

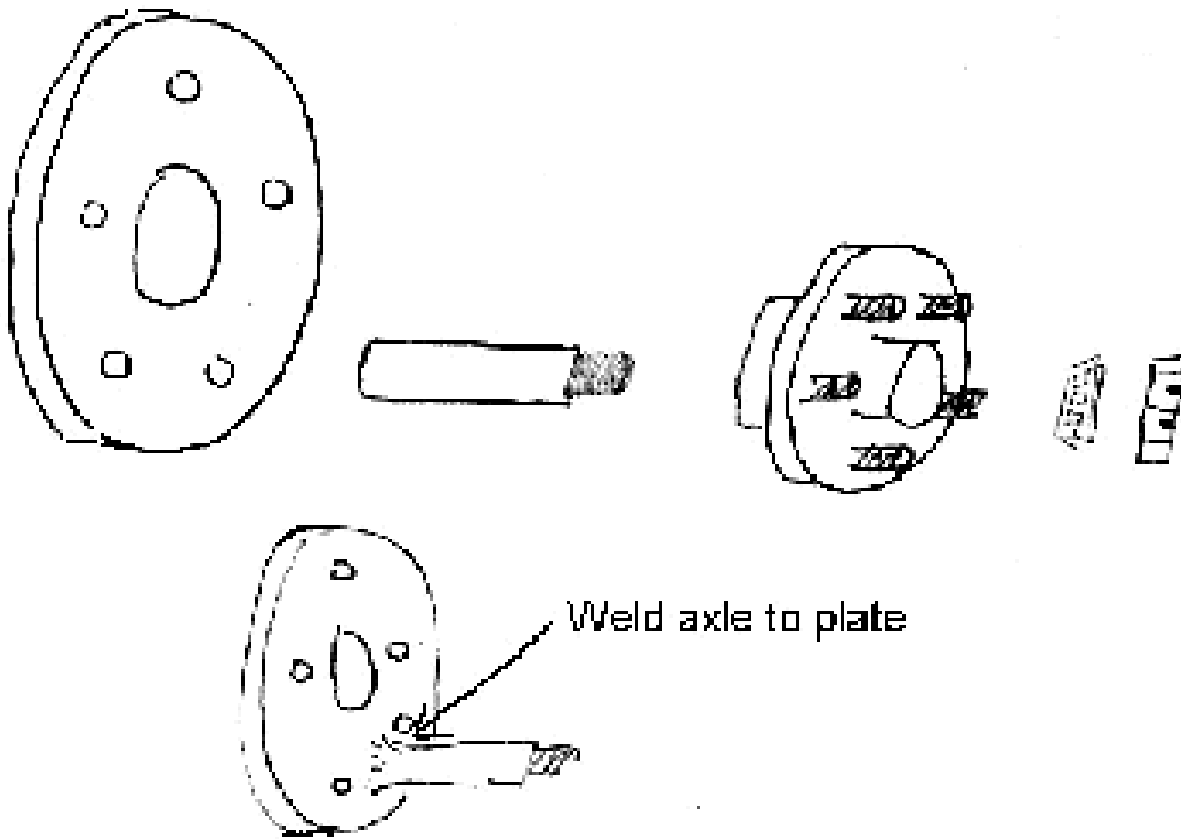
Free Wheeling Tow-hubs

by Tom Carnegie

A few people have expressed interest in free-wheeling hubs as a way to tow a Model T. It is somewhat unconventional and looks a little goofy, but it has many advantages. The two main advantages are that the T tows very well, and requires little power to pull. I pull mine with my four-cylinder car and have no trouble. The second advantage is that you have no trailer to contend with when you get to your location. All of my towing equipment fits easily into my car trunk. I have made a drawing as best as my limited skills will allow showing how I made my hubs. The axle and hubs can be purchased at any large, well stocked hardware store. I used "donut" spare tires, purchased at the local wrecking yard for just a few dollars each. They are usually glad to be rid of them. Some people are concerned about mileage/speed constraints of these temporary spares. Model T's are very light. I have been using the same tires with my setup for several years, and several thousand miles and they still look brand new. I have no problem towing my T at up to 70 miles per hour with these tires. The chief reason that I opted for these wheels over something larger is that they clear the fenders. If you were to use larger tires, you would need to remove your rear fenders to tow your car. The steering is let loose to turn as it likes. The brakes are released on the rear hubs which allows the hubs to float as needed too.

Construction Details

I started out with a circle of 1/2" steel plate about 8" in diameter. I then cut a hole into the center and five holes for the lug studs. I had my holes bored on a Bridgeport so that they would be spaced perfectly, but this is not critical. As long as the studs go through, good enough. I then countersunk these holes with a 60 degree countersink. This is only necessary if your studs are too short to allow the lug nuts to grip. I bored a hole into the plate and inserted the axle into it. I then welded the axle on the front and back. I think it would be OK to just butt weld the axle to the plate, especially if you welded on a couple of gussets. Make sure that the wheel clears everything involved before welding it solid. That is, bolt your plate to the hub of your car and make sure the wheel clears the T hub, the plate the fender and anything else. After you make the hubs, you need to make a tow bar. I just have one that attaches to the front I beam of the T. I then use magnetic tow-lites which are available at U-haul and other places too.



Disclaimer

I've had great luck towing my T with this method, but I will not be held responsible for anything that might go wrong including but not limited to: bad welds, poor driving skills, bad suspension and so on and so on.

(end of article)

Free Wheeling Tow-hubs Part 2

This is a follow up on last newsletter's article. Some folks have wondered about the tow bar. Again I have draw some really lousy pictures. I hope that they get the point across. The towbar is bolted to the front axle I beam between the two spring perches. If the angle to the trailer hitch is close, no hinge is needed although it might be a good idea to use one.

