

Slick Way To Hook Up To Lift Arms

Anyone who's ever hooked up a 3-pt. implement to an older tractor knows what a pain it can be to hook up to the lower lift arms. Everything has to be lined up just right.

When Charles Schmidt got tired of dealing with the problem, he did something about it. He made a slotted hookup system that makes it easy for an operator to hook up, without any help.

"The design works so much better than the original," he says. "I can easily and safely attach or remove any 3-pt. implement in just a few seconds."

He had a local machine shop do the work. They cut off each lift arm about 8 in. back from the ball coupling, then welded steel plates onto both sides of the remaining lift arm. A 6-in. long slot was made in the cut-off part. Then 3/4-in. and 3/8-in. dia. holes were drilled through the plate, and a 3/4-in. hole

through the remaining lift arm. A 3/4-in. pin connects the slotted piece to the remaining lift arm, and a 3/8-in. pin keeps the slotted piece from falling off.

"I use it on my 1985 IH 784 tractor. It really works good," says Schmidt. "My high wheel rake and my mower used to be almost impossible to hook up. Now it's an easy job. You can buy replacement adjustable lower lift arms for older tractors like mine, but they sell for \$300 apiece. I spent a total of \$75."

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Slotted hookup system makes it easy for Charles Schmidt to hook up 3-pt. implements to his IH 784 tractor, without any help (above). "I can attach or remove any 3-pt. implement in just a few seconds," says Schmidt.



Subway Car Paint Now Available For Tractors, Too

"This paint was formulated for New York City subway cars in the early 1970's," says Pat Mastricola about his Master Series paint. "I sold it for 20 years before I found out the cars were regularly scrubbed with brushes and an alkali and solvent cleaner to remove grit, grime and graffiti. The cars still look like new even after 10 years of this type of cleaning."

Mastricola has started offering the heavy-duty paint for tractors and other farm equipment. The key to the paint's success is applying multi coats.

Two coats of the company's Permanent Rust Sealer Primer followed by a single coat of Tractorkote AG111 has been shown to withstand 14,000 hours of salt spray. AG111 by itself is a powerful anti-chemical coating, withstanding 90 days of immersion in acetone. It is also UV stable. The paint goes on with a brush and, once cured, is highly chip resistant with a high gloss finish.

"It was formulated with three different resins; most paints have one or two," explains Mastricola. "It can be used in areas that really get beat up by fuel and other fluids. I

do a lot of car restoration, and I use it on the cars and the floor of my shop."

Testing it out for himself, Mastricola clear-coated a 1967 Chevy hood with AG111. He then drew on it with a magic marker.

"I cleaned it right off with a little paint thinner," he says. "I use thinner to clean my painted concrete floors. A little thinner on a rag wipes up spilled paint and doesn't damage the floor."

Mastricola adds that a little AG111 goes a long way, thanks to the fact it contains 60 percent solids. "I painted an entire Firebird exterior with a single quart of paint," he says. "A quart will do 110 to 120 sq. ft."

Mastricola says the company carries stock Deere green, Farmall, Massey and other brand colors. However, special color requests are common. A Tractorkote AG111 kit, complete with sealer, Tractorkote and thinner, is available for \$69.95.

AG111 sells for \$33.95 per quart or \$36.95 with a hardener. The company also sells primers, thinners, DIY high heat ceramic coatings, and paint removers.



Master Series paint was formulated for New York City subway cars in the early 1970's. Now it's available for tractors and other farm equipment.

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Side-Mounted Mower "Does A Beautiful Job"

"It goes down into ditches and under low hanging branches where 3-pt. mounted mowers can't go," says Daniel Van Dam, South Kortright, N.Y., who converted a used 3-pt. mounted, 60-in. Land Pride mower to a side-mounted unit. He modified the pto-driven mower to run on hydraulics.

He built a steel frame to support the mower. The frame bolts to a steel beam that mounts under the tractor. A hydraulic motor replaces the gearbox that was originally located on top of the mower and runs off a pto-driven pump on back of the tractor. An 8-in. hydraulic cylinder is used to raise and lower the mower. An ATV winch that operates off the tractor battery is used to fold the mower upright for transport. A hydraulic reservoir tank mounts on front of the tractor.

"Moving the mower to one side of the tractor makes it fun and easy to operate," says Van Dam, "and I can see everything well without having to look back. My Massey Ferguson 2625 tractor has power steering so I can turn the mower around on a dime. Also, with the mower on the side I can use it to cut grass over gullies where a 3-pt. mounted model couldn't go."

The Massey's hydraulic system didn't have enough capacity to handle the 3,000 rpm motor that drives the blades so he had to install the pto pump. He used a Jacobson

hydraulic motor, which is typically found on riding mowers used by golf courses.

"In normal grass, the pto-driven pump allows me to do a nice cutting job without revving up the tractor engine. I can operate the engine at idle, or about 1,000 rpm's. If the grass is real heavy I speed up the engine.

"It all turned out quite well," says Van Dam. "I use it on my 6-acre lawn, and alongside a long driveway with ditches on each side. I couldn't mow them with a zero turn mower without getting hung up at the bottom of the ditch. I like not having to worry about maintaining gearboxes and belts and pulleys.

"I built it after I retired. Someone who saw it told me they had never seen such a beautiful piece of machinery.

"I bought the mower used for \$700. The mower frame allows it to float up and down to follow the ground contour. To fold the mower up for transport I just push a button on the dash.

"I paid \$300 for the hydraulic motor and \$500 for the pto-driven hydraulic pump. I already had most of the steel that I used to make the mower frame."

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Daniel Van Dam converted a used 3-pt. mounted, 60-in. Land Pride mower to this side-mounted unit. "It lets me see everything well without having to look back," says Van Dam.



An ATV winch that operates off the tractor battery is used to fold the mower upright for transport.