

# Front Suspension

## VOLKSWAGEN JETTA, RABBIT, RABBIT PICKUP & SCIROCCO

### DESCRIPTION

Vehicles are equipped with front wheel drive and independent strut type front suspension. Axles are supported by lower control arms, and vertically mounted strut assemblies. Strut assemblies consist of double action shock absorbers with coil springs mounted over the outside. The top portion of strut is attached to inner fender panel and lower portion is attached directly to steering knuckle. Tie rods are connected to steering knuckle.

### ADJUSTMENT

#### WHEEL ALIGNMENT SPECIFICATIONS & PROCEDURES

See *Wheel Alignment Specifications & Procedures* in *WHEEL ALIGNMENT* Section.

#### WHEEL BEARING ADJUSTMENT

See *Wheel Bearing Adjustment* in *WHEEL ALIGNMENT* Section.

#### BALL JOINT CHECKING

See *Ball Joint Checking* in *WHEEL ALIGNMENT* Section.

### REMOVAL & INSTALLATION

#### STRUT ASSEMBLY

**NOTE** — Suspension strut does not need to be removed to replace end collar. Only requirement is to leave vehicle on ground.

**Removal** — 1) Raise vehicle so front suspension and front wheels are not supported.

2) Remove bolts mounting suspension strut to steering knuckle. Note that top bolt is one used to adjust front wheel camber.

3) Remove brake caliper assembly and suspend out of way. Pry or force suspension strut out of steering knuckle.

4) Support front suspension by hand. Also, support lower control arm and related components. Work inside engine compartment and remove upper strut mounting nuts. Guide out strut assembly.

**Disassembly** — Fit strut to spring compressor. Slightly collapse coil spring. Remove shock absorber piston rod nut. Slowly release spring pressure. Take off upper mounting hardware and coil spring.

**Reassembly** — 1) Fit protective sleeve and buffer over piston rod.

**NOTE** — Both coil springs must be of same class. If set cannot be matched, both springs will have to be replaced. Springs are color coded.

2) Position coil spring into lower spring seat. Install the upper spring retainer. Fit entire assembly into spring compressor and collapse coil gradually until whole threaded portion of piston rod is exposed.

3) Put on bearing, rubber bumper and remaining upper mounting components. Hold piston rod and tighten piston rod lock nut.

**Installation** — Reverse removal procedure and check front wheel alignment.

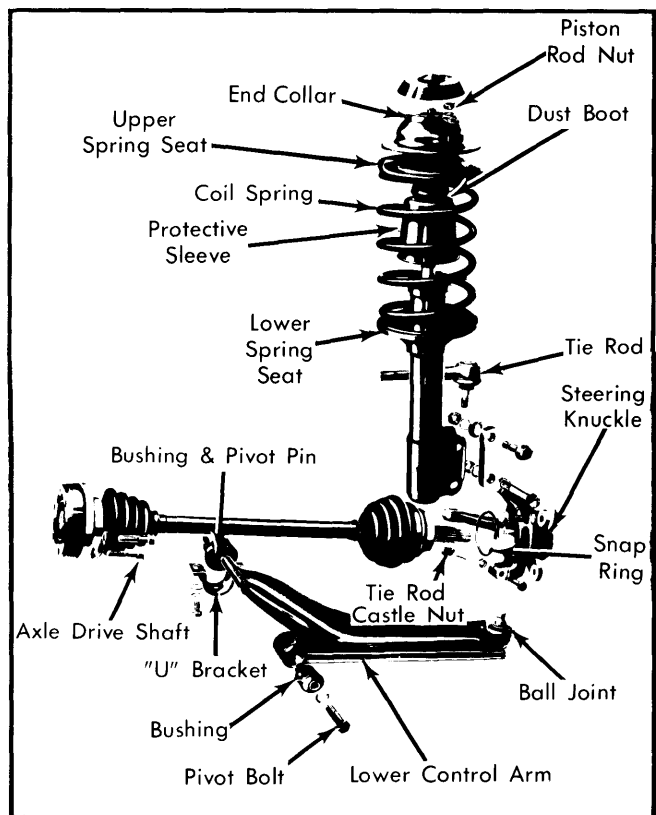


Fig. 1 Exploded View of Front Suspension Components

#### FRONT SUSPENSION ASSEMBLY

**Removal** — 1) Raise vehicle so front suspension and wheels are not supported. Disconnect brake line, leave flex line in place, and plug openings.

2) Remove tie rod castle nut. Press tie rod from steering knuckle. Remove bolts mounting inner portion of constant velocity joint to transaxle drive flange.

3) Remove lower control arm front pivot bolt. Remove 2 bolts mounting "U" shaped bracket holding control arm rear pivot.

**NOTE** — On vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions, engine may have to be slightly raised to gain access to pivot bolts.

## VOLKSWAGEN JETTA, RABBIT, RABBIT PICKUP & SCIROCCO (Cont.)

4) Support suspension assembly. Remove upper strut mounting nuts located in engine compartment. Guide assembly from vehicle.

**Installation** — Reverse removal procedure and note: Make sure convex side of thrust washer faces pivot bolt head.

### LOWER CONTROL ARM & BALL JOINT

**NOTE** — Ball Joint can be replaced while control arm is in vehicle.

**Removal** — 1) Raise vehicle and suitably support with front suspension free. Remove nut and clamp bolt mounting ball joint in bottom of steering knuckle. Force ball joint out of steering knuckle. Leave control arm hanging in mounts at subframe.

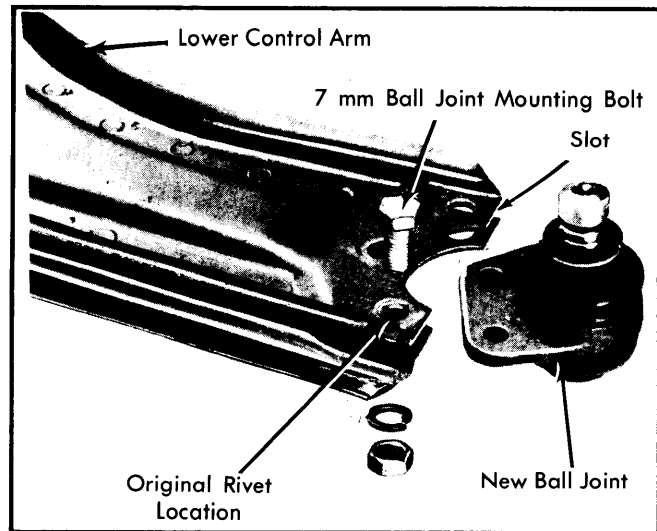
2) If control arm is not being removed, drill out 3 ball joint rivets with a  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7 mm) drill. After drilling it still may be necessary to chisel off rivet heads. Remove ball joint.

3) If control arm is being removed, take out pivot bolt and "U" bracket housing inner pivot pin. Slide out control arm.

**NOTE** — On vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions, engine may have to be slightly raised to gain access to pivot bolts.

**Inspection** — Check lower control arm bushings. If bushings are bad they can be replaced. Press out worn bushing. Select new bushing and press into position. Make sure bushing does not twist when seating into place.

**Installation** — Slide new ball joint into slot in control arm. Tighten ball joint mounting bolts. Refit lower control arm to subframe (chassis). Install ball joint into lower section of suspension strut.



**Fig. 2 New Ball Joint Installation Location in Lower Control Arm**

### TIGHTENING SPECIFICATIONS

Application	Ft. Lbs. (mkg)
Ball Joint Clamp Bolt-to-	
Steering Knuckle .....	36 (5.0)
Tie Rod Castle Nut .....	22 (3.0)
New Ball Joint-to-Control Arm .....	18 (2.5)
Suspension Strut-to-Inner Fender.....	14 (2.0)
Control Arm-to-Subframe (Chassis) .....	50 (6.9)
Pivot Pin "U" Bracket .....	32 (4.5)
Axle Drive Shaft-to-Transaxle .....	32 (4.5)
Suspension Strut-to-Steering Knuckle .....	58 (8.0)
Piston Rod Nut.....	58 (8.0)
Axle Shaft Nut.....	173 (24.0)