

# 1961 Rambler American Convertible

## Restomod Expense Log

Serial # B304395

### --- 2022 ---

26 Nov 2022 – \$3000.00 -- Purchased from Charles Frank, 9356 Horseshoe Circle, Indian Land, SC 29707  
Phone (704) 806-1209

26 Nov 2022 – \$53.00, 5.0 hrs -- Gas for ~230 mile round trip to pick up car.

### --- 2023 ---

12 Jan – 2.0 hrs – Put car up on jackstands

20 Jan – 3.0 hrs – Remove front suspension and move parts from inside of car, retract top frame

28 Jan – 2.0 hrs – Start rust repair at lower front suspension mounts (remove old covers, clean up)

16 Mar – 3.0 hrs -- \$186.79 -- Purchased front and rear 1999 Honda Accord disc brakes from Pull-A-Part

18 Mar – 2 hrs – \$15 -- Disassembled front suspension, cleaned Honda brakes - \$15 for spray paint

20 Mar – 2.5 hrs – Welded repair patches in for lower front suspension mounts

30 May – 2.5 hrs – Removed left suspension assembly from parts car, disassembled and cleaned up

30 May – 0.5 hrs -- \$157.28 – Ordered new lower trunnion from E-bay seller “mechanical innovation factory”

09 July - 2.0 hrs - Removed sleeves and rubber from all front control arms, cleaned and painted. Will use soft polyurethane inserts in original housings per Tom Jennings (<https://www.ramblerlore.com/AMC/Suspension-1950-1963-small-highperf/index.html#POLY>)

10 July – 1.5 hrs – Researching poly bushings – Ridetech 90001596 not available (as used by Tom). Energy Suspension bulk-2006 seems to be a good substitute (\$22.75 each)

10 July – 1.0 hrs – \$40.41 -- researched and purchased spacers for poly bushings – (irontime-sales.com)

12 July – 1.0 hrs -- \$215.47 – decided not to use polyurethane bushings and ordered stock type rubber replacement bushings from AMC Acres

24 July – 0.5 hrs -- \$29.94 – ordered 5/8” ID grommets and O-rings. To be used as new seals for trunnions. Not sure if the 3/16” thick O-rings or the 5/16” grommets will be best. Two O-rings stacked are typically used, but I’m thinking the thicker rubber grommets will work better since they are flat on each side instead of round and may only need one per side instead of two.

29 July – 3.5 hrs -- +\$288.00, - \$80 – Took rear brakes off, packaged along with front brakes for sale to Michael Holifield, 8739 Courthouse Rd. Louisa, VA 23093 (via “All Things Rambler” Facebook page - \$80).  
Cut backing plates off rear axle to mock up fit for Accord calipers and rotors (\$288 from Pull-A-Part, Cola.).  
Removed original park brake cable.

11 August – 2.0 hrs – Installed inner control arm bushings on all eight arms

26 August – 2.0 hrs – Not directly work on car, but cleaned shop area and laid out parts so I can start assembling front suspension next chance I get to work on car.

05 September – 1.5 hrs – Cleaned and painted the rest of the front suspension parts.

12 September – 2.5 hrs -- \$520 – Paid \$500 for a rolled over 2006 Ford Ranger with 2.3L Duratec four cylinder and 5R44E five speed auto trans. Cost of \$20 in gas to drive ~45 minutes each way to retrieve it (from 113 Glad Street, West Columbia; ~30 miles each way). Purchased from “Stevo CR”, Facebook Marketplace. Ratios for transmission: 1st: 2.47, 2nd: 1.86, 3rd: 1.47, 4th: 1.00, 5th: 0.75, Reverse: 2.10

23 September – 2.0 hrs – Assembled lower arms/trunnion for one side. Cranked engine in the Ranger to ensure it runs before proceeding. Have to by-pass fuel pump inertia switch, just squirted gas down intake tube to see if it would crank this time.

15 December – 1.0 hrs – Thought I'd get some more assembled, but organized things and found I still needed a few parts, mainly some new grease zerks.

## -- 2024 --

10 January – 4.0 hrs – Assembled upper arms onto trunnion for one side, then assembled entire suspension. Cleaned and painted – one side done! Started cleaning the steering knuckle and upper trunnion for the other side.

20 January – 0.5 hrs – \$13.46 -- Bought grease zerks from Autozone (one pack straight, one pack 90 degree)

13 February – 0.5 hrs – \$12.10 -- Ordered front bearing seals (for hubs). National 7022S, from Amazon, delivered 15 February

14 February – 4.0 hrs – Made CAD file of rear disc brake bracket.

15 February – 0.5 hrs -- \$31.03 -- Sent CAD file to Send-Cut-Send, ordered sample bracket. (arrived 21 Feb)

26 February – 2.5 hrs – Assembled lower suspension arms for second side. Test fit rear disc brake bracket (have to move one hole slightly). Made brace pieces for each side for front end brace (under engine brace)

04 March – 5.0 hrs – Finished assembling second side suspension. Greased both suspension units. Installed driver side suspension assembly (no spring). Finished welding patches on driver's side (near lower suspension mount).

13 March – 2.0 hrs – Designed front disc brake brackets (11" Honda Accord rotors and calipers)

26 March – 2.0 hrs – Worked on front disc brake brackets and “Shelby Drop” upper control arm brackets

31 March – 2.5 hrs -- \$66.19 – Tweaked “Shelby Drop” brackets. Made adjustments to front disc brake bracket drawings. Ordered rear disc brackets in 3/8" steel, ordered “Shelby Drop” bracket sets for both sides.

01 April – 1.0 hrs – Tweaked front disc brake brackets. Made new plywood mockup and confirmed new drawings are good to go!

02 April – 0.5 hrs -- \$46.37 – Ordered one pair of front disc brake brackets.

16 April – 2.0 hrs – \$58.53 -- Test fit rear bracket, discovered I need larger holes to mount front bracket. Ordered hardware to mount calipers and brackets.

29 April – 1.5 hrs – Drilled front caliper bracket holes out to larger size. Tack welded Shelby Drop brackets up and tapped holes in one.

01 May – 2.0 hrs – Mounted Shelby drop brackets on one side of car.

05 May – 1.5 hrs – Finished bolting up suspension (lower arms and lower shock mount supports) and fitted Accord front disc brake brackets/rotors/calipers.

01 Jun – 4.0 hrs – \$12.25 -- Installed Shelby drop brackets on other side of car. Installed spindles, hubs and caliper brackets on both sides. Greased front wheel bearings and replaced rear seals on both hubs before installing. Had to buy longer bolts for spindles.

02 Jun – 1.0 hrs – \$244.92 -- Ordered new calipers, rotors, and pads from Rockauto, hoses from Amazon.

11 Jun – 1.5 hrs – Removed door and seats from donor Ranger. Will make it easier to access other parts later.

08 Aug – 5.0 hrs – Installed front springs, installed new rotor and caliper for one side. Had to make spring holders to install springs.

13 Aug – 1.0 hrs – \$10.06 -- Installed left side caliper and rotor. Exchanged washers in right side caliper (spacers) for thinner body shims. Caliper is better centered now. Connected steering (outer tie rods).

25 Aug – 2.0 hrs -- \$250.77 – Test fit power brake booster and master cylinder. Ordered from E-bay. It's a 1970 Ford Torino setup. Ordered bolts from Bolts-n-Nuts.com

06 Sep – 2.0 hrs – Installed rear disc bracket/caliper/rotor on right side. Need longer bolts for bracket to axle.

21 Oct – 2.0 hrs – \$3.03 -- Installed rear disc bracket/caliper/rotor on left side. Got longer axle to bracket bolts from Tractor Supply, replaced short bolts on right side.

28 Oct – 1.0 hrs – Looked over rear park brake cable routing. Short wheelbase makes it tough! The way the convertible park brake cable comes out (in center of X brace right next to driveshaft) makes it tougher! Made an adapter to drop the cable to clear driveshaft. Looked at rear brake lines – need adapters for calipers.

25 Nov – 0.5 hrs -- \$24.02 – Ordered two banjo bolt to 3/8-24F brake line adapters. Will have to run a new 3/16" line to the rear – it has a little 1/8" line now and I can't find a banjo adapter for it. The alternative is an adapter in the adapter... I'd rather run a new line.

## -- 2025 --

27 Jan – 3.0 hrs – Finished rear disc park brake cable routing. Tested park brake – need to adjust left caliper tighter, works perfectly on right!

23 June – 7.0 hrs – -\$500 -- Removed engine and steering. Had to remove power steering to get engine out from the bottom anyway. Sold engine – will be picked up tomorrow. Will sell power steering setup also.

13 July – 3.0 hrs – “De-wired” the engine compartment and under dash. Remove instrument cluster.

04 Aug – 1.0 hrs – Started removing right front fender (for cleaning “trough” underneath). Forgot doors have to come off! Got to the point of having to remove door.

10 Aug – 1.5 hrs – Removed passenger door and final bolt to remove passenger fender. Removed driver door and fender. Cleaned rusted area under fender.

23 Aug – 2.0 hrs – \$118.79 – Got supplies to fix rust under fender (steel, rust remover, primer, paint). Made temporary PVC drag link so car can be moved. Adjusted left rear park brake (caliper). Cable seems to be broken/frozen – will have to replace.

06 Sept – 2.0 hrs – Removed idler arm, steering arms, and drag link from parts car. 1.0hrs of this was in cutting brush to gain access to the car!

19 Sept – 2.5 hrs – Cleaned up drag link from parts car. Straightened and prepped for welding. May not use it, but not sure. If needed it will be ready, at worst it will serve as a pattern to make a new solid drag link.

20 Sept – 3.0 hrs – One step forward, two steps back! Got the idler arm installed. Had the lower arm mount bar on backwards! Had to remove that and turn around. With the idler arm installed it's obvious that the power steering pitman arm is a lot longer than manual steering. Checked the steering arms – they are the same as manual steering... so I don't have to change them. The power steering tie rods are different and much longer than manual steering also. That part makes sense at least – different mounting points on the power steering cross ram than the manual steering drag link. Started taking the tie rod ends off the parts car arms that I retrieved when I got the drag link. Got one side apart before I had to quit. Next big job is pulling the pitman arm from the parts car. That might be tough!

27 Sep -- 1.5 hrs -- Attempted to remove pitman arm from convertible, no go! Removed steering box from parts car, will swap with the convertible later.

02 Oct – 2.0 hrs – Pulled steering boxes from convert and parts car. Cleaned up part car box and one tie rod.

04 Oct – 2.0 hrs – Installed steering box from parts car in convert. Cleaned up other tie rod. Painted tie rods. Welded drag link and painted. Put rear tires on.

122.5 hours \$4398.06 (as of 04 Oct 2025 – Purchased car 26 Nov 2022)