

42 Draft Designs

Audi TT 180Q & 225 3" Cat-Back FAQ

Q: What cat-back system is right for me?

A: We currently offer our TT 3" cat-back in two fitments - 180Q and 225. Each fitment is designed to bolt to our respective 3" downpipe using our CNC machined flanges. Fitment is specific to each model and each downpipe. Rumor has it that 180Q and 225 exhausts are interchangeable. Our experience proves that each downpipe terminates in a similar, but very different location. The 180Q downpipe terminates in the center of the tunnel. The 225 downpipe terminates on the driver's side. Our systems are accurately designed for each model and cannot be interchanged. Please observe the following guidelines when choosing our 3" cat-back:

- If you have our 225 3" downpipe installed - use our 225 3" cat-back
- If you have our 180Q 3" downpipe installed - use our 180Q 3" cat-back
- If you have a custom 3" downpipe installed on a 225 - use our 225 3" cat-back
- If you have a custom 3" downpipe installed on a 180Q - use our 180Q 3" cat-back

TT owners with hybrid turbocharger setups take notice! Each cat-back fits the turbocharger and respective downpipe it was designed to fit. 180Q owners with 225 hardware should use the 225 cat-back or turbo-back. 180FWD owners should steer clear - this cat-back won't fit regardless of turbocharger swaps.

Q: My 180Q has a single exhaust tip. Do you offer a single tip version?

A: We do not offer a single tip version of our 180Q or 225 3" cat-back. Both systems use the same rear muffler with dual 4" tips. 180Q owners will need to install a 225 or 3.2 rear valance when installing our cat-back. During product development our 180Q test cars insisted on converting to the 225 rear valance. In our research, we found the majority of 180Q owners preferred the dual tip. At this time we have no plans to offer a single tip cat-back for the TT.

Q: How does your cat-back connect to my existing downpipe?

A: If you have a 42 3" downpipe, our 3" cat-back installs using three bolts and a gasket. It's that easy.

Q: I have a different 3" downpipe on my car. How do I install your cat-back?

Although our 3" cat-back was designed to fit our 3" downpipes, it can be installed on other downpipes. Custom 3" downpipes and 3" downpipes built by other manufacturers are equally worthy and equally common. Fitment to these downpipes is not difficult, but requires more than a clamp-on install. Here's what we recommend:

First, realize that our 3" cat-backs start where our factory adaptor bolts-up. This location is deep into the downpipe. 225 cat-back systems begin 3" into the existing downpipe. 180Q cat-back systems begin 3" into the existing downpipe. Before purchasing, be sure you have the real estate. Make sure you have the respective length of straight piping in your downpipe using the center of the stock sleeve clamp for reference. Be sure your catalytic converter and second oxygen sensor bung will not interfere or make arrangements to move them. Once you're sure, move on to the next step.

Next, remove your existing cat-back exhaust and install ours. Mark the start of the cat-back flange on your existing downpipe. Remove the marked portion of piping and cut at your mark. Re-install your

downpipe piping and slide our 3" adjustable flange onto your piping. Bolt the loose flange and the first flange of our cat-back together. Your downpipe should sit naturally in the flange. Check your tip fitment and clearances along the entire length of the cat-back. With your cat-back fitting exactly as designed, carefully mark the flange and your downpipe.

Next, unbolt the flange and remove the downpipe piping. Tack weld the flange to your piping being careful to align the flange as marked. Rotation, angle, and depth is critical. Once tacked together, re-install and check fitment once again. Test fitment is crucial to your satisfaction with the final fitment. Once your happy with the final fitment, fully weld the flange to your downpipe piping. We recommend professional TIG welding, however careful MIG welding will work just fine. Re-install the finished pipe, bolt it all together and drive the car!

Q: Are there any other ways to connect your cat-back to my custom 3" downpipe?

A: There's a dozen ways to join two pieces of pipe together. The flange method we describe is the best method. It's solid, leak-free and will never fail you. When you're working with custom downpipes, fabricators, and shade tree mechanics you'll receive a myriad of different suggestions. Here's a couple we're comfortable with and even a few that won't work.

- Do not cut the flange off our cat-back and try to use a sleeve clamp or create a slip joint. Our piping enters the flange at an angle required by the tight fitment. Attempting a straight pipe to straight pipe connection will result in terrible fitment.
- Think flange. If you have the room, you (or 42) can create a bolt-on adaptor that will slide straight over your existing exhaust. If your downpipe is 3" you could weld 3" of straight pipe to a flange, cut your downpipe to fit and use a 3" sleeve clamp to join the two pipes together. You could also expand this pipe, slot it and slide it over your 3" piping to create a slip fit. A heavy duty clamp would be required.
- If your existing downpipe is not 3" piping, additional thinking may be required. The easiest way to adapt ~2.75 piping to 3" will be to expand the piping to match. Follow our instructions to cut the downpipe. Take your downpipe and flange to a muffler shop and have them expand your tubing to 3" at the flange. Mark carefully and weld for a perfect fit.
- If your existing downpipe is not 3" piping a custom bolt-on slip-over type adaptor can also be fabricated. If you're unable to create this adaptor please contact us with your specific needs. Pictures and accurate measurements will be required for a successful fit.
- Remember - nothing's permanent. It's just pipe and can always be modified by metalworking professionals.

Q: Does this cat-back require any additional modification?

A: Yes, this system requires a simple heatshield modification. Although our 3" cat-back follows the same path as the factory exhaust, it's significantly larger in size and requires minor trimming of the rear muffler heatshield. Roughly 2" x 7" needs to be removed, enlarging an existing opening. Reference the pictures below for exact measurements. Trimming can be performed with basic tin snips without removing the heatshield.



Q: What hangers does this system use?

A: Both systems use the rear muffler hangers and the narrow hanger welded to the rear suspension. The 180Q stock exhaust uses a hanger which is bolted to the car in-between the stock sleeve clamp and the rear suspension. This hanger bracket must be removed and the hanger bushing used on the rear suspension hanger. Why? The 180Q hanger will not clear 3" piping. It's too low. If we accommodate this hanger our piping moves even closer to the ground. There's no tangible difference between this hanger and the 225 hanger.

Q: Your website mentioned that the exhaust has the potential to be loud. Please explain...

A: Before over-analyzing the volume of our system, please watch our video sound clips online to get a feel for the natural volume of this system. It's not loud, but it could be quite loud inside the car under the right conditions. Here's why:

The design of the TT body lends itself to intense cabin noise. Any TT owner knows a worn out set of rear tires is brutal on the ears. When it comes to exhaust, the rear end is a bass drum covered in pretty paint. A broad, horizontal rear muffler positioned underneath an equally flat rear heatshield and interior sends sound waves straight up to be reflected off the rear window and straight into the driver's ears. When an aftermarket exhaust is installed it's important to understand why it's louder. Aftermarket exhausts are open and free-flowing. Exhaust gases and sound waves flow freely, only to be absorbed by the rear muffler. The more sound waves the rear muffler absorbs the more you hear inside the car in the form of drone.

To avoid a loud exhaust, we recommend keeping the rear seats installed. We also recommend using a street series downpipe with a high-flow cat. The cat will buffer sound waves before they hit the rear end, helped by our resonator of course. The rear seats keep the noise down - no matter what exhaust you have. Using our street series downpipe with your rear seats in you'll have no problems whatsoever.

We're not saying our exhaust is loud. We're saying it can be under the right conditions. We feel everyone should know what these conditions are before moving forward. Every TT owner is different - 3" exhaust may not be for you.

Before releasing these systems we extensively tested a number of catalytic converter, resonator, and muffler combinations. Our final choices reflect our desire for a free-flowing system with exceptional sound, fitment, and minimal interior sound. We're happy with the system and confident you will be too.

Q: What is your cat-back made of?

A: Our piping and resonator is 14 gauge aluminized steel. Our flanges are 1018 cold roll steel. Our muffler is 400 series stainless steel. Our hardware is cad/zinc plated steel.

Q: So what does all that actually mean? I am concerned about rust.

A: Let's start with the piping. Aluminized steel is a basic low-carbon steel with a coating of aluminum bonded to the pipe inside and out. Like any coating, the aluminum protects the steel from the elements, preventing rust. It holds up to 1600° and will never peel or flake off. The pipe underneath cannot rust until the aluminum corrodes and the coating is degraded.

Our flanges are cut from 1018 cold roll steel. This material machines fairly easily and is consistent. We machine to exacting precision to ensure proper fitment on your vehicle. Precision aside, steel rusts. The flanges will get a coating of rust on them immediately, but are too thick to "fall apart" within the normal lifespan of this system.

Our muffler is provided in 409 stainless steel. 409 stainless steel is essentially mild steel with enough chromium added to slow down the corrosion. It will turn dark brown quickly and will rust slowly over time.

Our hardware is cad/zinc plated. This plating acts as a protective layer reacting with the corrosive environment before it can reach the steel.

Q: Why don't you make this cat-back in stainless steel?

A: Simply put, it would be too expensive.

Ever notice how expensive a high quality stainless steel system is? Surely you've seen all the low priced systems out there. There's a HUGE difference in materials, build quality, and fitment between the two. We're right in the middle with a high quality, perfect fitting system made from high quality American made materials.

To make this system in stainless steel to our quality standards we would need to source the absolute best components and raw materials. The design of our system calls for the tightest radius bends possible and a rare rear muffler design. All said and done, the total cost of this system in 100% 304 stainless steel exceeds what we feel a TT owner would pay with a reasonable mark-up. To build our cat-backs we chose the materials listed above which have been successful for us for over 5 years.

We are well aware that other companies offer cat-backs in stainless steel – some cheaper, some more expensive. We are confident in the quality, fitment, and features that our product offers. Yes, there are many high quality stainless systems out there priced at top dollar. There are also many other systems out there built in the US and foreign countries from questionable materials by un-trained workers. Beware of what you're buying. Just because it says "stainless steel TIG welded" doesn't mean quality.

Q: What can I do to prevent rust?

A: All of our exhaust products can be purchased ceramic coated. Our coating is professionally applied by the leading national coating shop. The coating offers a polished aluminum look, a thermal barrier up to 1600°, and the ultimate in corrosion protection. For more information, please visit our website.

Any part of the exhaust system after the catalytic converter can be high-temp powdercoated. Any local powdercoating shop can provide this coating service.

There are a number of high-temp paints available at your local auto parts or paint store which can be applied at home for a minimal cost. If you plan to coat your system, we recommend coating it before installing. Though any coating can be applied at any time, preparing the metal will be easier before anything rusts. Always follow the instructions provided to you by the coating manufacturer – prep, application, and cure.

Q: I just installed my cat-back... what's that burning smell?

A: The exhaust should smell like burning oil for about 100 miles. There are oils on the metals leftover from manufacturing. Once burned off, this smell will never return.