



# **Freedom Launcher® Sportsman and Adventure Kayak Editions**

Assembly and Installation Manual

V3.11 27 August 2025

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If you should experience a problem with your Wilder Side Purchase,

**CALL 1-833-949-4222 8A-6P M-F CST**  
**or 1-309-220-3947 (International)**

In many cases, a Wilder Side representative can resolve your problem over the phone.

### Safety Instructions:

When wheels are extended, intended solely for human manipulation of watercraft.

DO NOT TOW WITH ANY MECHANIZED VEHICLE.

Do not allow humans or pets to sit in or on watercraft while wheels are extended.

To be used to transport watercraft and gear via human power between a land point (such as a parking lot) and waterside landing location only.

When in doubt about your ability to manipulate the watercraft on wheels, ask a friend to assist when operating on an incline as hand loads increase due to gravitational pull, uneven terrain, or obstacles. Requires physical strength, coordination, and balance to safely launch watercraft using landing gear. Only use on inclines that you are able to safely navigate and control.

**WARNING: Keep children, pets, and operator hands and fingers out of the Freedom Bracket channel during use. Neglecting this may cause pinches or cuts to fingers or hands.**

## Preparing for Assembly

**Please note:** This assembly manual can be downloaded from our website. Doing so enables you to click useful links in the .pdf document.

Go here to download: <https://www.wilderside.life/product-support-resources>

And look for the “All design assembly manual” heading at top of page. Click on the .pdf icon to view and/or download.

Thank you for purchasing your Freedom Launcher from Wilder Side! We hope you are delighted with the product, and it provides you with years of easier maneuvering of your kayak.

There are several small assemblies you will need to complete to prepare for installation onto your kayak. Most require simple hand tools and getting these ready will assist you on your adventure.

### **Recommended Tools:**

1. Socket drive with 7/16” socket
2. 7/16” box end wrench
3. Flat bladed screwdriver
4. 3/8” nutdriver or socket
5. 1/2” socket
6. 1/2” box end wrench
7. Drill
8. 1/4” & 5/16” drill bits
9. Rubber mallet
10. Torque wrench set to 18 ft-lb.

## Unpacking your Landing Gear

It is recommended to place your large box on a sturdy surface such as a worktable as you begin the unpacking process. Your Freedom Launcher® from Wilder Side® should arrive in one long rectangular box containing the entire kit. Take the large rectangular box and open it and begin to inspect the parts. Your particular Bill of Materials (BOM) is contained in your owner packet (large manila envelope). A representative BOM is included below to support assembly instructions, which will include common parts to many versions of Freedom Launcher.

### **Example Parts Listing (See your insert pack for your specific BOM)**

|       |           |     |                                                              |
|-------|-----------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14    | WS-2N3331 | 2   | Freedom Launcher Axle - Standard Length                      |
| 15    | WS-7P6657 | 1   | Wheel post 8 degree LEFT - natural Aluminum                  |
| 16    | WS-1N1235 | 1   | Wheel post 8 degree RIGHT - natural Aluminum                 |
| 17    | WS-2Q1288 | 2   | Railblaza CTUG Wheel Assembly w/ WS Hub                      |
| 18    | WS-9Q9943 | 1   | MG01 Gorilla Mount Bracket with Backing Cushions & SS Hdwr   |
| 51    | WS-1Q6394 | 1   | Small Parts Combo Kit - Gen 3 Tan on Black PCB               |
| 20    | WS-2N4838 | 1   | Crossbar 8 degree assembly w endcaps and tool - natural AL   |
| 21    | WS-7N7487 | 2   | Wheel Post End Cap                                           |
| 22    | WS-1Q4597 | 1   | Welcome Packet: Welcome letter; BOM listing; Assembly Instr. |
|       |           |     |                                                              |
|       |           |     | <b>KIT &amp; ASSEMBLY CONTENTS FOLLOW</b>                    |
| REF # | WS-9Q9943 |     | MG01 Gorilla Mount Bracket with Backing Cushions & SS Hdwr   |
| 181   | WS-7H3358 | 1   | Gorilla Mount Kayak Bracket w Crossbar Hdwr                  |
| 186   | WS-5Q1632 | 1   | Gorilla Mount Thru Hull Hardware Kit                         |
|       |           |     |                                                              |
|       | WS-7H3358 | Qty | Gorilla Mount Kayak Bracket w Crossbar Hdwr                  |
| 181   | WS-5H9562 | 2   | Gorilla Mount Kayak Bracket                                  |
| 182   | WS-2H5669 | 4   | Hex Head Cap Screw 5/16" by 3"L Gr 8 Aluma-coat              |
| 183   | WS-9H4772 | 8   | Washer 5/16" SAE Grade 8 Aluma-coat                          |
| 184   | WS-2Q7935 | 4   | Lock washer 5/16" Grade 8 Aluma-coat                         |
| 185   | WS-9T9595 | 4   | Nut 5/16" Grade 8 Aluma-coat                                 |
|       |           |     |                                                              |
| 186   | WS-5Q1632 | Qty | Gorilla Mount Thru Hull Hardware Kit                         |
| 187   | WS-1P8344 | 4   | Round Load Cushion 1.2"D                                     |
| 188   | WS-2P1899 | 4   | Oblong Cushion SML                                           |

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|              |                  |            |                                                                   |
|--------------|------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 189          | WS-7N8463        | 4          | Oblong Cushion LRG                                                |
| 190          | WS-1Q7798        | 4          | Half Moon Washer 0.75" 0.375 tall                                 |
| 191          | WS-9T7763        | 4          | Hex Head Cap Screw Fully Threaded 1/4"-20 x 3L SS                 |
| 192          | WS-7Q5372        | 4          | Hex Head Cap Screw 1/4" by 2.5"L Stainless                        |
| 193          | WS-1N6682        | 4          | Locknut 1/4" Stainless                                            |
| 194          | WS-1N6997        | 8          | Washer 1/4" Stainless SAE                                         |
| 195          | WS-5N3443        | 4          | 1/4" Fender washer Stainless 7/8" dia                             |
| 196          | WS-1P5541        | 4          | Silicone seal 1.2"OD x 0.2"ID                                     |
|              |                  |            |                                                                   |
| 51           | <b>WS-1Q6394</b> | <b>QTY</b> | <b>Small Parts Combo Kit - Gen 3 Tan on Black PCB</b>             |
|              | WS-5N8859        | 2          | Freedom Bracket Air Lite - Black Powder Coat                      |
| 53           | WS-5N9555        | 2          | Tension Spring 6 in 0.360 OD Stainless                            |
| 53A          | WS-7Q4481        | 2          | Spring Sleeve 9" Black                                            |
| 54           | WS-5N9284        | 4          | Side Handles                                                      |
| 55           | <b>WS-1T1133</b> | <b>2</b>   | <b>Freedom Handle</b>                                             |
| <b>56</b>    | <b>WS-9N5397</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>Handle Hardware Kit - Stainless Pins</b>                       |
| <b>57</b>    | <b>WS-5P2637</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>Axle Kit</b>                                                   |
| <b>58</b>    | <b>WS-7N1663</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>Gen 3 Freedom Bracket Mounting Hdwr Kit</b>                    |
|              | WS-9P6546        | 1          | Freedom Launcher™ Decal - Gen 3 BLK on Tan                        |
|              | WS-7P2426        | 1          | Wilder Side™ Decal - Gen 3 BLK on Tan                             |
|              |                  |            |                                                                   |
|              | <b>WS-2N4838</b> |            | <b>Crossbar 8 degree assembly w endcaps and tool - natural AL</b> |
|              | WS-7Q6848        | 1          | Crossbar 8 degree one side finished - natural AL                  |
|              | WS-1N2782        | 1          | LH 8 deg end cap                                                  |
|              | WS-7P9297        | 1          | RH 8 deg end cap                                                  |
|              | WS-1N5539        | 2          | Crossbar end cap acetal insert V3                                 |
|              | <b>WS-5N9274</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>Crossbar 8 degree user tooling</b>                             |
| <b>REF #</b> |                  |            |                                                                   |
|              | <b>WS-9N5397</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>Handle Hardware Kit - Stainless Pins</b>                       |
| 561          | WS-9Q9256        | 2          | Hex Head Cap Screw 1/4" by 2"L Stainless                          |
| 562          | WS-1N6682        | 2          | Locknut 1/4" Stainless                                            |
| 563          | WS-9T7117        | 2          | Machine Screw 10-24 by 1.0"L Flat Head                            |
| 564          | WS-1P7674        | 2          | Locknut 10-24 Stainless                                           |
| 565          | WS-2N9519        | 4          | Hex Head Cap Screw 5/16" by 3"L Stainless                         |
| 566          | WS-7T2367        | 4          | Locknut 5/16" Stainless                                           |
| 567          | WS-1N3935        | 8          | Washer 5/16" Stainless SAE                                        |
| 568          | WS-5N7614        | 2          | Clevis Pin 3/8"D x 2-1/4"L Stainless                              |
| 569          | WS-7H8845        | 2          | Cotter Pin 1/8"D by 2-3/8"L Stainless                             |
| 570          | WS-9P8115        | 2          | Clevis Pin 5/16"D x 3-1/2"L Stainless                             |
| 571          | WS-2T1125        | 2          | Clevis Pin 5/16"D x 3"L Stainless                                 |
| 572          | WS-2T1772        | 4          | Cotter Pin 3/32"D by 1-5/8"L Stainless                            |

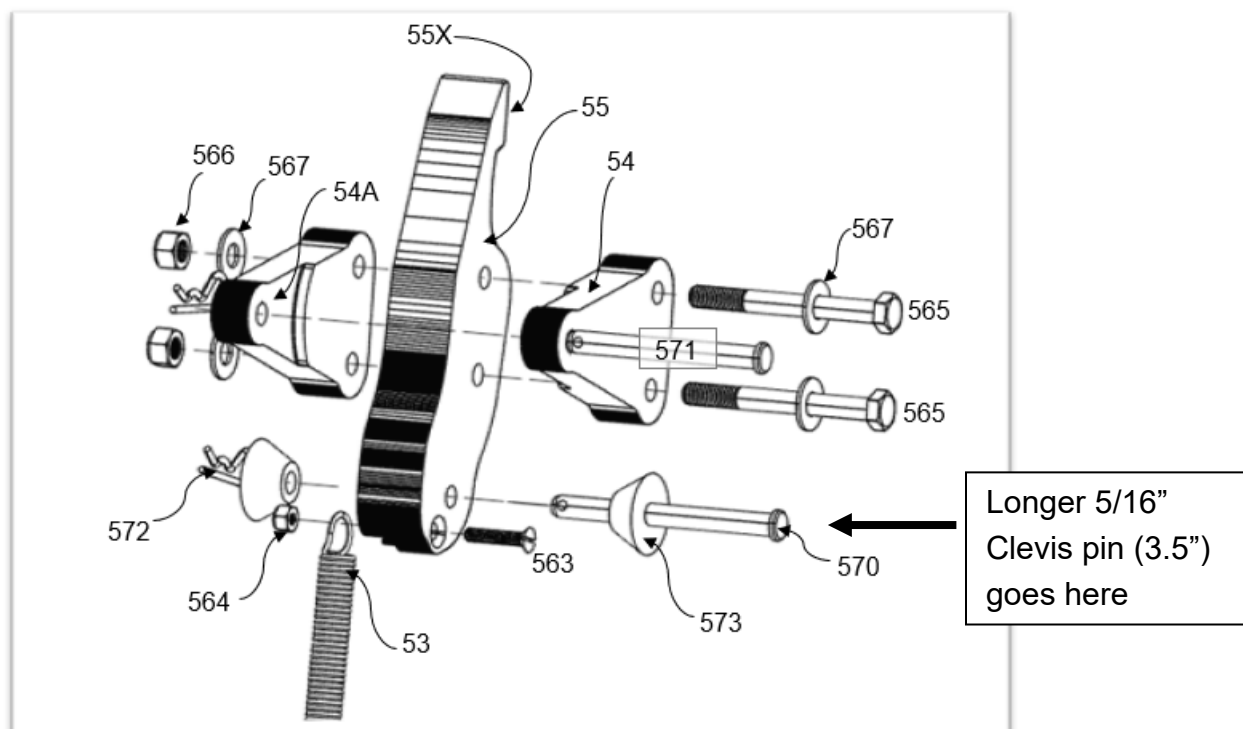
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|            |                  |   |                                                    |
|------------|------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------|
| 573        | WS-2P1576        | 4 | Tapered Washer for Lockpin                         |
|            |                  |   |                                                    |
| 57         | <b>WS-5P2637</b> |   | <b>Axle Kit</b>                                    |
| <b>571</b> | WS-1H1821        | 2 | Axle Lock                                          |
| 572        | WS-5P6634        | 2 | Machine Screw 10-24 by 1.5"L Stainless Round Head  |
| 573        | WS-1P7674        | 2 | Locknut 10-24 Stainless                            |
| 574        | WS-2N3182        | 2 | Wheel Spacer Washer                                |
| 575        | WS-7H5363        | 2 | Wheel Keeper Pin 1/4" by 1.75L Stainless Steel     |
|            |                  |   |                                                    |
| <b>58</b>  | <b>WS-7N1663</b> |   | <b>Gen 3 Freedom Bracket Mounting Hdw Kit</b>      |
| <b>581</b> | WS-7T7864        | 4 | Hex Head Cap Screw 5/16" by 1.75"L Gr 8 Aluma-coat |
| 582        | WS-9T9595        | 4 | Nut 5/16" Grade 8 Aluma-coat                       |
| 583        | WS-2Q7935        | 4 | Lock washer 5/16" Grade 8 Aluma-coat               |
| 584        | WS-9H4772        | 8 | Washer 5/16" SAE Grade 8 Aluma-coat                |
|            |                  |   |                                                    |

## STEP 1: Leg Assembly

The first step in the Leg assembly is to complete the left and right Freedom Handle sub-assembly. Reference numbers in the **Example Parts Listing** correspond to the following diagrams. **TIP:** Leave hardware in bags until indicated, then dump just those parts in a small tray.

Open the Small Parts Combo Kit and remove the contents onto a flat surface. It is helpful at this point to dispense item #56, the **Handle Hardware Kit** into a shallow tray. Lay a Side Handle #54 on a flat surface as shown in **Fig 1**. Then orient the Freedom Handle #55 as shown so that the push pad #55X faces away from the single hole end of Side handles #54. Lay the other Side handle on top of #55. Orient the side handles so that faces **54A** are on the side closest to the Freedom Handle #55 as shown.



**Figure 1. Exploded Left Side Handle Assembly**

Place a #567 (5/16" washer) on each #565 cap screw as shown. Referring now to **Fig. 1**, take one of the #565 cap screws and press it into one of two holes on the double-hole end of the Side Handle #54, ensuring that each notched end (**54A**) of single hole end of

part #54 face each other as shown in **Fig 1**. This notch provides clearance for the leg post.

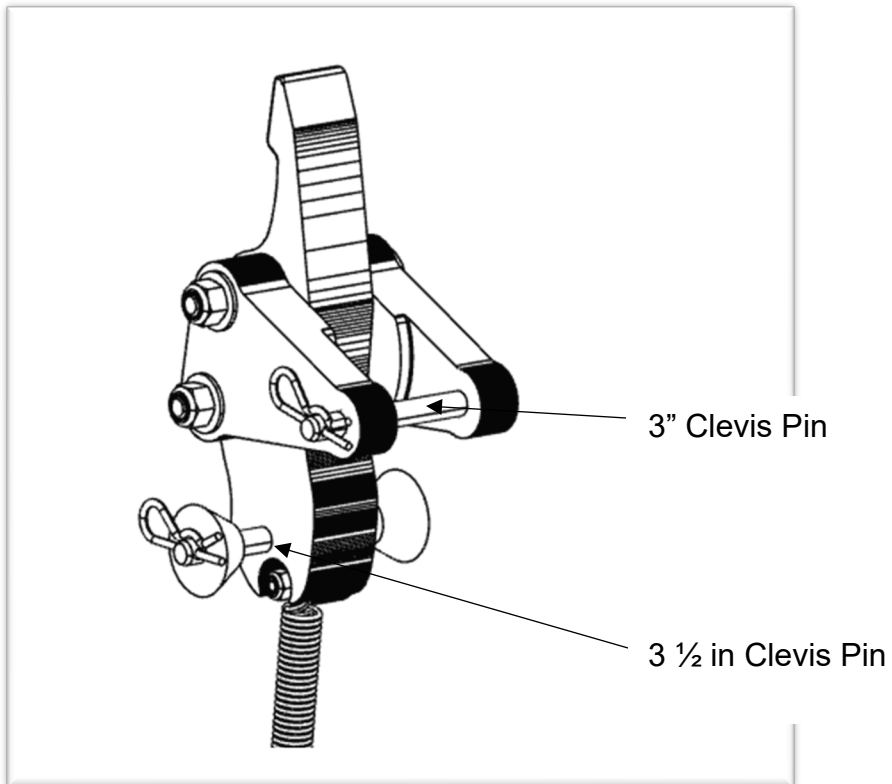
Continue pressing bolts #565 through Freedom Handle #55 and through the far Side Handle #54. You may want to put a piece of plywood shim under the lower side handle so you can drive the threads through the bottom hole. A light tap from a rubber mallet may be required. **It is recommended now to brush out any plastic debris from the threads before placing a washer #567 and locknut #566 on ends of cap screw threads.** Before tightening the locknuts, insert Pin #571 through the single hold end of Side Handles #54 as shown in **Figure 1**. This will ensure the bores of both side handles are aligned. Now tighten locknuts #566 onto cap screws #565 hand tight.

Place spring #53 into the spring pocket in bottom of Handle #54. Your spring should have arrived with a spring sleeve #53A installed. This device is to reduce chances of fishing line entanglement with the spring. Insert machine screw #563 into bore and through spring loop. Thread locknut #564 onto screw and tighten until end of screw is flush with end of nut. Leave play in joint so spring can move freely in pocket.

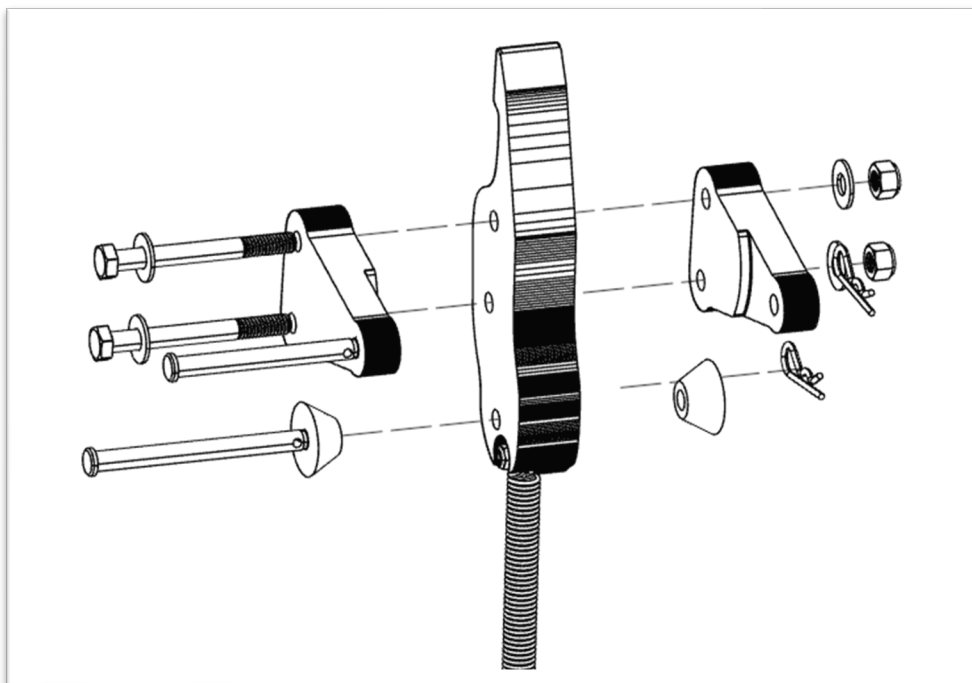
Slide tapered washer #573 onto Locking pin #570, ensuring the big end of taper is toward the end of the pin as shown. Now press the pin assembly through the lower 5/16" hole in Freedom Handle #54 as shown. Insert a second tapered washer #573 on the opposite end of pin #570, leaving clearance for the cotter pin. Now insert a cotter pin #572 onto pin #570. The subassembly should now be complete and look like **Figure 2**.

Repeat the steps for the left side handle assembly, except that you will flip the assembly 180 degrees before inserting the hardware. See **Figures 3 & 4** for reference. Using this convention will put the heads of the handle hardware facing the outside of the kayak and keep your left/right legs straight should you wish to remove them for transport and reinstall correctly at a later time.



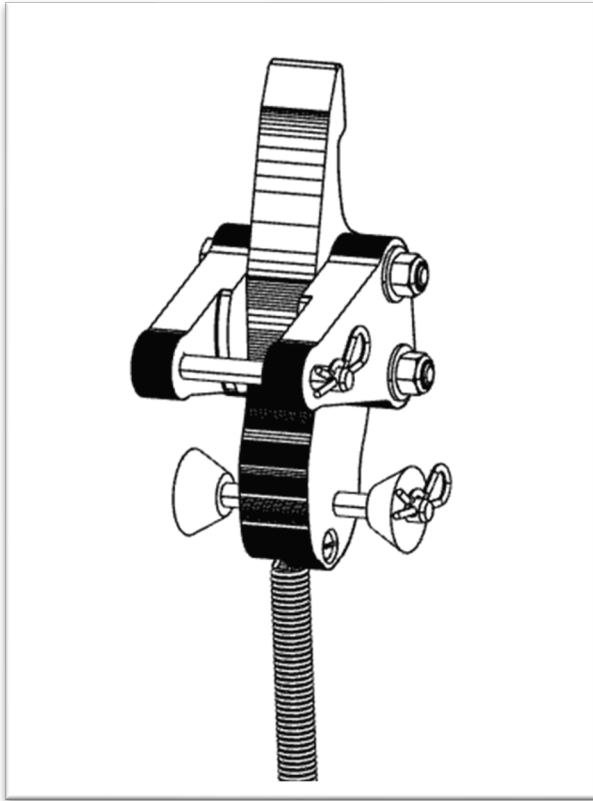


**Figure 2. Completed Left Side Handle Assembly**



**Figure 3. Exploded Right Side Handle Assembly**

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**WARNING:** Be sure there is no gap between each part in the assembly. If there is, remove locknuts, clean the threads with a stiff brush, and reassemble as shown.

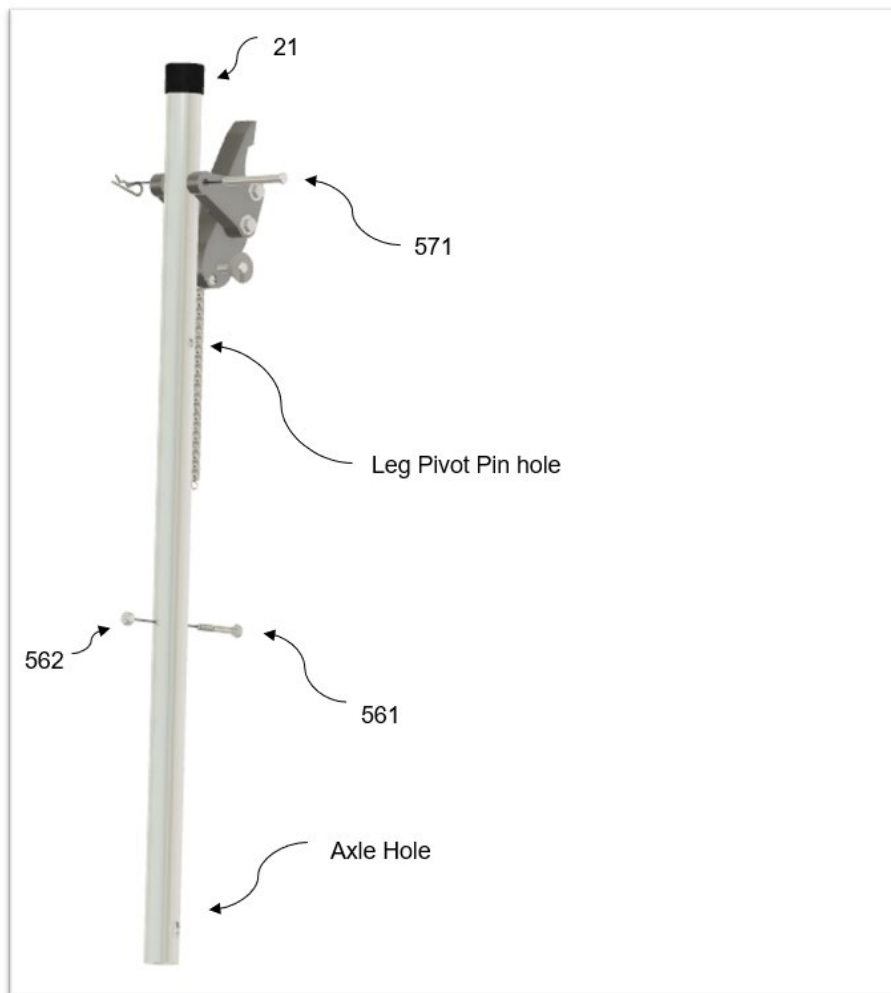
**Figure 4. Completed Right Side Handle Assembly**

### **Completing the Leg Assembly**

Find the left-hand leg #15 by looking at the open end; on the inside you should see both a number and a letter. The number represents the degree offset between the leg pivot pin hole and the axle hole when looking down the barrel of the leg. This offset allows the wheels to track straight when deployed. The letter will either be “R” for right or “L” for left.

Now, release pin 571 from the left freedom handle sub-assembly, and glide the side handles between the leg as shown and insert pin 571 back into the side handles and through the handle pivot hole of the leg. Reattach the cotter pin to secure the clevis pin. Find a 561 bolt and insert into the open end of the tension spring. Slide the spring sleeve over the spring. Now stretch the spring and twist slightly so that bolt 561 can be inserted in the lower spring tension hole which is located around mid-point on the leg. Secure bolt position with locknut 562, leaving play in the spring. **DO NOT OVER TIGHTEN.**

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**Figure 5. Left Side Leg Assembly**



**Figure 6. Completed Left Side Leg Assembly**

Follow a similar procedure to install the right-side freedom handle assembly to the right leg.

## STEP 2: INSTALL MOUNTING SOLUTION

There are multiple styles of mounting solutions we have developed for customer installation of the Freedom Launcher, including:

- A. Gorilla bracket with Thru hull backing cushions
- B. Hobie PA bracket with blind gunwale bracket
- C. Gorilla bracket with Rail mount hardware
- D. Gorilla bracket with blind gunwale bracket

Please refer the appropriate section below for the specific mounting solution provided.

### A. Installing Gorilla bracket on a through-hull with backing cushions

Three additional resources are available to assist you in completing the crossbar installation. Please refer to the following:

1. See Youtube video of thru-hull installation – click [here](#) or use QR.
2. See document of mounting kit hardware – click [here](#).
3. See written documentation of installation process – companion to YouTube video click [here](#).



### B. Hobie PA bracket with blind gunwale bracket

Three resources are available to assist:

1. See pictures of install on short YouTube video [here](#).
2. Narrated install from first Hobie PA 12 customer [here](#).
3. There are also helpful tips on crossbar completion at approx. 8:09 YouTube [here](#).

### C. Gorilla Bracket with Rail Mount

See Thru Hull mount documentation. Rail mounts are a little easier in that there are no under cushions and the orientation of Gorilla mount is somewhat dictated by the rail slots.

**As of Aug 27, 2025 all shipments will contain pre-cut crossbars fit to your particular kayak hull. In most circumstances, you will still need to center your crossbar between the mounting brackets and drill the final four holes to attach your crossbar to your kayak. This is usually a simple matter of using the Gorilla brackets as a drill guide for your 5/16" drill bit. Step 3 is included for historical reference and for users who prefer to custom cut their crossbar on request.**

### ~~STEP 3. SIZE CROSSBAR TO YOUR KAYAK~~

~~Your crossbar is delivered with three items attached: 1) crossbar tooling; 2) opposite side end cap; and 3) end cap insert pre-installed in the finished end. The standard crossbar is delivered at 47" long, which is sufficient to fit a range of kayaks up to 40" width. One side will be finished with an specific angle with endcap installed. You will size your crossbar, cut to length at appropriate angle, drill bracket holes, debur, and insert the second endcap.~~

~~There are two methods of cutting the crossbar demonstrated on YouTube. User decides which will be best for their particular situation. **NOTE:** Ensure that both edges of the crossbar form a "V" with the point angling in towards the rear of the hull.~~

- ~~1) Using a **miter saw** with non-ferrous blade: Click [here](#) to see demo#1.~~
- ~~2) Using a **jig saw** to cut aluminum crossbar: Click [here](#) to see demo#2.~~

~~It is suggested to start with the finished crossbar side on the left. Fit up one side of the crossbar using the machined holes to temporarily install a Freedom bracket. Then install a leg assembly. Ensure that all existing accessories allow for free travel of your Freedom Launcher leg & wheel on both sides of your watercraft at the desired crossbar projection outboard your kayak. Test in the stowed and deployed states. Determine the length of crossbar necessary to fit your boat. Under no circumstances should you cut the crossbar less than a total width of 6.5" + total width of hull at mounting location. Typical crossbar projection is 3.5" - 4.0" on each side, meaning your crossbar will be 7.0" - 8.0" wider than your kayak at the mounting location. Cutting the crossbar too short may cause the axle locks to bump against the hull. Once the overall length is determined; use a miter saw, jig saw, hacksaw or bandsaw to cut the crossbar to~~

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desired length and angle and then use the included tooling to drill the two Freedom Bracket mounting holes in the appropriate location. Note: The tooling is designed to finish the right side facing up. If you started with finished side on the right, you may need to drill from the bottom to get the right angle on the crossbar engagement with the tooling.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The crossbar should be a bare end when installing the drill tooling as shown in figure to the right. **DO NOT** install the opposite endcap insert until the drilling operation is complete.



## STEP 4. Drilling the crossbar mounting holes

Four center holes are required to connect the crossbar to the kayak mount which will be either a Gorilla mount or a PA style angle bracket. Use a 5/16" drill bit; a bit stop comes in handy to drill through the bottom of the crossbar. Use the Gorilla mount holes as drill guides. Center the Gorilla mount on the crossbar fore and aft. Two equal thickness of packing cushion works well to temporarily keep the crossbar centered in between the



Gorilla bracket. See video for details. Quick release wood clamps also come in handy to secure crossbar temporarily in relation to the Gorilla bracket.

## STEP 5. Attach crossbar assembly to the mount

|     |           |     |                                      |
|-----|-----------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 186 | WS-5Q1632 | Qty | Gorilla Mount Thru Hull Hardware Kit |
|-----|-----------|-----|--------------------------------------|

Open **item #186** found in your mounting group.

Use the included 5/16" x 3"L Alumina-coat bolts included to secure the cross-member to the Gorilla bracket. Do not over tighten, as the hollow tube and or plastic may yield.

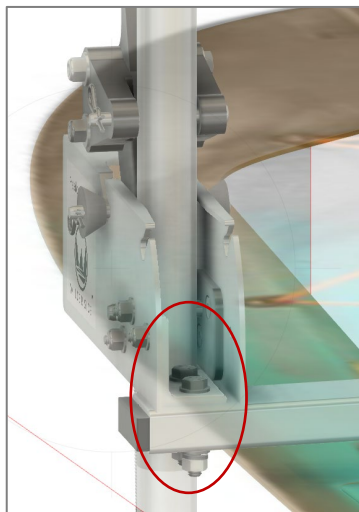
Snug hand tight only, ensuring that the lock washers fully compressed. Because this joint isn't torqued tightly, it is good idea to use blue loc-tite on this bolted joint.

## STEP 6. Mounting Freedom Brackets onto the crossbar assembly

|    |           |   |                                         |
|----|-----------|---|-----------------------------------------|
| 58 | WS-7N1663 | 1 | Gen 3 Freedom Bracket Mounting Hdwr Kit |
|----|-----------|---|-----------------------------------------|

Find **item #58** in the Small Parts Combo Kit. Use the included 5/16" x 1.75" hex bolts. Assemble using the following illustration.

See Illustration below. As an aide, the product labels for the Freedom Launcher will



also be on the outboard face(s) of the Freedom Bracket. The stack should be:

1. Bolt head
2. Flat washer
3. Freedom Bracket
4. Crossbar
5. Flat washer
6. Lock washer
7. Nut

**NOTE: Tighten the bolted joint to 18 ft-lb of torque.**



## STEP 7. Installing the Leg Assembly



NOTE: **There is a Left and Right Leg**. Legs should arrive be marked on the inside or outside of the axle end with a “R” for right side or “L” for left side. Do not interchange. **Installing legs on opposite sides will result in the axles not being parallel when deployed.** Slide the Axle end of the leg assembly into the top of the Freedom Bracket. Rest the position locking pin into the front restraining slots. Note: The Freedom Handle should be on top of the leg

when the leg is laying horizontally in the Freedom Bracket. The leg will hang there. Gently pull on the leg back; and wiggle up or down until the 3/8” holes in the Freedom Bracket align with the pivot pin hole in the leg. Find item #568 3/8” Clevis pin found in the Handle Hardware kit. Insert the clevis pin into the pivot holes; convention is to start from the outboard side and push in. I prefer to have all the clevis pin heads outboard and all the cotter pins inboard. USE THE LARGE COTTER PIN on the 3/8” leg pivot pin. It is there to make it easier to remove if you need to remove the leg.

Note: Your crossbar and legs should form a matched set. A 5 degree leg sweep crossbar only fits with 5 degree legs. If for some reason, you received a set with mismatched angles, please call us to rectify the situation before proceeding with installation!! We offer four different leg sweep angles to match a wide variety of kayak and canoe hull shapes. Your configuration was selected to best fit your particular hull shape with legs that neatly fit up near the gunwale when stowed.

## STEP 8. Assembling the Axle

|    |           |   |          |
|----|-----------|---|----------|
| 57 | WS-5P2637 | 1 | Axle Kit |
|----|-----------|---|----------|

Open **item #57** found in your Small Parts Combo Kit.

Slide the plastic “C” shaped axle lock onto the axle such that the “C” shape faces towards the center of the axle and the hole in the axle lock is over the smaller hole in the axle. Insert the 1.5” 10-24 screw into the axle lock and through the axle and secure the screw with a 10-24 locknut. Repeat procedure for the second axle.

### Mounting the axles and wheels

Insert the free end of the axle assembly completely into the inboard axle hole of leg until the axle lock engages with the leg as shown. Next slide the wheel spacer washer onto the axle; then the wheel; and finally hold the assembly in place with the ¼” stainless steel safety pin.

Note: Ignore wheel orientation in the diagram, have the nicer looking side of wheel facing outboard!!



### Transportation Tips

Wheels can be left on the watercraft for short trips if under 30 mph. For longer trips or higher speeds, it is recommended to **remove the wheels and axle assembly** and store in a storage compartment of your watercraft or vehicle. Another option is to use a bungee cord to secure legs and wheels from bouncing during travel. Either way, Leg assemblies travel well and can remain in the Freedom Brackets under most circumstances.

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