

Obviously, SVT Focus fans, the guys at Redline Tuning provided a few key pieces to finish off the SVT Focus to my liking. Seen here are the company's QUICKLift Elite (\$109.95), SVT Focus Dead Pedal (\$54.95), and SVT Focus Floor Mat Set (\$154.90). The QUICKLift Elite replaces the cheesy hood prop rod with two stainless steel, gas-charged shocks, which raise the hood. Meanwhile, the Dead Pedal is a much-welcomed addition for drivers with long commutes, and the floor mats, in addition to being higher quality than the stockers, are embroidered with the fetching SVT logo.

# Sensible Start

Starting down the slippery slope with a few mods on our SVT five-door

By Steve Turner  
Photos by Steve Turner and Mark Houtahan

Each time I buy a newer car I keep telling my magazine compatriots that I plan to limit the modifications to the car: I did so when I bought my '98 Mustang Cobra, and I ended up adding a six-speed, wheels and tires, brakes, a full Steeda suspension, and a revamped interior. I'll admit it. I'm an automotive modification addict. The

mitigating factor this time around is that my '05 SVT Focus Euro five-door is my first new car. That and I want to keep my warranty intact. The Focus, as cool as it may be, is still my commuter car.

With all that said, my friends around the office give me that look and say, "Yeah, right!" They know I can't resist, because as complete a car as the SVT Focus is, especially with the European appearance package, there are still a few items that seem like they should be stock. Even before I took delivery of my

car, I started looking for those little things to finish it off. Ending up at Redline Tuning's Web site, I found a trio of mods that seem to really finish off the car—quality floor mats embroidered with the SVT logo, gas-charged lifts for the hood, and a dead pedal for those long interstate drives.

So, I'm starting out slow, but I've still got ideas about a shifter, cold-air kit, throttle body, flash tuning, and exhaust. I probably won't be able to resist, but I'm glad I got off to a sensible start.

**FOCUS FACT:** The European Appearance Package added several desirable items to the already slick SVT Focus. A must-have are the included HID headlights, which are superior to any Ford headlights I've experienced so far. The Recaro seats, replete with side-impact airbags are definitely a step up from the standard SVT fare, and the mesh Euro wheels set the car apart from the crowd.



The stock SVT front floor mats actually aren't that bad...



...but when you compare them to the thicker, embroidered Redline Tuning mats, there is no comparison. The Redline mats are available with red, blue, orange, yellow, and silver logos, so they will match standard or Euro color schemes. The orange, yellow, and silver schemes are only available as complete packages with the cargo mats, however.



Though the stock front mats are passable, the rear mats are cheesy, undersized mats that look as if they shrunk in the wash. These mats don't do much to protect your rear carpet.



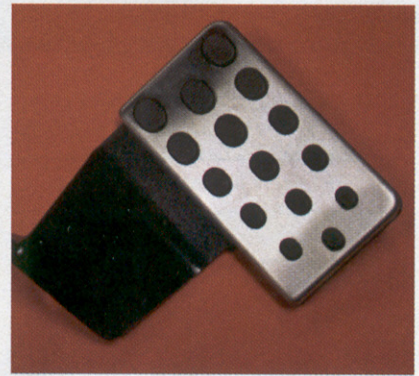
Redline Tuning's mats, on the other hand, are amply sized and actually are notched to fit up under the front seats. These mats make the purchase worthwhile even though they don't have the SVT logo.



You wouldn't expect the stock cargo mat to be anything special. You're just going to throw your gear back here, right?



Well, if you are part of the car-show crowd, or you just can't resist waving the SVT flag, the Redline Tuning mat really dresses up the cargo area. It is, just so you know, only shaped to fit the Audiophile subwoofer, which is a great excuse to add one if you don't already have the thumper.



Though its oval rubber extrusions aren't an exact match for the round rubbers of the SVT Focus pedals, the Redline Tuning dead pedal features a Focus-specific mounting bracket, which makes it a wise buy. Once it's down in the footbox, you'll never notice the oval shape of its rubber bungs.



After moving the carpet out of the way and trimming the insulation, use the pedal's bracket as a template to mark the sheetmetal. Then use a  $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch drill bit to carefully drill through the inner sheetmetal panel. Don't get too deep and drill through the side of your Focus!



Two self-tapping sheetmetal screws are included with the pedal. Simply screw them in to secure the pedal.

## Sensible Start

### Child Sweet



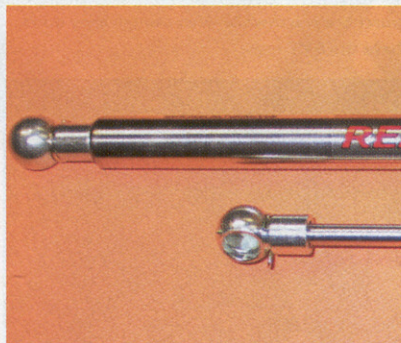
You'll never believe it, but having kids changes a lot, but it doesn't change everything as some might say. Your priorities are certainly rearranged, but you don't have to completely give up on being cool. Sure, having a child seat in your back seat is as sure a way to become uncool as inviting your date back to mom's house (where you still live). However, since my SVT was sporting the Euro Recaro seats, I decided that the only way to fly was with a Recaro child seat in back. The seat in question is the Recaro Start.

In addition to looking slick with the microfiber Volcano cover option, the Start is an innovative booster that adjusts to fit children from 1-12 years, or 30-80 pounds. Its height and side bolsters are both adjustable and it's built on a rugged aluminum frame. It features an integrated headrest to protect your child's head, and its shape and padding offer a comfortable ride. However, proving the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree, my son Jet's favorite part of the Recaro Start is the integrated pair of stereo speakers in the headrest. That way he can still jam to Winnie the Pooh, while dad is kicking the vintage hard rock on XM.

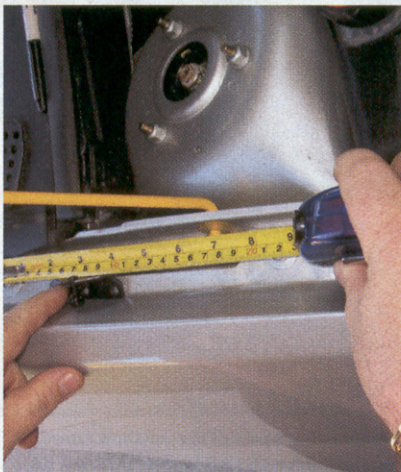
Of course such a cool car seat doesn't come cheap, the Start will set you back \$335, but that's not too much more than the Britax seat in my wife's Focus, and matching the front Recaros with the child seat is priceless.



Then you can just push the carpet back into place, under the pedal, and reinstall the plastic kick panel. This dead pedal really makes interstate cruising more comfortable, as your clutch foot now has a rest stop.



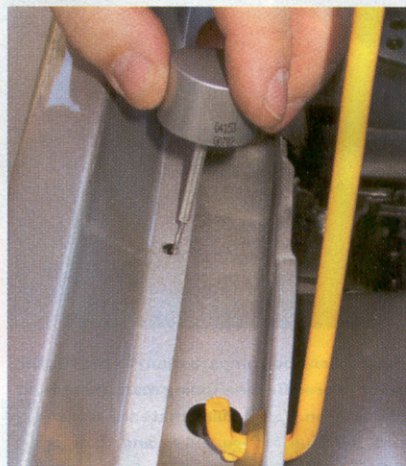
Redline Tuning offers both a QUICKLift and a QUICKLift Elite. The main difference is the Elite features stainless steel gas-charged shocks. I chose the Elite so I'd never have to worry about rusty spots under the hood. The standard kit carries a two-year warranty, while the Elites offer four years of coverage.



Step one is to measure, per the Redline directions, and locate the proper position for the mounting brackets. Then, simply use the brackets as a template to mark the drilling targets with a Sharpie.



Hopefully you didn't put that 1/16-inch drill bit too far away, as you'll need it to drill the holes in the inner fender and hood.



To prevent rust on those freshly drilled holes, you'll want to cover the bare metal with some touch-up paint. You can locate the paint code on the sticker inside the driver-side door. Ours was TS for CD Silver.

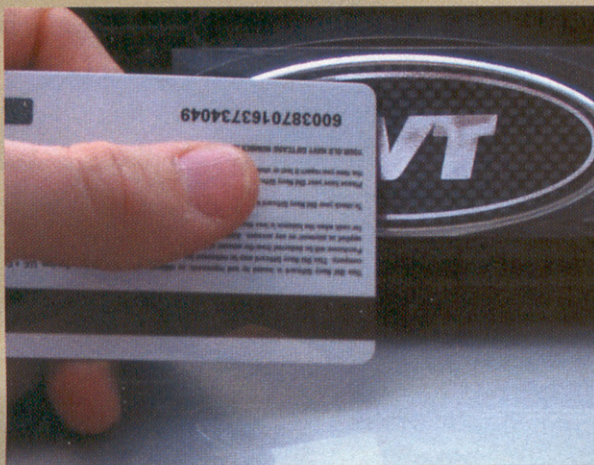


With all the bracket holes located and drilled, you can fasten the brackets in place using the included rivets. These are beefy rivets, so it will take a little elbow grease to drive these babies home. Be sure to protect the paint while using the rivet gun.

## Oval Overlay



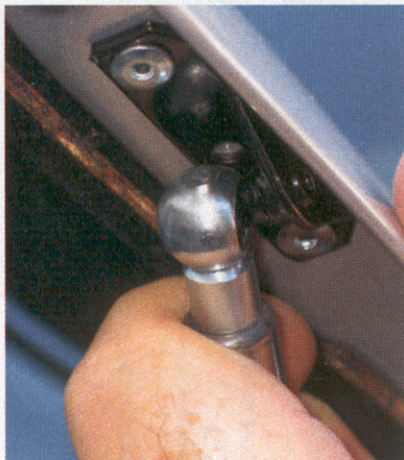
Can you tell I have a thing for the SVT logo? I for one think Ford would be crazy to get rid of its premium performance division. I also happen to have a pretty strong carbon-fiber fetish. So while I was looking for a way to doll up the everybody-has-'em Ford emblems, Tech Editor and Explorer Sport Trac nut Mark Houlahan hooked me up with his buddy at WebXtremes. Apparently the owner of this decal outfit has a Sport Trac and an SVT Focus, so he's obviously into Fords. As such, he offers all manner of dress-up decals, including those with the Ford and SVT logos. These are particularly handy for areas like the steering wheel oval, which are next to impossible to replace. We chose the front and rear emblems, as well as the steering wheel emblem in a carbon-fiber look with the SVT logo. These three-decal sets will run you \$24.99 or \$25.99 in the chrome/carbon-fiber look like ours.



First, you want to remove the backing from the decal and coat the sticky surface with soapy water. This will allow you to position the decal exactly where you want it before you stick it permanently. When you get it where you like it, use a credit card to remove the water and air bubbles to adhere the decal.



Here's the finished project. If you look closely, you can tell it's not real carbon fiber, but from any distance, it just looks cool.



With the brackets in place you can pop on the QUICKLift Elite shocks and install the locking clips, which will keep them locked onto the mounting balls.



The last step is to remove the cheesy stock prop rod, then bring your friends over to dazzle them with your SVT Zetec engine. People are sure to ask where you got those QUICKLift Elites, as they'll be wanting them for their rides too. *ff*

## SOURCES

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