

Gee I Wish I Had Known That

Repack Front Wheel Bearings

This may seem obvious but I will say it anyway, Raise the Chevelle off the ground and put jack stands under it. Break loose the lug nuts and remove the wheel and brake calliper. The pictures that follow were off a drum brake car but the procedure is the same. Remove the grease cap, cotter pin (and throw it out, do not reuse!), spindle nut and washer and remove the hub / rotor. Do not drop the bearings.



Remove the outer bearing from the hub. The inner bearing will remain in the hub. You will have to pry out the inner seal to remove the inner bearing. If you are very careful, you can reuse the inner seal, but for the few dollars the inner seals cost, buy new ones. If you are reusing the old bearings, wash thoroughly in cleaning solvent. Do not use an air gun to spin the bearings up as you can damage the races. Once clean, check the bearings for cracked separators or worn or pitted rollers or races



To remove the races from the hub, they make special drifts, but you do not need them. Using a punch, small hammer and a light touch, gently tap the race out of the hub.



Ok, Now it is time to put it back together. To install the new races in the hub, what I like to do is take the old races and grind down the outer surface so that they are no longer a press fit. Now you can use them as a drift to tap the new races in with out the “drift” getting stuck in the hub.



Pack both inner and outer bearings using a high melting point wheel bearing grease. Now is not the time to skimp. Buy the best grease you can find. I have a fancy bearing packer that I like a lot but you can do this without it. Just put a spoon full of grease into the palm of one hand and press the bearing repeatedly into it until you are pushing grease out the top of the bearing.

Ok, you're almost done. I like to put a couple of spoonfuls of grease inside the hub. Do not pack it, as it will just come out the rear seal. Set the inner bearing in and use the old inner bear race as a drift to tape the new inner seal in place.



Tighten the spindle nut, and how do you do that? With everything back in place, rotate the wheel and tighten the spindle nut to 12 ft. lbs. of torque. Back off the adjusting nut one flat and insert the cotter pin. Spin the wheel to check that it rolls freely. Bearings should have zero preload and .001 to .008 end movement. Good luck.