

Iron Sportster cylinder R&R

The cast iron cylinders come off after removing the four cylinder base nuts.

The tips and tricks:

1. **Make sure cylinder base nuts turn free, or buy new.**
2. **Tighten to 30 ft-lb.**
3. **Base nuts do not use washers or Loctite.**
4. **Use anti-seize on nuts at assembly.**
5. **A hone will not make cylinders true, that is what the boring bar is for.**
6. **Plastic lunch bags can keep parts clean and organized.**
7. **Clean cylinder before assembly, then immediately put oil on bore.**
8. **Flat black high-temp paint works great.**
9. **Have a bin or tray for all the parts.**
10. **As always, return the tools to the toolbox.**



Here are some tips and tricks for getting the cylinders off the cases, and then back on. (Click for video.)

Once you have the heads off the engine, you can take the cast iron cylinders off of the case. The four cylinder base nuts are fine-thread, and don't use washers. It's good to put anti-seize on them to help get them off the next time.

If the engine is in the frame, you may have to bump the motor to get the back piston down low enough so that you can get the cylinder off. Use snap-ring pliers to get the rings from the wrist pin holes in the piston. Use a socket to tap out the wrist pin. Pull the piston towards you and use light taps so you don't bend the rod or damage the rod bearings.

There are fancy ring compressors to put the cylinders on over the pistons, but a hose clamp works fine too. Be sure to use plenty of engine oil on the rings and piston. Be sure to get the base gaskets on right, and don't let the hose clamp nick it when the cylinder goes on the piston.