1965 – 69 Corvair Front Suspension Replacement Lower Control Arm Bushing Failure Problem
By Bob Nichols

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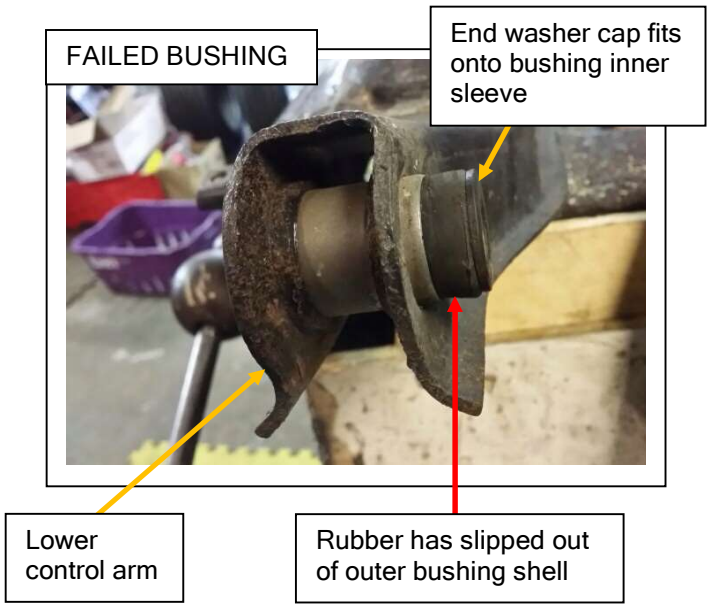
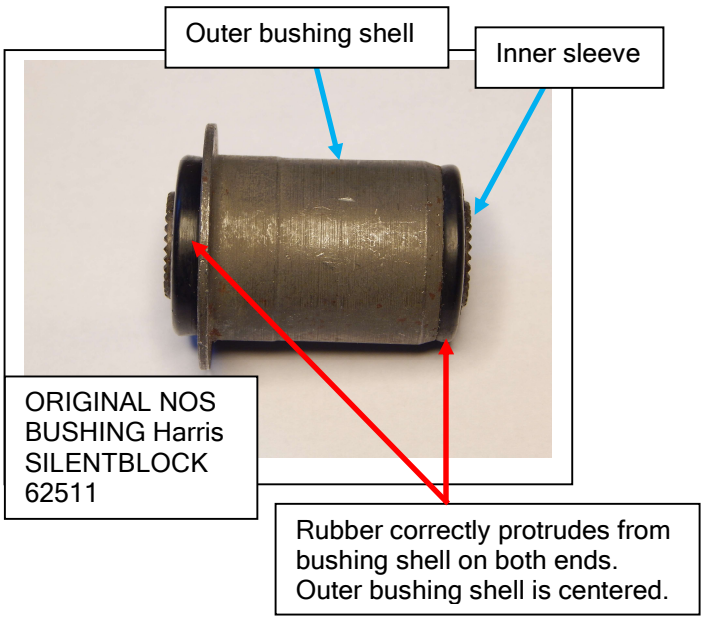
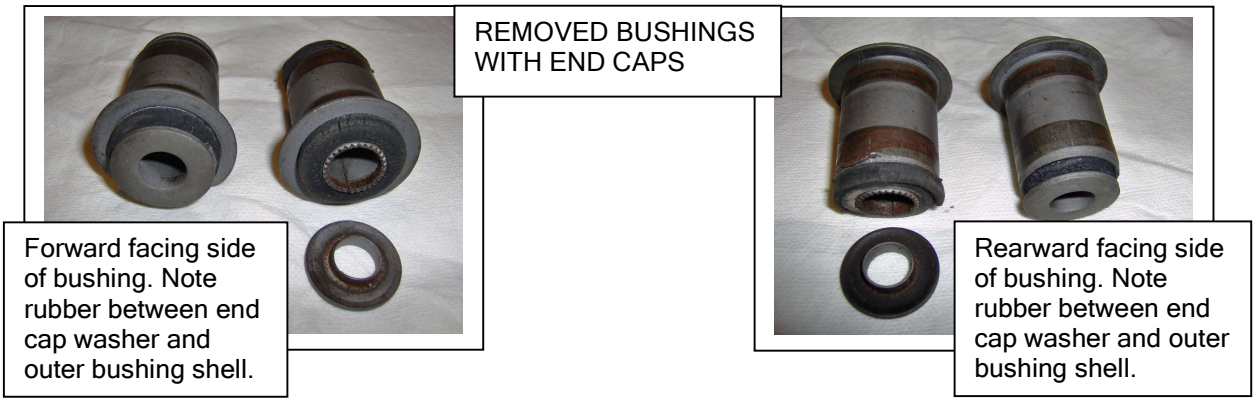
The second generation (1965-69) Corvair front suspension was revised to use an eccentric on the lower control arm to adjust camber. This change required a redesigned lower control arm bushing with a washer cap installed on each end of the bushing. NOTE: The 1960 – 64 lower control arm bushing will NOT work in the 1965-69 lower control arm.

THE PROBLEM: OEM (original equipment manufacturers) no longer make the 1965 – 69 front suspension lower control arm bushing. Corvair parts vendors are now selling alternatives. Owners reported problems with the new replacement bushings failing within a couple years or a few thousand miles. The bushing rubber, or elastic material, fails due to an incorrect design and the lower control arm, instead of being isolated by rubber, contacts the crossmember, metal on metal. This failure happens much sooner than it should compared to the original bushing service life. Failure symptoms reported are clanking or banging while stopping or when going over bumps, and unusual tire wear. When the owner, or a mechanic, inspected the suspension they found the lower control arm was contacting the crossmember frame because the bushing elastic material had not kept the control arm centered in the crossmember. On this page see one failure illustration of the bushing shell offset on the rubber insert in the lower control arm. Compare failure to illustration of NOS (new old stock) Harris SILENTBLOC 62511 bushing.



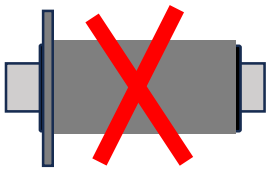


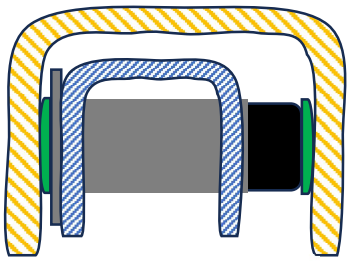
The correct design has rubber protruding on both sides of the bushing shell to the ends of the inner sleeve. See picture of used factory bushings removed from lower control arm with end cap washers. Like the NOS bushing pictured above, the rubber extends past the outer shell to the ends of the inner sleeve to prevent the outer metal shell from slipping to one side or the other that can cause the control arm to move against the crossmember. Page 2 illustrates the two different incorrect bushing observed online at different vendors.



The following illustration shows one incorrect bushing type some vendors sell that does not have a rubber core extending past the outer shell to the ends of the inner sleeve. This allows a gap between the end washer caps on the inner sleeve, and the rubber inside the outer metal shell. Eventually movement forces the rubber to slip in the shell and on the inner sleeve until the shell contacts the washer end caps and the lower arm contacts the cross member.

Incorrect rubber gap between sleeve ends and rubber core allow outer sleeve and rubber core (black) to slide over inner sleeve between end caps (green).



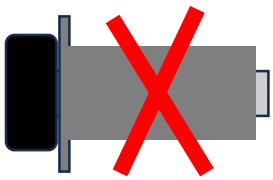


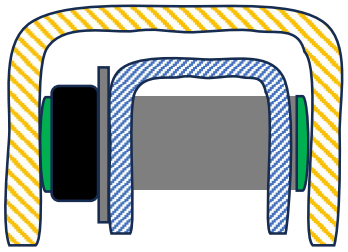
FAILED

Lower arm (blue) typically moves off center against crossmember (orange) resulting in metal to metal contact.

The other incorrect bushing type found online has no rubber extending on one side allowing the end cap to contact the outer shell. This bushing causes the lower arm to be off center and contact the crossmember.

Incorrect rubber insert only extends out only one side. Other side outer sleeve moves and contacts end caps (green).



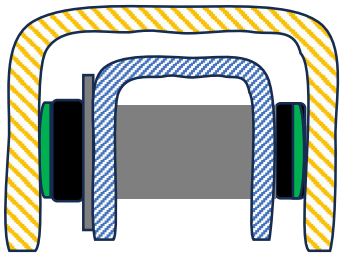


FAILED

Lower arm (blue) contacts crossmember (orange) on one side resulting in metal to metal contact.

The following illustrates a correct bushing. At the time of this article only California Corvair sold this original style bushing. See illustration and note rubber correctly extends past outer shell to end of inner sleeve on both sides.

Rubber core (black) correctly extends past outer shell to ends of inner sleeve between end caps (green).



CORRECT

Lower arm (blue) centered between crossmember (orange) with rubber isolation on each side.

Image included by permission of California Corvair.

Part number CC06191B.

THE FIX: An online examination of 1965 – 69 Corvair suspension parts indicates many vendors sell the problem (incorrect) bushings individually or in suspension kits. If your front suspension lower control arm bushing has failed, then it is suggested BEFORE purchasing new replacement bushings, visually inspected replacements at a vendor, or their online site from proper configuration. As of the writing of this article, the only solution is to use a NOS (New Old Stock – OEM) bushing or purchase a correct reproduction bushing from California Corvair part number CC06191B.