**

## Hinge installation:

Note: If you have an '03 or older Jeep, check inside the tub, under the carpet in the corner on the back side of the rear wall of the tub. There is a small bracket with threaded holes that serves as a nut plate for the bolts in the top tailgate hinge:



This bracket needs to be removed and the Sport Bar Bracket installed when you install the top hinge to secure the new hinge bolts. See the Sport Bar Bracket installation section when performing step 6.

5. Confirm that with the short side of each hinge on the tub side of the tailgate opening, the acorn nut is on the top of the hinge. This is required for clearance with the taillight housing. If you find one not oriented this way, remove the nut and bolt and reinstall in this position.
6. On the tub, position a riser block under the short side of the top hinge and secure to the tub with the longer two bolts provided until they are just snug. The tub side bolts for the upper hinge need to be the 2 1/2" long bolts (the others supplied are 2") so there is enough exposed thread inside the tub for the roll bar tie-in bracket when it's installed later. (If you have an '03 or earlier Jeep, refer to the Sport Bar Bracket installation section now and use the nuts that secure the bracket to secure the hinge bolts.

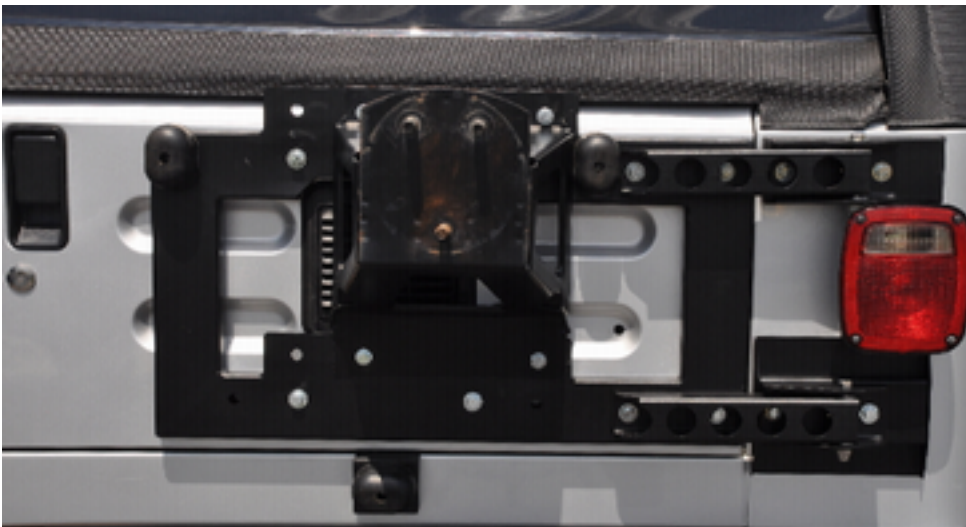


7. Position a riser block and the load spreader plate under the lower hinge using longer bolts provided just snug. The load spreader plate goes against the tub with the bends on the end, facing out. (Note: the load spreader is an important part of the structural integrity of the installed product; failure to install it as directed may result in damage to the Jeep body tub.)



8. Close the long side of the hinges on the Exogate frame and use the longer hardware provided to attach it through the frame, into the stock hinge mounting holes. Snug the bolts.

At this point, all hardware going into the tailgate or tub should be snug, but not tight.



### **Test the tailgate fit and reinstall CHMSL or replacement:**

9. Test open/close the tailgate. If needed, align by loosening bolts on either side of hinge and adjusting the position. This is to get an initial adjustment so the door opens and closes smoothly, once weight of the tire is on the tailgate, it may need to be readjusted again.

Note: if your tailgate does not fit very snugly against the tailgate opening, you should adjust the position of the striker pin mounted to the tub on the left side of the tailgate opening. Using a T-50 Torx bit, loosen the striker pin, move it towards the front of the Jeep, and retighten it, then retest the fit. Having the tailgate close snugly

10. Once the fit is satisfactory, tighten all bolts on the hinges, tire bumpers, frame and spare carrier.
11. If you are reusing the stock CHMSL, make any adjustments necessary to reinstall or install an aftermarket replacement.
12. Mount the spare tire. If the lugs in the carrier don't reach through the holes in the rim, the carrier needs to be spaced away from the frame enough to push the lugs through far enough to have sufficient thread engagement with the lugnuts. If the supplied spacer was not used, install it now. If it was installed and you still need more spacing, additional spacers can be purchased on the GR8TOPS website or you can find another means to space the carrier.
13. Check the spacing between the tire and the various tire bumpers, if needed, you can measure any gaps between the tire and bumpers and order spacers from the GR8TOPS website. Note that longer bolts may need to be sourced for large numbers of spacers.

14. Once the tire is securely mounted, test the opening/closing of the tailgate. If you used the offset raised carrier holes, the clearance between the tire and the passenger taillight when opening the gate needs to be checked to ensure the tire does not crush the light. The image below shows how this tire would hit the light before the stops on the hinge.



15. The hinges have a factory-installed grease fitting. To ensure smooth operation of the hinges and to maximize hinge bushing life, we recommend greasing the hinges after installation.
16. Periodically check all fasteners for tightness and readjust the fit of the Exogate as needed over time to ensure a solid, rattle-free fit.

## Sport Bar Bracket

This bracket ties the upper hinge bolts inside the tub to the left rear sport bar mounting bolt.



### Tools & Equipment:

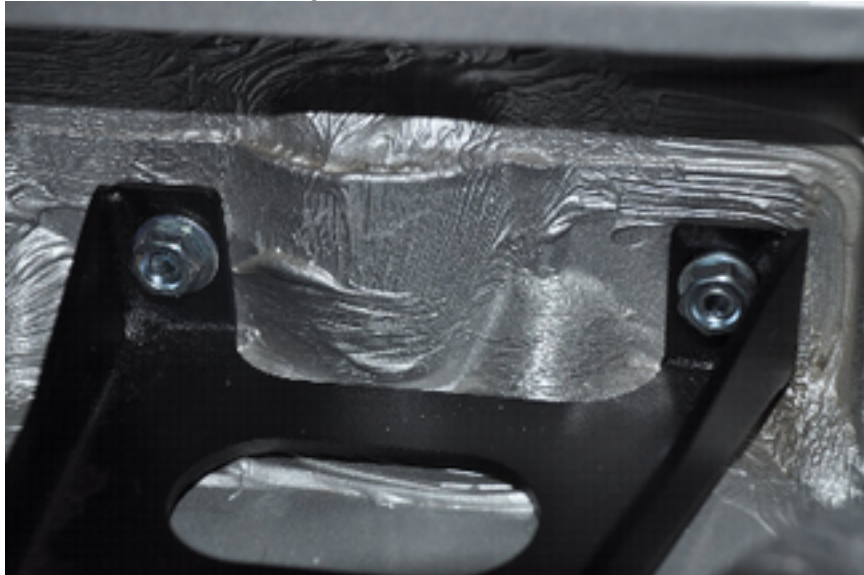
- ½ inch open-end wrench
- Torx T-45 or 47 driver/extension/ratchet

1. Fold back the carpet behind the passenger side roll bar.
2. Using a T-45 or 47 Torx driver, remove the inner (left) sport bar attaching bolt. The plastic boot on the seat belt does not need to be removed; an extension on the ratchet wrench is helpful to reach the bolt without removing the seat belt boot.
3. Place the bracket so that the ends of the upper hinge bolts pass through the two holes in the back of the bracket and the front hole in the bracket lines up with the sport bar bolt hole in the tub. (See photo on next page)

4. Reinstall the sport bar bolt and tighten securely using the T-47 Torx driver.



5. Install and tighten a 5/16-18 nut and washer on the end of each hinge bolt. (These nuts will secure the hinge bolts for '03 and older Jeeps.)



6. Fold the carpet back into place, it should fit over the bracket.

## **Warranty**

GR8TOPS warrants our product to be free from defects in material and workmanship for the term of one year, provided there has been normal use and proper maintenance. The remedies under this warranty are limited to the repair or replacement of any item or items found by GR8TOPS to be defective within one year of purchase. This warranty applies to the original purchaser only. All removal, shipping and installation costs are customer's responsibility.

If you have a warranty claim, first you must call GR8TOPS for instructions. You must retain proof of purchase and submit a copy with any items returned for warranty work. Upon completion of warranty work, if any, we will return the repaired or replaced item or items to you freight prepaid. Damage to our products caused by accidents, fire, vandalism, negligence, misuse, Acts of God or by defective parts not manufactured by us, is not covered under this warranty. Repaired or replaced items are considered part of the originally purchased item and does not extend the warranty coverage.