

Loader Tractor Built Out Of Chevy Blazer

"It works great for general loader work and also for hauling round bales," says Steve Rasmussen, Bloomer, Wis., about the loader tractor he built primarily out of an old 4-WD Chevrolet Blazer.

Rasmussen already owned the 1974 Blazer which was equipped with a 327 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission. He stripped it down to the main chassis and used 2 by 8 and 4-in. channel iron to build a new frame that supports a used Deere 4700 loader. The loader cylinders are operated by a hydraulic pump (off an old Ford combine) that's belt-driven off the engine. He reversed the controls and replaced the car's original bench seat with a bucket seat out of a Toyota, mounting it backward. He used angle iron and solid steel pipe to build a rollbar that extends all the way to the back of the machine. A pair of old car hoods were used to fashion a hood.

"I call it my 'Chevier' because it's a cross between a Chevy and a Deere. A lot of people who drive by stop to check it out," says Rasmussen, who built the rig last win-

ter. "I use it to move dirt and plow snow, to pick up cars around my yard, and to drag tree tops out of the woods. By replacing the bucket with a bale spear I can also use it to load round bales onto a semi trailer. The loader has a lift capacity of up to two tons.

"I built it because I couldn't justify spending \$13,000 to \$20,000 for a new skidsteer loader. I paid \$400 for the loader which was my biggest expense. My total cost was about \$600. It has a longer wheelbase than a conventional skidsteer loader which helps with traction because the front and rear wheels don't drive in the same tracks, resulting in a better chance of getting onto hard ground. It still has the Blazer's original 15-in. tires.

"It goes faster than a skidsteer loader. To go forward I actually drive in reverse, which has a top speed of 35 mph. If I want I can turn the seat around to drive the other way and go even faster. The reversed seat sets about 2 ft. back so I can still operate the controls. A heavy-duty winch mounts between the loader arms and under the custom-made gas tank, which mounts under the seat.



"The loader didn't have cylinders on it when I bought it so I added 3-ft. long cylinders and built brackets for them. To steer I simply move a lever back and forth. I use a two-way spool valve to operate the loader and bucket. The hydraulic pump off an old Deere combine provides power steering. The pump

originally was connected to cables that controlled the combine's steering system. I connected the cables to the Blazer's steering system."

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How To Build An Inexpensive Pole Barn

"We needed additional barn space during calving season to shelter cows with new calves or for sick calves that need to be out of the weather. The price of lumber has risen so much we decided to build with poles instead, cut from trees on our own ranch," says Heather Smith Thomas, Salmon, Idaho.

We used the biggest poles for uprights and smaller, longer poles for rafters. The uprights range from 12 to 16 ft. long with the longest poles in front so the roof slopes to the back. We set them 3 to 3.5 ft. in the ground, firmly tamped. The rafters are covered with metal sheeting, screwed to the pole rafters, which rest on double cross bars

nailed to the upright poles. The pole rafters are spaced 2 ft. apart and reinforced with criss-crossed poles underneath.

To put up the building, we worked on top of two cattle trucks that we used as scaffolds by putting boards across the truck racks.

The open-sided barn was partitioned into stalls using portable panels fastened to the upright poles. We can take the panels out and move them to the side for cleaning the barn with a tractor and to use the barn to store machinery."

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How He Switched To Narrow Rows

"Anyone who wants to switch to narrow rows without moving their tractor wheels in closer might want to look at the setup I'm using," says Robert Stonner, Camden, Mo.

"I added an extra row unit to my 8-row Deere 7100 30-in. planter. I had to move the drive sprockets over so they're right behind the tractor wheel since I now have a row in the middle.

"I straddle 3 rows and have 3 rows on each side. Rows are spaced 24 in. apart except where the tractor wheels run, which

are 28 in. The tractor wheels remain at 76 in. center-to-center.

"I rebuilt a Deere 843 cornhead to handle the new row spacing. I had to trim down the existing tin work and add one more row unit. It has two wider snouts to match the two wider rows. The conversion of the cornhead was really quite simple to do and works and looks great."

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4-WD Tractor Built Out Of Army Loader Tractor

"It rides like a Cadillac and handles like a dream," says J.W. Carter, Sparta, Tenn., about the 4-WD tractor he built using parts from a military 4-WD loader tractor. Additional components came off a semi truck, combine, and log skidder.

He paid \$450 for a Hough H90 military loader which he bought directly from the manufacturer. He combined the drive axles and other components with frame work off the semi truck. He matched the loader engine up with the truck's 10-speed Road Ranger transmission. He added a 2-speed transfer case (salvaged from an old truck) to transfer power to the rear axle. The tractor has 20 forward speeds and four reverse.

He bought four 23.1 by 26 combine tires and mounted them on the wheel rims off an old log skidder. He also mounted the 3-pt. hitch off an old Oliver 1850 tractor.



"It rides so nice that even my wife likes to drive it," says Carter. "I spent a total of only about \$3,500 so it's been a good, cheap source of horsepower. It's great for heavy tillage work, and my friend Jack Langford has even had success with it at local tractor pulls."

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