

# PICK & MOUNT A TRAIL TRUCK BODY

Improve your truck's performance with little to no money!

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Like the look? This is Pro-Line's '81 Bronco, 3472-00.

## IT'S A GREAT TIME TO BE IN THE RC HOBBY,

especially if you're into scale vehicles. There are many choices out there and the performance

of the vehicles is pretty impressive. A big draw for people is their realistic look. But what if you don't like the stock body?

The great thing about hobby grade RC is that there are always parts and pieces that you can use to make your vehicle stand out, and truly make it your own. Getting a new body is the best way to make that happen, but for some, the choices can be a little overwhelming. You have to figure out which body out of the many available will fit your truck, and then there's the issue of mounting. I'll take you through the steps of picking out the right body for your rig and how to get it perfectly mounted.



Measure the distance between the centers of the wheels to get the truck's wheelbase if you can't find the information online or in the manual.

## MEASURE THE WHEELBASE

Before you pick out a body, find out what your truck's wheelbase is so you can match it up with the proper size. This information can generally be found in the truck manual or on the manufacturer's website. If that info isn't available, you can measure the distance between the centers of each wheel to get the wheelbase measurement. You can also head to your local hobby shop and measure the wheelbase of the body there and compare it to your truck.

## TRIM THE BODY

Now that you have your body picked out, you have to go through a few steps to get it mounted. First, trim the body. It will come out of the bag with extra Lexan that has been left over from the molding process. You will want to remove this extra plastic so it won't interfere with any parts of your trail truck. Cut the body right up to the trim line.

**The body has a lot of excess Lexan that will interfere with parts on the chassis and keep you from getting it mounted correctly. Trim this off before you get started.**



Adjust the body mounts so that the body sits level on the chassis before marking the post hole locations. If you leave it sitting at an angle like this, you may have post holes that are slightly off.

## ADJUST THE BODY MOUNTS

Place the body over the mounts, and adjust the front and rear mounts as necessary to get the body to sit level. If the body is sitting at an angle it can throw off the location of the mounting holes. At this stage it's okay if the body is sitting too high because we are just trying to level it; you will lower it to the correct height later.



## ALIGN THE BODY

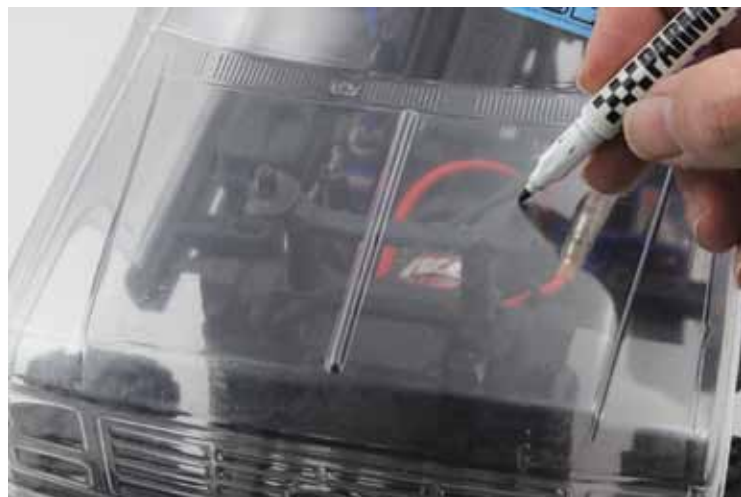
Sit the body on the posts and align it from front to back, making sure you get the center of the body in line with the center of the truck's wheelbase. Or, you can mark the center of each wheel well and align those up with the centers of the wheels. If your truck's wheelbase is slightly longer or shorter than the distance between



Align the body front to back, then side to side.

fender openings, just eyeball it until you find the position that looks best and minimizes the difference.

Now, look down at the body and align it from side to side. Do the best you can by eye, and then use a ruler or pair of calipers to center the body over the truck's body posts. For example, measure from the center of the body post to the edge of the hood, and move the body until both posts have the same measurement.



With the body aligned, indicate the center of the body posts with a marker.

### MARK THE POSTS

Once you are happy with the position of the body, use a marker to indicate the centers of the body posts. This will show you where to make your mounting holes after you remove the body from the chassis. Make sure your marks are right on the center of the posts.



When getting the body to the right height on the chassis you may run into parts that interfere with it. You may have to trim the body to clear these parts.

### SET THE HEIGHT

Once the body has been positioned left to right and front to back, it's time to set the height. There's no right or wrong here; set the body to the height that looks good to you. If you're going low, you may have to cut the body slightly to make room for chassis parts, such as the bumper mounts or frame rails. On my Traxxas TRX-4 the rear bumper and bumper mount stick out past the body, making it difficult to get it to sit properly. I'm ditching the rear bumper, so in the end it doesn't matter; if I were going to keep the bumper mount I would simply cut the body out around that area.



### REAM THE HOLES

Now you need to ream out the holes for the body posts so the body can be attached. If you are using a ream that has hole sizes marked on the side, measure the post size before reaming so you know where you have to stop. For example, if your post measures 5mm in diameter, then you stop reaming when the 5mm line reaches the body.

If you don't have marks on your ream, make a hole that is slightly smaller than the size of the body post. Place the body on one of the posts so you can get an idea of how much more you have to go. Remove a small amount, then try it again and repeat until the body slides over the post. Once you have one post hole perfect, place the ream in the hole and mark a line on the edge of the ream along the edge of the Lexan. Then you can quickly ream the rest of the holes using that line as your stopping point.

Some body reams have lines on them to show you the sizes of the hole it will make.



If your ream doesn't have marks on it, make one hole to the correct size, then place the ream back in the hole and mark it along the outside of the Lexan so you know where to stop.



When you pick a body that doesn't have the same wheelbase as the truck that you're putting it on, you may have to trim the wheel wells slightly to make it fit better.

### FUDGE IT

You may find a body that has the look you're going for but the wheelbase is slightly off by a few millimeters. You can still use the body by trimming the wheel wells a little larger to make up for the short. You don't have to stick with bodies designed for trail trucks; for example, you may find a body designed for a monster truck like the Tamiya Clod Buster that has the right wheelbase to work on your truck. So don't limit yourself—think outside the body. You may just come up with something that will blow people away!



### GO PAINT IT!

When the body is mounted, it's ready for paint. Picking out the right body for your ride is easy to do when you know where and how to

## Mounting a Painted Body

If you're starting off with a body that has already been painted, mounting it will require a different technique. Start with the same steps as mentioned in this article, but when it comes to actually mounting the body, you'll want to first place a small dab of grease on the top of the body posts. Hold the body above the chassis and align it the best you can from front to back and left to right. Once you have the position right, lower it down on to the body posts. When you pull it back off make sure you lift straight up so you don't smudge the grease. The dots left by the grease will show you where to ream your holes.

This way of mounting is slightly harder, because you have to make sure you nail the alignment before you touch the body to the posts. The good news is that you can check the locations of the grease points and adjust if necessary before reaming your holes. The side-to-side spacing is easier to figure out than the front-to-back because you can simply measure off of the lines of the body to get it right. You can check the front-to-back spacing by flipping the body upside down, holding it against the side of the truck, and lining up the body posts by eye.



A little dab of grease is all you need to locate the body post on the bottom of a painted body.



look. Make sure you take your time, and check and double-check while mounting. This is one of those "measure twice and cut once" deals, and the extra effort it takes will be worth it when you see your finished product. ☺