

INSTALLING A 1970 THROUGH 1978 CAMARO STEERING COLUMN INTO A 1969 THROUGH 1976 CHEVELLE

1970 through 1978 Camaro steering columns are pretty much the same as 1969 through 1976 Chevelle steering columns. So Camaro tilt columns can be a source for an upgrade from a standard (non-adjustable) steering column to a tilt column in your Chevelle.

However, you do have to take into account the following differences:

The intermediate shafts are different lengths, so you have to swap the Chevelle I-shaft on the F-body column. (Note, starting the 1979 model year, the connection between the Camaro steering column and the I-shaft was changed from a 1 inch diameter, round, splined connection with a clamp, nut, and bolt to a double D connection with a through bolt. So 1979 and later columns will not connect to the earlier I-shafts.

The bracket where the F-car column attaches to the floorpan is different. F-bodies had 3 spotwelds that hold the bracket to the column jacket. You'll have to cut that off and grind the spotwelds smooth. Chevelle brackets just slip on the lower column and bolt tight

Some people have reported that turn signal switches in the later steering columns have a "harmonica" connector that will not snap into the original vehicle harness. (They look very similar but they just won't connect.) So loosely place the new column in the car and take the new turn signal switch connector down under the dash and try to snap the flat harmonica connector into the vehicle harness before you begin installing the new column. If the new switch connector easily snaps into place you are good to go. However, if the connector will not assemble, you will want to swap the harmonica connector from the old column onto the switch wires in the later column.

Here is the swap procedure; disengage and remove the individual switch wires and metal contacts from both plastic harmonica connectors. Straighten a heavy paper clip and insert it into the harmonica connector from the contact side to disengage each wire and contact. There should be a small molded square channel in the connector that will guide you to a metal tang on the contact that holds it in place. Once you depress the tang and pop the wire and contact out of the connector, you should take a small knife blade and bend the tang back out so that it will engage the old connector correctly

You must make careful note of the exact order of the wires in the connector so that when you reassemble them, all your lights, horn, and buzzers will work correctly.

One last tip. The ignition switches between a standard steering column and a tilt column are different. However, the vehicle harness (with two connectors) was the same for all steering columns. The difference is that you have to take the vehicle connectors and twist them 180 degrees to connect from the one type ignition switch to the other.

Jim

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