

DIAGNOSIS GUIDE · AK-DG-003

TIRES HITTING YOUR FENDERS? **STANCE** WITHOUT THE SCRUB

You dropped it, it finally sits right — and now every driveway and passenger announces itself with that sound. Rubbing isn't the price of stance. It's a geometry problem with exactly five possible causes, and rolling a fender lip is treating the symptom, not the math.

[FIND THE CAUSE](#)[GET THE \\$9.95 HANDBOOK](#)

Applies to: 1949–1979 VW Type 1, 2, 3 · lowered or air-ride

Time: ~20 min of checks **Difficulty:** Beginner

Cost to diagnose: a stick of chalk

LOW IS A LIFESTYLE — RUBBING IS A MATH ERROR

\$0 FREE CHECKS FIRST

READ THIS BEFORE YOU BUY ANYTHING — FROM US OR ANYONE

BEFORE YOU SPEND A DIME

We sell narrowed beams for a living, and we'd still rather you check the free stuff first. Set your **tire pressures to spec, cold** — an underinflated tire bulges wider and rubs when a correct one clears. Check the **fender mounting bolts and beading** (a loose fender shifts into the tire), and clear any **packed mud or undercoating** off the inner arch. Then drive your usual rub route.

If the sound is gone — great. You owe us nothing; go enjoy the car and tell a friend who we are. If it's still there, it's real geometry, and the chalk test below will tell you exactly which of the five causes you've got. (*Pressure specs by tire size and ride height are in the \$9.95 handbook.*)

THE CHALK TEST: THE TIRE TELLS YOU **WHERE, BEFORE YOU BUY ANYTHING.**

Chalk the tire shoulder and the fender lip, drive your usual rub route, and look where the chalk transferred. That one mark separates the five causes: **outer lip in turns** points at track width or backspacing, **top of the arch over bumps** points at tire size or travel, **one side only** points at a wheel or fender issue, not the beam.

Sixty seconds of chalk beats a thousand dollars of guessing. Match your mark to the five causes below.

THE 60-SECOND DIAGNOSIS · 5 CAUSES

MATCH YOUR CHALK MARK TO ITS CAUSE

Each cause tells you what the mark looks like, how to confirm it, and the fix that ends it. Rub is often two causes stacked — a wide wheel on a full-width beam — so check the whole list before ordering parts.



Same beam, minus the inches your fenders need back.

1

THE BIG ONE · MOST LOWERED CARS

LOWERED ON A FULL-WIDTH BEAM

Drop a VW on a stock-width beam and the tires sit exactly where VW put them — but the fenders came down around them. The track that cleared at stock height doesn't clear at slammed.

YOUR CHALK MARK: Outer fender lip, worst in turns and over dips, both sides roughly equal.

THE FIX: A **narrowed PRObuilt beam** — 2" to 4" depending on drop and wheels — pulls the whole front track inboard so the tires tuck instead of touch. This is the cure, not the workaround; every other fix on this page assumes the track is right.

How much narrowing your drop needs, by model: in the handbook.

2

5-MIN MEASURE · AFTER EVERY WHEEL SWAP

WHEEL WIDTH & BACKSPACING

Two wheels with the same diameter can put the tire an inch apart in the arch. Width, offset and backspacing decide where the rubber actually lives — and most "cool wheels" were never measured against a lowered VW arch.

YOUR CHALK MARK: One edge only — outer lip (not enough backspacing) or inner components (too much) — usually appearing right after a wheel swap "that should have fit."

THE FIX: Measure before you buy, once: beam width, drop, tire size and arch clearance together. That's exactly what we validate in a **wheel & tire combo** — and why ours come matched to the beam.

The straightedge backspacing measurement, step by step: in the handbook.



Measure once, buy once.



Every inch of drop costs you tire.

3

2-MIN CHECK · THE SIZE MISMATCH

TOO MUCH TIRE FOR THE DROP

Every inch of drop costs you tire. The 165s that cleared at stock height need to be 135s or 145s at a serious drop — sidewall height and section width both eat your new, smaller arch gap.

YOUR CHALK MARK: Top of the arch, over every bump, even going straight, even with sane wheels.

THE FIX: Size the tire to the ride height you actually run, not the one the car left the factory with. Shorter and narrower up front is the lowered-VW rule — our **wheel & tire combos** are sized this way from the start.

Tire size by drop, the chart: in the handbook.

DROPPED SPINDLES ON THE WRONG COMBO

Dropped spindles are a great tool — they lower the car while keeping suspension travel. But they relocate the wheel upward into the arch, which changes the clearance math, and some spindles also push the wheel outboard slightly.

YOUR CHALK MARK: Appeared the day the spindles went on, with the same wheels and tires that used to clear.

THE FIX: Spindles, beam width, wheel offset and tire size chosen as one package. That's the whole philosophy behind a **PRObuilt front end** — the parts are matched before they ship.

Which spindle/beam/wheel combos clear, by model and drop: in the handbook.



Same bolt holes, different math.



Laid out and not touching — that's the system doing its job.

AIR RIDE WITHOUT TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

Air gets you show stance *and* highway height — but aired out, or hitting a bump at low pressure, the suspension can use travel the tires don't have room for.

YOUR CHALK MARK: Clean at ride height, marks high in the arch after airing down or hard hits at low pressure.

THE FIX: A properly plumbed and tuned **air ride kit** on the right beam — pressures, travel and tire package set up together. 40,000+ of our kits are on the road this way; drag-and-park isn't a compromise when the system's designed as one.

Ride-height presets and minimum driving pressures: in the handbook.

MATCHED YOUR MARK? FIX THE MATH.

Three ways forward — pick the one that fits how you like to work.

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA



NARROWED BEAMS
The cure for track width



WHEELS & TIRES
Combos matched to the beam



AIR RIDE
Kits, parts & installs



THE \$9.95 HANDBOOK
Size charts & pressures



TALK TO A PRO
Scan to call/text

STUCK? WE ANSWER.

REAL HUMANS. REAL PHONES. REAL VW PEOPLE.

If your chalk mark doesn't match any cause, or you're planning wheels and want the combo validated before you spend — reach out. We pick up the phone. That's the Airkewld way.



THIS GUIDE ONLINE

Scan for the live page & latest revision

CALL / TEXT
1-623-518-3537

EMAIL
help@airkewld.com

TAG YOUR FIX
#AirkewldArmy on Instagram

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