

Hey guys and gals,

As many of you know the importance of improving exhaust flow is CRUCIAL to making more power on a turbocharged application, Far more important than a non-turbo car. So it should not come as any surprise that Howard was literally begging for me to jack him up and get the ALTA system installed. It was an exhausting experience for both of us!!!! (Sorry I couldn't resist.) But seriously, this is a VERY easy installation and can be performed at home with some simple tools. Just like all my other mods thus far this was done at home. (Admittedly, I did rob a photo from our instructions as no matter how hard I tried I couldn't get my camera to focus.) So thank the UPS driver for the box, grab some tools and lets get to it!

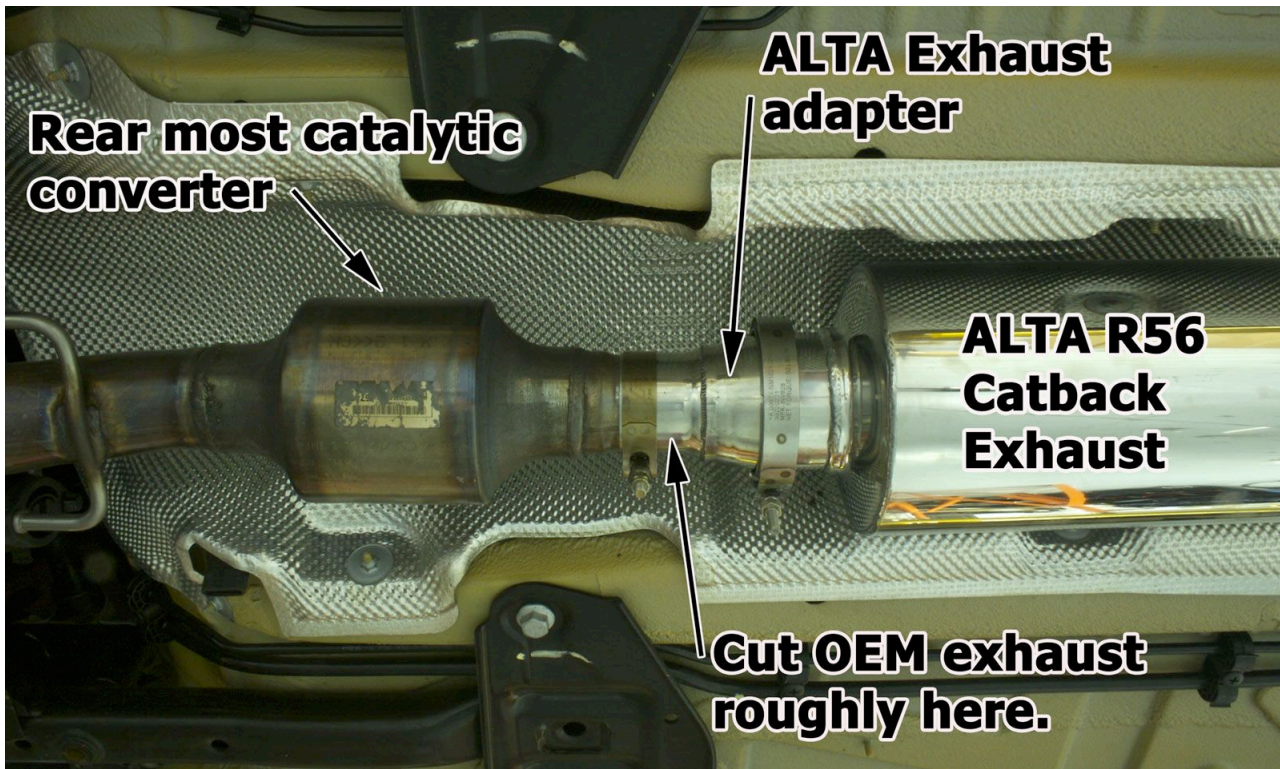
Note: if your kit comes out of the box with damage like this:



STOP and alert the delivery Company and ALTA! I knew this was like this and that is why I chose it for my car. It got damaged between the polisher and our offices and instead of scrapping it I thought Howard would like his pipes with a little more character!

As with any occasion when you need to raise the car, use suitable means to do so safely. Since I think the jury is still out on whether you can take your MINI motoring in the afterlife! I recommend getting the car at least 16 inches clear off the ground. It will make life even better if you can go closer to 24 inches. This will allow you to use a sawzall to cut the pipe on the car, otherwise you will need to remove the whole system and cut it on the shop floor.

Once the car is in the air begin by marking the OEM exhaust pipe behind the rear catalyst. Now measurements may vary from car to car but I used the ALTA exhaust as a guide and measured from the back of the resonator to the front of the adapter. Then using the black exhaust / body bracket as a reference point measure that same amount forward and mark a line on the OEM pipe. Then back out the depth of the smaller portion of the adapter and mark that distance on the pipe. (These measurements should be roughly 14 3/4" for the first and 2 1/8" on the second.) Now it is time to cut the pipe. Also use the photo below as a good guide as well. This doesn't have to be perfect. But if you do cut it too short THAT will be a problem.



Our instructions caution against cutting the pipe on the car and I do agree with that unless you use the proper tools and also exercise caution against damaging other parts of the car. If you choose to do that, you can now drop the exhaust system from the car and cut it on your shop floor or similar. For me, I chose a cordless Craftsman sawzall with a metal cutting blade. Being careful not to hit the body cut at the mark. This literally took 4-10 seconds. Cut right through it. (Be sure to use safety goggles, hearing protection etc. to reduce the chances of injury.)

Now that you have sectioned the system proceed to remove it. I found it easiest to spray some penetrating lubricant on the rear exhaust hangers, then slide the muffler loose and let it hang. Depending on how high the car is you may want to place a jack or blocks under the muffler to keep the front portion from coming up too high and resting on the underbelly.

Then loosen and remove the (6) 10mm bolts that secure the black aforementioned brace from the body. Lower the system down and drag it out.

Before re-assembling the new system take a metal file and dress the pipe on the car. This will prevent the adapter tube from hanging up and reduce the chance of cutting yourself.

This next step is also not depicted in our current instructions, but I am working on changing that. I felt it was important to offer an alternative to bending the black brace to add extra clearance for the resonator and larger plumbing. From a centerline of the forward portion of the brace mark 3" in either direction, thus totalling 6" wide. Then mark 3/4" back. I used the sawzall and a vice to hold it in place and cut that section out. Then filed the edges smooth and painted the edges. The purpose here is to allow the system to move back and forth without possibility of contacting the bracket creating a rattle. You may not have to do it and our test mule doesn't have this done to it. The choice is yours.



Now it is time to put everything back together!

Gently push the heat shielding up toward the body and spread it slightly in the area around the front resonator. This doesn't have to be perfect, but it is easier to do it now before the exhaust system is in place.

I first hung the muffler into the hangers in the back. Then using some blocks under the forward section to support it in the general area where it will live once it is connected to the center pipe.

Then place the adapter onto the center section and loosely secure it with the "ALTA" v-band clamp. Don't final tighten yet as you will want to move it around for clearance. Place the std. clamp over the adapter, again loosely. Slide the center section over the OEM exhaust pipe, and again place a block or similar under the rear section to support it.

Loosely place the "ALTA" v-band clamp over the center section and muffler section. Now rotate the center section up and away from the ground. While holding the system up, tighten all of the clamps to the torque specs in the ALTA instruction set.

Re-install the black support bracket. I added a couple plate washers between the body and the plate at each of the mounting points to add some additional clearance. These are not in our current hardware kits but I am requiring later shipments to include them. Nothing fancy just some washers. Something you probably have around your garage (I did!)



Now using the supplied collar clamps center the system in the rear. We supply an allen wrench in case you don't have one. Just hold the muffler in the right place and then tighten the clamp to hold it. Also at this time note the distance the tips extended or don't extend beyond the bumper. You can adjust this distance by loosening the clamp at the far forward extent of the adapter. Then push it back or forward and re-secure. I recommend that the ALTA logo be mostly visible. This will allow heat and soot to escape without tarnishing your bumper.



Double check everything is tight and clearance exists around the plumbing. You are done! Lower the vehicle off the supports and take that first drive.

It is VERY common for some obnoxious smelling smoke to be expelled during the first 100 or so miles. This will cease shortly. Also, the system will get slightly louder after a few hundred miles. This is normal and will not continue to get louder after this break-in period.

Simply put I love this kit! It will make a HUGE difference in power, is subtle in the sound increase and looks awesome! I encourage anyone with an R56 to seriously consider this system! More photos and sound clips to come soon!

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