

Instrument Tech: Classic Instruments

Photos & Words: Paul Martinez

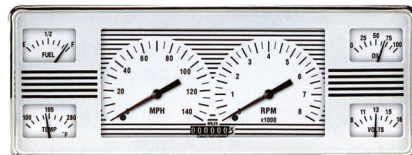
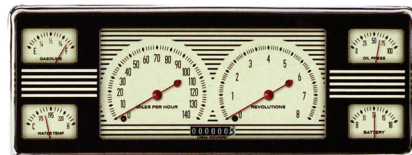
1940 Ford Gauge Cluster

The big trend in hot rodding has been a return to using more original pieces in our cars whether they are original or new, modern versions which look old. One of the toughest areas are gauges or gauge clusters which were made 70+ years ago for cars which had limited power and were of the 6-volt variety. The 1940 Ford is a prime example with the gauges matching the elegant looks of the car. If you wanted to use the stock gauges it would be a costly endeavor to have them rebuilt.

Fortunately we have companies like Classic Instruments which will do the research and development and pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into projects like their brand new 1940 Direct Fit gauge cluster so you can have old look/modern gauges in your hot rod.

Each package includes a speedometer, tachometer, fuel, oil, temp, and volt gauges in an injection molded ABS housing. LED lighting provides superior illumination and is adjustable using the built in dimmer. Green LED Halo turn signals are installed in the left and right sides of the instrument cluster with a red high beam indicator at the top of the cluster. The package is finished with a polished stainless steel bezel and glass lens. It comes completely assembled and ready to install with all sending units and necessary mounting hardware.

Electronic circuitry incorporating Classic Instruments' Zeus Speedometer Technology (ZST) provides calibration at the touch of a button and ensures the smoothest pointer operation. ZST accepts any known speed signal such as a pulse generator, VSS, ECM, or GPS without the need for an additional interface.



Three additional styles are based on the Hot Rod, White Hot, and Nostalgia series of Classic Instruments' gauges.

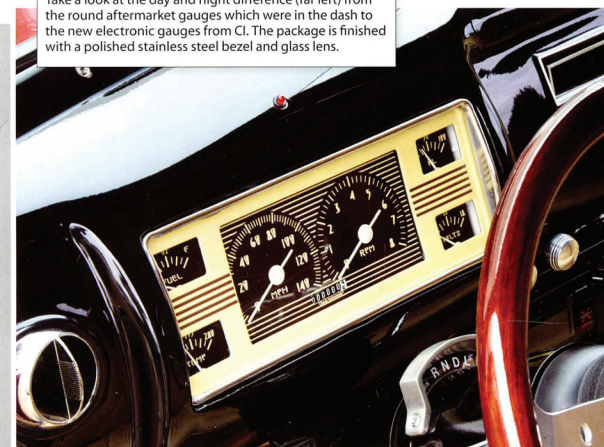


This is typical of what many rodders would do to update the original gauges to 12 volt and also to customize their street rod.



Until now your only option to use the stock gauges was to have them rebuilt which was a costly venture. Classic Instruments introduced their "all new" 1940 Ford Direct Fit cluster at the 2014 SEMA Show in November. Shown here is the "original style" design.

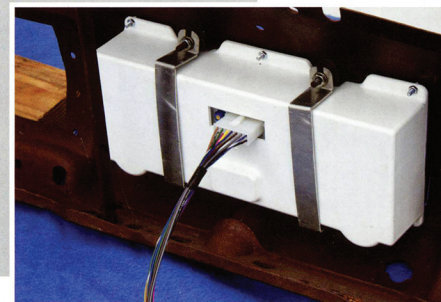
Take a look at the day and night difference (far left) from the round aftermarket gauges which were in the dash to the new electronic gauges from CI. The package is finished with a polished stainless steel bezel and glass lens.



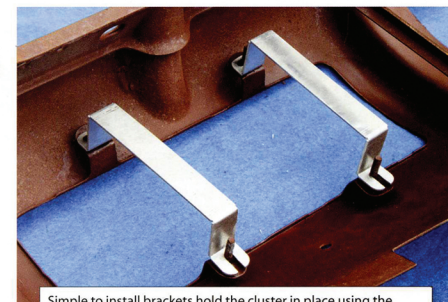
Our friends Randy and Mike Way of All Ways Hot Rods in Phoenix, Arizona are in the process of giving their dad Larry's '40 Ford coupe an update and received one of the first units off the assembly line. We caught up with them in early December as they were replacing the round gauges in the coupe. It's a fairly straightforward process and the change was stunning to say the least. We'll bring you a full feature on Larry's car just as soon as his sons get done with his long list of changes.

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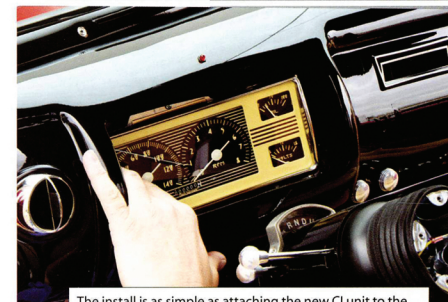
The cluster is encased in an ABS box and has a push-in wire loom.



Simple to install brackets hold the cluster in place using the original '40 Ford dash studs.



Mike Way unbolts and removes the "late model/modern" gauges and panel from his dad's dashboard.



The install is as simple as attaching the new CI unit to the stock studs and running the wire to the included senders.