

97+ XJ Hook install

(Using the [Custom 4x4 Fabrication](#) kit)

Tools you need:

- T50 Torx bit
- T25 Torx bit
- 8MM socket
- 10MM socket
- 12MM socket
- 17MM socket
- 10MM flat wrench
- measuring tape
- ratchet
- Philips screwdriver
- keyhole saw (small handheld saw for opening the holes in the air dam) and a file
- Small work light (available at Home Depot for under \$20)

Tools that make it easier, but aren't a necessity:

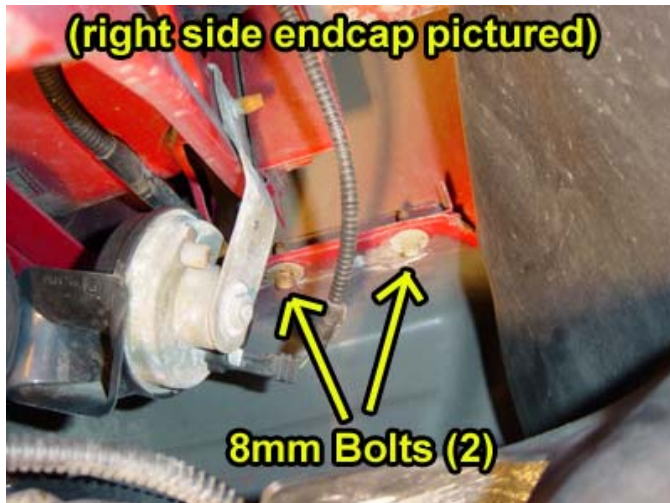
- Clip removal tool (see first pic)
- WD-40 (well, I don't know if this is "optional")
- section of pipe to use as breaker bar
- drill and bit (to get rid of those rivets)



Slide under the truck and start by using the clip removal tool to pop out the black plastic clips that hold the rubber covers on each side of the front end (1 on each side). It's also a good idea to go ahead and pop out the ones that hold up the big rubber flap along the bottom edge of the bumper.

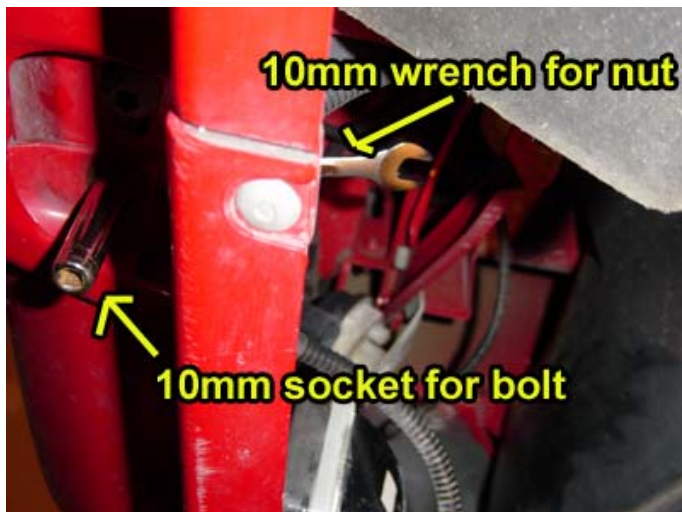


The picture shows the rubber flap with the front of the Jeep at the bottom of the pic.



There are three bolts and a rivet that hold each end cap on, as well as one plastic tab on the top inside edge. Two of the bolts are 8mm bolts where the end cap meets the fender right in front of the front wheels. You can see it here with the light on it. Having a small compressor w/ an air ratchet saves you a lot of time here, but either way, get these two bolts out. The other two bolts are in the next step.

The right side is shown here.



There is a 10mm bolt here behind the fog light hole, and one rivet at the bottom of the air dam. You can leave the rivet in and deal with the end caps flapping around as you take the bumper off, or just drill them out in 10 seconds and replace them with a nut and bolt.

To get the bolt out, use a 10mm socket with a ratchet on the bottom side, and hold the nut on top with a 10mm flat wrench.

The picture shows the right side, with the front of the Jeep on the left.



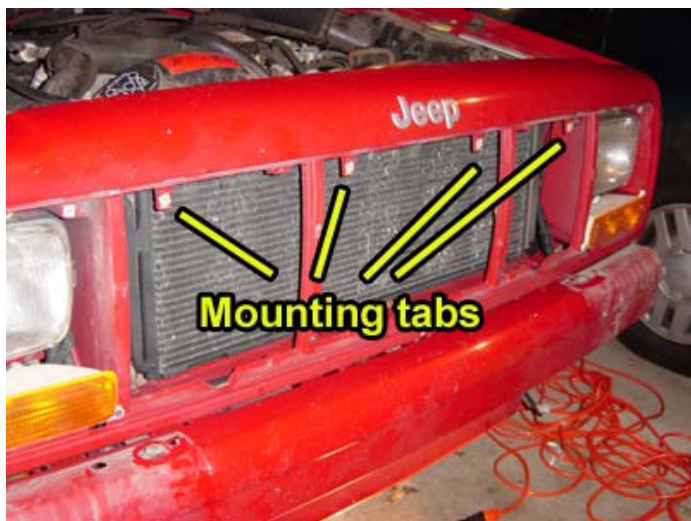
Once you get the bolts out (and rivet if you want), here's how to get the caps off:

There is a tab shown here on the inside top edge of the cap. To remove the cap, push it outward (from the center of the Jeep out towards the side of the Jeep) about a half inch, then pull it towards you (assuming you're standing in front of the truck facing it).



Driver side cap slot show here. To remove the cap, slide it to your right (from the center of the truck outwards), and then pull it towards you.

To put it back on, slip the tab into the slot, and slide it towards your left.



Before you take out the Torx bits that hold the bumper on, you'll probably want to take out the grill (and headlight bezels, since they are on top) first.

It's only four Philips screws (and two at the top of each headlight bezel). Take out the screws, pull the top edge down, then lift the tabs on the grill off the bottom.



The charcoal canister mounts to the bumper on the passenger side of the bumper. Use a T25 Torx bit to take out these two screws so you don't get hung up when you go to pull the bumper away.

After that's off, use a T50 Torx bit to remove the four bumper bolts and pull the bumper away (if you have fog lights, don't forget to unplug the harnesses first).



Here you can see the charcoal canister and the bumper brackets.

Don't get ahead of yourself here; only remove one bumper bracket, install the new brace, and use the other unmoved bracket as a measuring guide so the bumper lines up when you're done!



To get the bolts loose, spray them with WD-40, and use a section of pipe slid over your ratchet for leverage.

The front bolts go into the clips; the rear bolt goes into a threaded boss in the frame (the reason two of the bolts in your kit don't have nuts)

Put the really long bolt in the furthest back hole. Four more bolts hold the brace and bracket together with the factory bracket on top.



NOTE: before you start to crank these down, measure the distance from the edge of the grill to the beginning of the hole on the still install factory bracket on the other side. Also measure the gap between the bracket and the bottom edge of the grill (up and own). Make sure you newly mounted brackets are the same.

Note 2: before you crank these down, drop the front hook bolt through the hole and leave it in there. Once I tightened the factory bumper bracket in place, the bolt wasn't able to slip past the edge of it into the hole, so I had to loosen it up again. The pics were taken before I loosened it and put the bolt through.



Once you've got them fairly snug and adjusted to match the factory bracket, crank these things down tight. I added a little Loc-Tite too.



With one side done, proceed to remove the other factory bracket and install the brace using your new bracket you just finished as your measuring guide.



Save those screw clips from the original bracket bolts! Compare them to the ones that are still on the factory bracket. If the ones still on the bumper look like they're starting to split along the fold, switch them with the other ones if they look better.

If one of these clips snaps while you're tightening down the bumper, you'll be the opposite of happy..



Now that the new braces are in place, you can slide the bumper back on and put everything back together. Before you put your endcaps back on, you'll need to open the holes up for the hooks. I used a black marker to draw lines extending the factory hole down almost to the bottom of the air dam, then used the little hand held saw (sometimes called a key-hole saw, similar to a drywall saw, but with a finer blade) to cut along the lines, and a file to smooth the edges and round the corners.



Grill and bezels re-installed.



Here's the new hook cutout without the hook in there yet



And here's the finished install with hooks and all. I used a box end wrench to hold the head of the bolt on the hooks, and a ratchet and deep-well socket to get the nuts on the bottom.