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Sportster Technical Menu



Below you can find a vast array of technical information about the Sportster model motorcycle created by Harley-Davidson in 1957.

The information is divided into three sections:

[Ironhead Models \(1957-85\)](#)

[Evolution Models \(1986-later\)](#)

[Reference Material \(All Years\)](#)

Click on a section above or simply scroll down the page to review the technical categories that are available.

Select the Ironhead or Evolution sections for year specific information. For general subjects pertaining to all Sportsters, select the Reference section. Because there is some overlap in technical information between the Ironhead and Evolution models, if you don't find what you are looking for in one section you might want to explore the equivalent category in the other model section.

Be sure to visit our Parent Site - XLForum.net to discuss everything related to Harley-Davidson Sportsters:

<http://xlforum.net/forums>

Ironhead Engine Models (1957-1985)

Ironhead Technical Categories

- **Engine Mechanicals - Bottom End**
 - [Cases, Crankshaft](#)
 - [Cams, Tappets](#)
- **Engine Mechanicals - Top End**
 - [Cylinders, Heads, Pistons & Rods](#)

- [Rocker Box, Rocker Arms, Pushrods, etc.](#)
- **Oiling and Lubrication**
 - [Engine Oiling](#)
 - [Oil Pump](#)
 - [Oil Tank, Lines and Routing](#)
 - [Trans/Primary Oiling](#)
- **Carburetor, Intake Manifold & Exhaust**
 - [Basic Carb Model Info](#)
 - [Carb Functions, Adjustments, Tuning](#)
 - [Intake Manifold](#)
 - [Exhaust System](#)
 - [Air Cleaner](#)
- **Electrical System**
 - [The Basics - Voltage & Ground](#)
 - [Fuses, Relays, Batteries, Charging System](#)
 - [Switches, Instruments, Lights, Turn Signals](#)
- **Engine Control**
 - [Ignition, Coil, Plugs, VOES, Timing](#)
 - [Starter/Solenoid](#)
 - [Kick Starter](#)
 - [Throttle](#)
- **Primary Drive & Clutch**
 - [Primary Design](#)
 - [Clutch Basket, Hub, Plates, Release](#)
- **Transmission & Final Drive**
 - [Gears, Sprockets](#)
 - [1957-1970 4-Speed](#)
 - [1971-1985 4-Speed](#)
- **Suspension**
 - [Front Forks](#)
 - [Fork Oil](#)
 - [Rear Shocks](#)
 - [Swingarm](#)
 - [Engine Mounts](#)
- **Wheels, Brakes & Tires**
 - [Axles, Wheels & Tires](#)
 - [Brakes](#)
- **Body Parts**
 - [Fuel Tank, Fenders, Frames](#)
 - [Seats, Side Covers](#)
 - [Handlebars, Levers & Cables](#)
 - [Foot Controls, Pegs, Kickstand](#)
- **Ironhead Specific Troubleshooting**
 - [Practices & Procedures](#)
- **Ironhead Sportster - General Information**
 - [1957 - 1969](#)
 - [1970 - 1977](#)

Evolution Engine Models (1986-2017-later)

Evolution Technical Categories

- **Engine Mechanicals - Bottom End**
 - Cases, Crankshaft
 - Cams, Tappets
 - Crankcase Ventilation
- **Engine Mechanicals - Top End**
 - Cylinders, Heads, Pistons & Rods
 - Rocker Box, Rocker Arms, Pushrods, etc.
- **Oiling and Lubrication**
 - Engine Oil System
 - Engine Oil Routes
 - Oil Pump Unit
 - Oil Tank, Lines and Routing
 - Oil Leaks
 - Trans/Primary Oiling
- **Carburetor, Intake Manifold & Exhaust**
 - Basic Carb Model Info
 - CV40 Carb Functions, Adjustments, Tuning
 - Intake Manifold
 - Exhaust System
 - Air Cleaner
- **Electrical System**
 - The Basics - Wire Gauge, Wire Color, Voltage & Ground Checks
 - Fuses, Relays, Batteries, Charging System
 - Switches, Instruments, Lights, Turn Signals
 - Serial Data Bus, CAN Bus
- **Engine Control**
 - Ignition Module, Coil, Plugs, VOES, Timing
 - EFI System, Engine Sensors (EFI & Carb), Fuel Pump
 - Starter/Solenoid
 - Throttle
- **Primary Drive & Clutch**
 - Primary Design, Engine Sprocket
 - Clutch Design, Hub, Plates, Release Bearing & Adjustment
- **Transmission & Final Drive**
 - Gears, Sprockets
 - 1986-1990 4-Speed
 - 1991-2003 5-Speed
 - 2004-later 5-Speed
- **Suspension**
 - Front Forks
 - Fork Oil
 - Rear Shocks

- [Swingarm](#)
- [Engine Mounts](#)
- **Wheels, Brakes & Tires**
 - [Axles, Wheels & Tires](#)
 - [Brakes](#)
- **Body Parts**
 - [Frame, Triple Tree, Etc.](#)
 - [Fuel Tank, Fenders, Etc.](#)
 - [Seats, Side Covers](#)
 - [Handlebars, Levers & Cables](#)
 - [Foot Controls, Pegs, Kickstand](#)
- **Evolution Specific Troubleshooting**
 - [General Practices & Procedures](#)
- **Evolution Sportster - General Information**
 - [1986-later](#)

Additional Troubleshooting & Information For All Years
Factory Tech Info, Charts, Lists, Shop Notes, Tools

Reference Technical Categories

- **Engine Mechanicals**
 - [Bottom End](#)
 - [Top End](#)
 - [Inspection, Gearcase, Sprocket Cover Mods](#)
- **Oiling & Lubrication**
 - [Engine Oil](#)
 - (Includes: Changing Oil - Which Oil to Use - Oil Charts - Getting More Technical)
 - [Transmission/Primary Oil](#)
 - (Includes: Charts)
 - [Wet Sumping](#)
 - [Engine and Primary Oil System Modifications](#)
 - [External Oil Coolers](#)
 - [L84-85 and 86-90 Oil Filter Mount Comparison](#)
 - **Oil Pressure**
 - [Sportster Oil Pressure \(57 to Present\)](#)
 - [Installing an Oil Pressure Gauge](#)
 - **Oil Pumps**
 - [77-Present Sportster Oil Pump Comparisons](#)
 - **Oil Filters**
 - [Understanding Oil Filters](#)
 - [Oil Filter Comparison Data for Sportsters](#)
 - [Oil Filter Internal Comparison Pics \(cut open\)](#)
 - [HD Super Premium 5 vs Napa 7148 5 micron oil filter \(picture comparison\).](#)

- Re-usable Oil Filters
 - Remote Oil Filters
- **Carburetor, Intake Manifold & Exhaust**
 - Factory Carbs, Performance Options, Aftermarket Carbs
 - Mikuni Aftermarket Carbs
 - Intake Manifolds
 - Exhaust Systems & Modifications
 - Fuel Lines & Modifications
- **Electrical System**
 - Electrical Concepts - Wire Gauge & Current Load, Contact Resistance, AC vs DC Amp Rating, Etc.
 - Electrical Tools - Multimeter, Spark Tester, Etc.
 - Batteries, Bulbs, LEDs
 - Device Connector Pinouts
 - Instruments - Speedo - Tach
 - Ironhead - Simplified Wiring Schematics
 - AfterMarket Charging Systems/Stators
 - Misc Electrical Items - BAS Bypass - Keyswitch '14 - Etc.
 - Gauge Mods / Relocating
 - Headlight - Tail Light Mods / Relocating
 - Turn Signal Mods / Relocating
- **Engine Control**
 - Aftermarket Ignitions
- **Primary Drive & Clutch**
 - Broken Rotor / Clutch Basket Magnets
- **Transmission & Final Drive**
 - In Search of 4 Speed Gear Ratios
- **Suspension**
 - Suspension - General
 - Suspension - Details - 7-Pages Theory, Set-Up, Tuning
 - Fork Oil
 - Front Forks
 - Fork Brace
 - Aftermarket/Alternative Rear Shocks
 - Rear Shock Lowering / Riser Blocks
- **Wheels, Brakes & Tires**
 - Axles & Wheels
 - Brakes
 - Brake Pedal Mods
 - Tire 101 (Understanding Sizes & Descriptions, Buying, Numerous Charts - speed, load, etc.)
 - Additional Information - Changing Tires, Cush Drive, Etc.
- **Body Parts - Accessories**
 - Foot Controls, Pegs, Kickstand
 - Sissy Bars & Fender Racks
 - Saddlebags
 - Tool Bags
 - Mud Flaps
 - Aftermarket Fuel Tanks and Parts

- [Lowering the Detachable Windshield](#)
- [Document Tubes / Holders](#)
- [Helmet Locks](#)
- [HD Paint Codes](#)
- [Flag Holders](#)
- [Brass Accents For Your Bike](#)
- [Aftermarket Handlebars, Risers and Mods](#)

- **Service Procedures**
 - [1986-1990 4 Speed Transmission Removal / Inspection / Installation](#)
 - [1991-2003 5 Speed Transmission Removal / Inspection / Installation](#)
 - [2004-later 5 Speed Transmission Removal / Inspection / Installation](#)
 - [Hydraulic Lifter - Disassembly / Inspection / Assembly](#)
 - [Performing a Cylinder Compression Test](#)
 - [Performing a Cylinder Leak-Down Test](#)
 - [Finding TDC of the Piston](#)
 - [Degreeing Cams](#)
 - [Testing the Oil Pressure Switch](#)
 - [General Drilling and Tapping](#)
 - [Polishing Aluminum and Stainless Steel](#)
 - [Trying to Get a Mirror Finish on Stainless Steel](#)

- **General-MSR (For Maintenance, Servicing & Repair)**
 - **Troubleshooting**
 - [Diagnostics - First Things First, Won't Turn Over, Won't Start](#)
 - [Engine Troubleshooting](#)
 - [DTC - Diagnostic Trouble Codes](#)
 - **Compounds**
 - [Assembly Lubes, Oils and Sealant](#)
 - (Includes: Bearing Grease - Dielectric Grease - Threadlock - Anti-sieze)
 - [Cutting Oils, Soaking Oils and Lubes](#)
 - [Cleaning Solutions - General, Parts, Etc](#)
 - [Polishing Compounds](#)
 - [Liquid & Electrical Tape](#)
 - [Plasti-Dip, etc](#)
 - **Shop Notes**
 - [Notable Quotes](#)
 - [Engine Initial Start-up, Heat Cycles and Break-In](#)
 - [Before Buying a New or Used Sportster](#)
 - [Stuck, Frozen and Broken Off Bolts](#)
 - [Warped or Damaged Thread Repair](#)
 - **Tips**
 - [Building a Rolling Chassis](#)
 - [Installing an Engine](#)
 - [Twisting Metal](#)
 - **Miscellaneous - Other**
 - [Wind Chill Chart](#)

- **Tools**

- [Tool Suggestions, Workarounds, and Sources](#)
 - (including Commercial, Homemade and Modified Tools for Sportsters)
- **Engine Conversions**
 - (Includes Top End Upgrades, Performance Mods, etc., etc.)
- **Trailer / Trailering or Otherwise Hauling a Sportster**
 - [Trailer Your Ride](#)
 - [Pull Behind Trailer](#)
 - [Hauling Your Ride in a Truck \(Loading / Unloading\)](#)
- **Custom Painting**
 - (Includes Paint Schemes and Graphics)
- **Raw Data**
 - (Anything waiting to be integrated)

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