

Step By Step: Lug Nut & Brake Drum Restoration

After you've bought new tires & powdercoated the rims and install them onto the T34 you notice the drums & lug nuts are not detailed like they should be. Detailing is an easy process.



Early model 5-lug T34s (1962-65) have M12x1.5 lug nuts with 20 per car (below). 1966-69 T34s changed to 4-lug and have M14x1.5 lug nuts with 16 per car.



First thing is to remove the lug nuts. The original T34 lug nuts were black but over the years have turned a nasty combination of rust, grease, & grime. Package them up and send them off to a plating shop that specializes in Black-Zinc coatings. The black-

zinc process transforms the lug nuts, sandblasting off the rust, applying a zinc coating then a black chromate coating (see comparison above). The black-zinc coating will not add a layer of paint that may crumble & loosen over time like paint.



Next turn your attention to the brake drums. The outside surface is also nasty with grease, dirt, and old paint. Begin by removing the drum and degreasing it. Then use a wire wheel attached to a drill to clean off all the remaining rust & dirt. Finally use 160-grit sandpaper to clean up the minor blemishes. Fifteen minutes of cleaning and they'll be ready for paint. Mask-off the inner hole & lug nut holes with masking tape and use an Exacto knife to trim the tape close to each hole (right). Spray several coats of high-temp glossy black paint (below right) and let dry overnight. Remove the tape and install the brake drum.



With freshly painted drums and black-zinc lug nuts, your T34 will look perfectly detailed to match the restored rims & new tires.



FYI: we found there are three different styles of original early T3 lug nuts. One is extremely dished, one is slightly dished with the letters KAMAX, and the third is flat. All three styles have tiny round VW logos printed on the top. Although it's impossible to tell from owners manual photos which one is authentic, it seems that the flat ones are most common on early T3s. The dished styles may have been replacement nuts or simply from a different vendor.

