

# Trailer Receiver Hitch Installation Instructions

7/1/2020 Version: 3

## Model/Applications:

R56 07-13 Mini Cooper S Hardtop  
R57 09-15 Mini Cooper S Convertible  
R58 10-15 Mini Cooper S Coupe  
R59 11-15 Mini Cooper S Roadster

**Hitch Part #:** 1003, 1004, 1007, 1008

**Hitch Capacity:** 1400 lbs gross, 200 lb max tongue

Notes: This hitch allows for a removable ball mount to be attached (which is sold separately) and is required if towing a trailer. This hitch is not intended for use as a weight-distributing hitch. Before towing, the hitch pin and retainer clip **MUST** be in place securing the ball mount to the receiver.

## The tools you will need are:

- #2 Phillips Screwdriver
- #2 Stubby Screwdriver
- 8mm Socket
- Torque Wrench
- Safety Goggles
- 12mm or 13mm Socket (MINI changed bolt head size mid-2007)
- 10 mm Socket (Convertible)
- Hacksaw or Sawzall
- Exacto Knife or Coping Saw
- Dremel w/ heavy cut off wheel (Cooper S only- used to cut square hole in plastic grill)

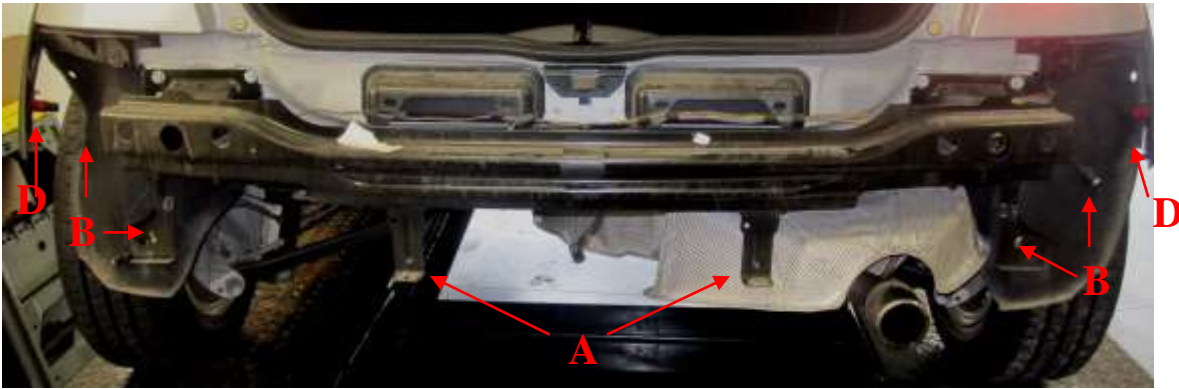
## Step 1: Removing the bumper

The MINI Cooper and S stock bumper is attached the car with various fasteners.



Picture 1 – Fasteners

In the next three pictures, the fastener locations are labeled.



Picture 2 – Rear Bumper off (same locations for Cooper and Cooper S, however this is a Cooper)



Picture 3 – Fastener C Under Rear Fender Flair



Picture 4 – Rear Bumper

Using the 8mm socket, remove fasteners A.

Next, with the Phillips Screwdriver, remove fasteners B in four locations, two on each side. These are accessed from inside the rear fender well as shown in Picture 5. Repeat on the other side of the car. Fastener B is a two-piece design. Do not be surprised if one part remains in the fender well. You will need to remove this piece before re-installation.



Picture 5 – Inside Rear Fender Well

Next, you need to remove the two plastic two piece connectors that hold the rear wheel arch to the rear bumper. They are behind the inner fender liner. One is on each side of the car.



Picture 6 – Behind Rear Fender Well

To remove this fastener, push inner piece down from the top until enough of the head is available from the bottom to pry it the rest of the way out. Remove both pieces.

The next two screws are hidden. The location of two of these screws, one on each side, is under the rear fender flair that is attached to the body, as shown in Picture 3. Using one hand, fish up behind the fender liner at the bottom seam of the wheel arch and rear bumper arch until you can feel the lowest tab. Push on the bumper towards the front of the car while pushing on the inner tab. This will free the lowest tab. Pull hand out from under fender liner. Use hand now to pry the arch away from the bumper to free the top second clip.



Picture 7 – Accessing hidden screw

Use an angled Phillips screwdriver or a stubby #2 Phillips screwdriver to remove the screw C. Disconnect the side marker light connector.



Repeat for the other side.

The final two screws are the ones you see every time you open your boot on the Hardtop or drop the back tailgate on a Convertible. Locate the two fasteners C in Picture 2. Remove these two with your Phillips Screwdriver.

If your vehicle is equipped with a rear fog light(s), disconnect the wiring harness from the rear and pop out the light(s) from the back side by depressing the tabs on each side of the light.

Your bumper cover is now basically free from the car. Pulling up and back in the center of the bumper should help pull the bumper off the center mounting ledge. If necessary, you may need to fish your hand up behind the plastic bumper cover and over the steel substructure to reach the final center mounting point. See photo below. This shows the tab you need to reach up and depress behind the plastic bumper cover.



You now need a box or something to place the bumper on. If you have backup sensors this box can help hold the bumper cover in place until the sensor wires are disconnected (use a cloth between the bumper and box to help eliminate any scratches).

Congratulations! Your bumper should be totally free from the car now and you should be ready to install the hitch.

## **Step 2: Hitch Installation**

**General Fit:** This hitch mounts behind the steel substructure behind the bumper cover using the original bumper mounting bolts (welded to chassis) and nuts. If your MINI has a metal spacer plate between the bumper support beam and the chassis remove it and keep it should you ever need to uninstall the hitch. This hitch replaces this spacer plate. The steel substructure/bumper support beam is installed after the hitch has been placed.



Remove the eight 13mm bolts holding the steel bumper substructure to the car. Disconnect the wiring harness from the steel substructure. Remove the back foam insert.

**Hardtop:** Disconnect the wiring harness from the steel substructure. Remove the back foam insert. This foam insert should be trimmed to desired fit during the install of the hitch/bumper.

**Convertible:** Behind the steel substructure is a steel plate. Disconnect the wiring harness from this plate. Using a 10 mm socket, remove the two plastic nuts holding this plate to the back of the steel substructure. Discard this plate and the foam insert unless it is trimmed to fit (depends on year/model).

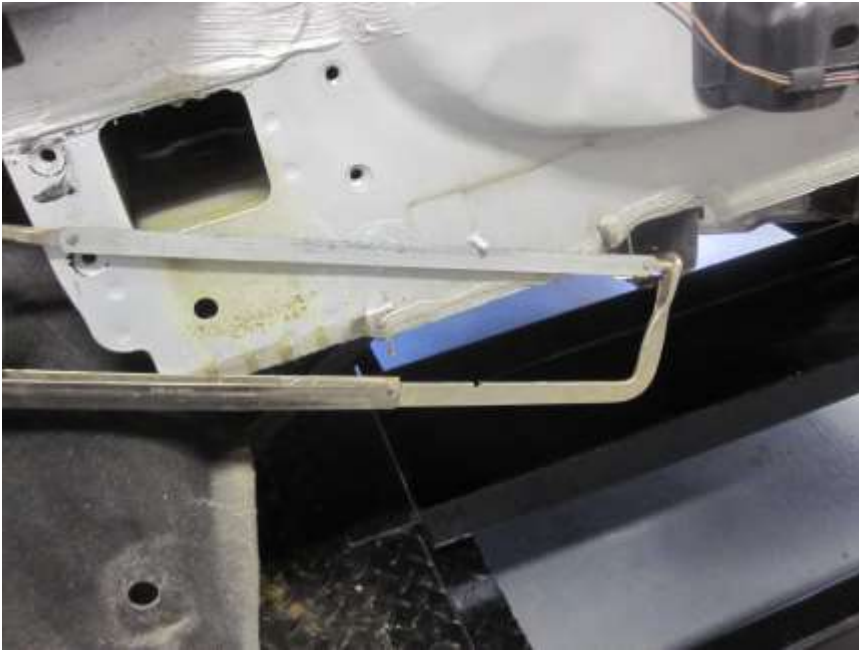
**Some MINI** models (Convertibles + Roadster) may require additional clearance. The steel substructure/bumper support beam needs to be modified as shown below. Measure to the center of the rear bumper and place a mark at the center bottom. Measure 1.25" to each side and mark.



Using a hacksaw or a sawzall, cut along the lines just marked on the bottom lip of the bumper substructure up to the first bend. Then cut along the first bend to create a notch.



**2011 and newer models only:** Using a hacksaw or cut off wheel, cut off the 3 threaded studs from the back of the car. These are the threaded studs that held the foam insert into place behind the bumper substructure and are not required for any other purpose. The studs will prevent the hitch from bolting to the back of the car and must be cut off.



Lift hitch into position behind the steel substructure sandwiched between the substructure and the rear of the car. Use the eight 13mm bolts to install the hitch and steel substructure back to the car. Torque to 17 ft lbs.

**Hardtop:** Reconnect the wiring harness to the steel substructure.

**Convertible:** Use the supplied wire ties to secure the wiring harness to the cross bar of the trailer hitch.

**Cooper with spare tire:** If you find the hitch interferes with the spare tire the spare mounting can be loosened enough to install the hitch and then retightened.

Using the supplied wire ties, connect the black sensor that once was in the foam insert to the top of the trailer hitch crossbar. As needed remove the foam insert if it causes interference. ***If your MINI has a sensor imbedded in the foam insert or is attached to the bumper support beam you may need to relocate the sensor to the chassis using zip ties.***

**Cooper S rear grill opening:** If you have a Cooper S the rear valence/grill will need to be modified by cutting a small 1.5" square hole centered above the exhaust tips using the supplied template. We have found that marking the general area with a marker first. Use a Dremel with a heavy duty cutoff wheel (the metal type that look like a circular saw blade- the fiber based cut off wheels shatter too easily) to make the opening fit the black plug. This opening allows access to the hitch. Use the supplied black square plug to cover the hole when the hitch is not in use. See enclosed modification instructions. There is a template for the 2007-2010 and one for the 2011 and newer gen2 models. It's best to test fit the bumper once the hitch is in place to confirm the hole is in the right location.

If you prefer to remove the rear grill from the bumper to cut the hole, it can be removed from the bumper cover by depressing the plastic fittings around the outside of the valence with a regular screwdriver while prying apart with your other hand. It takes a bit of work to remove it and is easier to just leave it in place.



Reinstall by clipping back into the plastic connectors.

### **Step 3: Reinstall the rear bumper**

This is really just the reverse of the removal directions with these helpful hints.

Attach the rear fog light and backup sensors (if equipped) wiring harness's.

When hanging the bumper on the car, there are three major height locators for the bumper. These are shown in Pictures 8 & 9.



Picture 8 – Side Alignment Feature



Picture 9 – Center Alignment Feature

The bumper rests on the center alignment feature and fits between the body and side alignment feature. Plug in the rear fog lights and side reflector lights.

Screw in two fastener C screws inside the boot. Only tighten about two-thirds of the way, this will allow some slight adjustment.

Then, tighten fastener C inside the rear body fender flair. When complete, reattach the fender flare to the rear bumper and reinstall two part fastener D.

Maneuver the inner fender wells inside the rear bumper. Assemble Fastener B in four places by inserting the spreading part of Fastener B first into the inner fender well and bumper. Next, by either pushing or screwing, tighten the other part of the Fastener B.

Finish tightening the 2 Fastener C's inside the boot. Tighten Fastener A. You are now finished with the bumper.

### **Step 4: Use**



Now that your hitch is installed, you're ready to use it. The receiver portion is set in behind the fog light on the Cooper or behind the black plastic grill on the Cooper S. Remove the fog light (Cooper only) by depressing the tabs behind the bumper while pushing outward on the light. You will need to reach with two hands under the bumper cover to gain access to these tabs. The light can be unplugged and stored while the hitch is in use.

With the light or cover removed you can easily see the receiver. Slide your receiver mounting devices (cargo carrier, bike carrier, drawbar, etc.) into the receiver.

On both MINI models access to the hitch pin is behind the bumper. In order to install the hitch pin you will need to reach behind the bumper. Make sure the exhaust tips are cooled off first (Cooper S models).