SOFTWARE & TECH

Lowering Kit Instructions Street Glide

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Introduction: Why Lower Your Harley-Davidson Street Glide?

For many riders, the Harley-Davidson Street Glide is the ultimate touring machine—iconic styling, long-distance comfort, and that legendary V-twin rumble. But even a great bike can feel better when it's set up just right for your reach and riding style. That's where a **lowering kit for Street Glide** comes in. By reducing the seat height by one to two inches, you not only gain a more confident flat-foot stance at stops but also improve aerodynamics and give the bike a sleeker, more aggressive profile. However, proper installation is critical to maintain handling, suspension travel, and safety. Whether you're a seasoned DIY mechanic or a first-timer, following reliable **lowering kit instructions for Street Glide** is the key to a successful upgrade.

This guide walks you through the entire process—from choosing the right kit, gathering tools, and step-by-step installation, to final adjustments and safety checks. Let's get your Street Glide sitting lower and looking mean without compromising ride quality.

Understanding Your Lowering Kit Options

Before diving into the installation, it's important to know what type of lowering kit you have. Most aftermarket kits fall into three categories, each affecting the bike differently.

1. Rear Lowering Shocks or Lowering Blocks

The most common approach uses shorter rear shocks or adjustable lowering blocks that reposition the stock shock mount. A typical rear lowering kit drops the back end by 1 to 1.5 inches. Some kits replace the shocks entirely, while others include brackets that alter the leverage on the stock shocks. This is often the easiest part of DIY lowering.

2. Front Lowering Springs or Lowering Tubes

To maintain balanced geometry, many riders lower the front as well—usually by 1 inch. This involves installing shorter fork springs or using internal spacers to reduce preload. Some premium kits replace the entire fork tube assembly. Front lowering requires careful attention to oil levels and alignment.

3. Complete Lowering Kits

Many manufacturers sell matched front and rear kits designed for the Street Glide. These ensure the bike stays level and the rake/trail remain within safe limits. For this article, we'll focus on a typical complete **lowering kit installation for Street Glide**—covering both ends.

Tools and Preparations Needed

Don't start the job until you have everything ready. Missing a tool mid-project can be frustrating and dangerous. Here's what you'll need:

- Socket set (metric and standard, especially 3/8" and 1/2" drive)
- Torque wrench (ft-lb and in-lb ranges)
- Allen wrenches (hex keys)

- Jack or lift (capable of supporting the rear of the bike)
- Axle stand or wooden blocks
- Spring compressor (for front fork work)
- Anti-seize compound
- Loctite (blue or red) for critical fasteners
- Shop manual for your specific model year (torque specs vary)
- Safety glasses and gloves

Pro tip: If your kit includes new front fork springs, also have fresh fork oil (10w or 15w recommended for lowering) and a measuring syringe ready.

Step-by-Step Lowering Kit Installation — Rear End

Let's start with the rear, as it's generally simpler and will immediately make the bike feel lower. Always work on a stable surface and support the bike securely.

Step 1: Raise and Secure the Rear

Place the bike on a lift or use a bottle jack under the frame near the swingarm pivot. Ensure the rear wheel is off the ground and the bike is stable on stands. Never rely on the kickstand alone while working on suspension.

Step 2: Remove the Stock Shocks

Using the appropriate socket, remove the upper and lower shock mounting bolts. On a Street Glide, the top mount is behind the side covers. If your kit uses lowering blocks, you'll keep the stock shocks but reposition them. Alternatively, if you have replacement shocks, simply unbolt and remove the old ones.

Watch out: The rear fender and bag supports may need slight loosening to access the lower bolts. Consult your shop manual.

Step 3: Install Lowering Blocks or New Shocks

- For lowering blocks: Install the block brackets onto the frame's shock mount per the manufacturer's instructions. Slide the stock shock into the new lower mounting position and tighten bolts to spec (usually 45–55 ft-lb).
- For new shocks: Attach the new shock's upper eyelet to the frame mount. Then pivot the lower eyelet into position on the swingarm. Tighten evenly.

Always apply a dab of Loctite to the threads and use anti-seize on any bolts that go into aluminum.

Step 4: Check Clearance and Tighten

Before fully torquing, cycle the rear suspension up and down by hand to ensure nothing binds. Make sure the shock body doesn't contact the fender or belt guard. Once clear, torque the bolts to the values in your manual. Reinstall any side covers or bags you removed.

Step-by-Step Lowering Kit Installation — Front End

Lowering the front requires more mechanical work but is essential for a balanced ride. If you only lower the rear, the bike will have a "chopper" rake—looks cool but hurts handling.

Step 1: Raise the Front Wheel

Use a triple-tree lift or support the bike under the frame near the steering head so the front wheel is off the ground. If you don't have a lift, you can use a tall jack stand under the engine guard, but be careful—the bike may tilt.

Step 2: Remove the Front Forks

Loosen the pinch bolts at the triple clamps (upper and lower). Then remove the axle and wheel (or leave the wheel attached and slide the fork legs out; this varies by kit). You'll typically need to unbolt the brake caliper and fender. Keep all hardware organized.

Step 3: Disassemble the Fork Tubes

Unscrew the fork cap (this is under spring tension, so use a spring compressor if needed). Slowly release pressure. Remove the stock spring and spacer. On many **Street Glide lowering kits**, you'll replace the spring with a shorter one and also adjust the fork oil volume.

- Measure and cut new spacers if provided, or use supplied preload spacers.
- Drain the old fork oil and refill with the recommended amount (e.g., 300–350 ml per leg, depending on the kit).
- Install the new spring and spacer, then reinstall the fork cap—tighten to spec (typically 15–20 ft-lb).

Step 4: Reinstall the Forks

Slide the fork leg back through the triple clamps. Torque the upper and lower pinch bolts in stages—inner bolts first, then outer. Reattach the brake caliper, fender, and wheel. Spin the wheel to ensure it's straight.

Step 5: Set Sag and Check Alignment

With the bike back on its wheels (and rider weight approximated), check the front suspension sag (the amount it compresses with the bike's weight). Most lowered Street Glides should have about 1–1.5 inches of sag. Adjust preload if possible. Finally, check that both fork legs are equal in height above the top triple clamp.

Important Considerations After Installation

Lowering your ride affects more than just seat height. Here's what you need to verify before taking your Street Glide back on the road.

Ride Height and Leveling

Measure the center of the fender to the ground at both front and rear. The bike should sit nearly level. If the front is significantly lower, adjust the fork tube height in the triple clamps. Most kits allow 3–5mm of adjustment.

Suspension Travel

Reduced travel means you'll bottom out more easily over bumps. Increase rebound damping if your shocks are adjustable. Consider progressive-rate springs for better bottoming resistance.

Ground Clearance

With a lower center of gravity, the floorboards and exhaust may scrape earlier in corners. That's normal but avoid aggressive lean angles until you're used to the new geometry.

Side Stand Length

A lower bike may lean too much when parked. Many riders replace the side stand with a shorter one or have it cut and welded. Don't skip this—a bike that falls over is a costly mistake.

Headlight Aim

Lowering the front changes the headlight beam angle. After installation, aim your headlight downward slightly to avoid blinding oncoming traffic.

Pros and Cons of a Lowered Street Glide

No modification is perfect. Weigh these factors before you commit.

Advantages

- Confidence at stops: Shorter riders can flat-foot easily.
- Improved aerodynamics: A lower profile reduces wind drag at highway speeds.
- Aggressive look: The Street Glide gains a mean, lowered stance that turns heads.
- Better handling at low speeds: Lower center of gravity makes parking lot maneuvers easier.

Disadvantages

- Reduced suspension travel: Hard bumps can be jarring; bottoming out is more likely.
- Reduced cornering clearance: You'll scrape pegs and floorboards sooner.
- Potentially harsh ride: Shorter shocks often have less damping capacity unless upgraded.
- Need for other modifications: Side stand, headlight aim, and possibly rear fender clearance may need attention.

Conclusion

Installing a **lowering kit on your Street Glide** is one of the most rewarding chassis upgrades you can make—if done correctly. By carefully following these **lowering kit instructions for Street Glide**, you'll achieve a bike that sits lower, feels more planted, and gives you increased confidence whether you're cruising Main Street or touring through twisty backroads. Remember to take your time, torque everything to spec, and always test-ride in a controlled area before hitting the highway. The end result is a custom look and fit that transform your riding experience. Ride safe, and enjoy the new stance of your lowered Street Glide.

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