My 8.8 Swap

The Ford Explorer 8.8 is a good axle to swap into a SWB Jeep. ALL Explorer 8.8s are 31 spine shafts (even though some believe only '95+ are Explorers), Also, the next good point of the 8.8... '95 and newer are all going to have disc brakes! This a huge plus for the street and trail... not to mention, they will hold your axle in to a certain extent (enough to get off the trail for repairs) should you break the 1.32" 31 spline shaft. Anyway, here is a run down of their plusses and minuses. I will also do a little compare and contrast to other axles - mainly the D35, which is normally replaces, and the D44, which is it often compared to.

Plus:

5x4.5 lug pattern - same as stock Jeep
31 splines - compared to the 27 sp in the D35, 30 in the D44, and 30 in most D60s...
1.32" shafts (at smallest point)- compared to 1.19" in D44 and 1.30" or 1.19" in D60
Discs Brakes - nice stopping power and retain broken axle (pre '95 had drums)
59.25" wide - close to stock Jeep width (60")- 3/8" shorter on each..
Big, 8.8" ring gear - hence the name (D44 is 8.5", HP 9" is 8.8 as well)

Shaft testing: Warn did a break test on stock D44 and 8.8 axle shafts a few years ago in one of the off road magazines. The results had the D44 breaking at about 4600 pounds per foot of rotational twist, but with the 8.8 they couldn't get an actual result..... because at the 6200 lb limit of the machine, the 8.8 axles were still holding tight!!!

As far as the 8.8 being a C-Clip axle, to me this is not a weak link in my mind-don't see how the ¼" piece of steel is considered weak, especially seeing that it has very little stress on it!

Axle Comparison Chart:

Vehicle	YJ/TJ	TJ/XJ	8.8
Axle	Dana 35	Dana 44	F8.8
Weight	155lbs	167lbs	174 lbs
Ring Gear Dia.	7.56"	8.5"	8.8"
Ring Gear Bolts	3/8" (8)	3/8" (10)	7/16" (10)
Pinion Diameter	1.406" (26sp)	1.375" (30 sp)	1.625" (30sp)
Axle Diameter	1.160" (27sp)	1.30" (30 sp)	1.320 (31 sp)
Strength (approx)	4161 ft.lbs	5982 ft.lbs	6200+ ft.lbs
Tube Diameter	2.5"	2.75"	3.25"
Discs	No	No	'95+

To obtain an 8.8, any wrecking yard should have an abundance of them or go to Carparts.Com to locate one. Priced anywhere from $250.00 to 1000.00 depending on mileage and gearing. Most come with 3.73 and Traclok, some have 4.10 if you're lucky. I purchased mine brand new thru Ford with the help from Jay Prosch' Jensen (Ultimate Driveline), Ford has a huge stock pile since the newer Explorer's and Mountaineer's went to independent rear suspension.
You will then have to obtain the bracket kit from either M.O.R.E. or Teraflex; this is a 11 piece kit that will have all the brackets for you control arms, spring plates, shock mounts, track bar, sway bar, etc.
Plus you will need E- brake cable kit. ZJ cable kit will work from any Jeep dealer.

Then you will have to cut off all the bracket and reweld the new one's on in the correct angles and locations, plus I had my tubes welded at the center housing to prevent the tubes from spinning.
Stock driveshaft will work with a yoke adapter; however I opted for an AA SYE and Tom Woods CV shaft.

Installation was pretty straight forward, we did have to bend new hard break lines only because who ever had my Jeep before me must have replaced the passenger side hard line and jammed it in the t-block and gooberd up the flare and stripped some threads because it was a metric end going into a standard fitting.

And we did have to get a universal adapter U-Joint with 1310 & 1330 cap ends (Thanks to Anders) to adapted to the yoke adapter on the 8.8.

Over all to me this was a great swap for the money I have a brand new complete rear axle with disc brakes and an ARB locker that will hold 38" tires if I choose to go that big with no worries of breakage.

Oh, and a special thanks to Anders Farr for all his help!!!!

Thanks,
Tony Pilch