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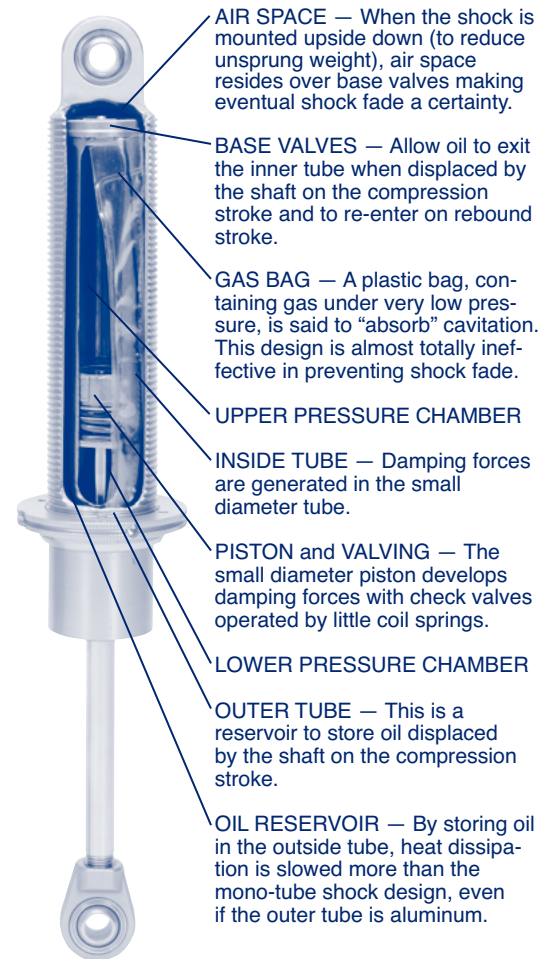
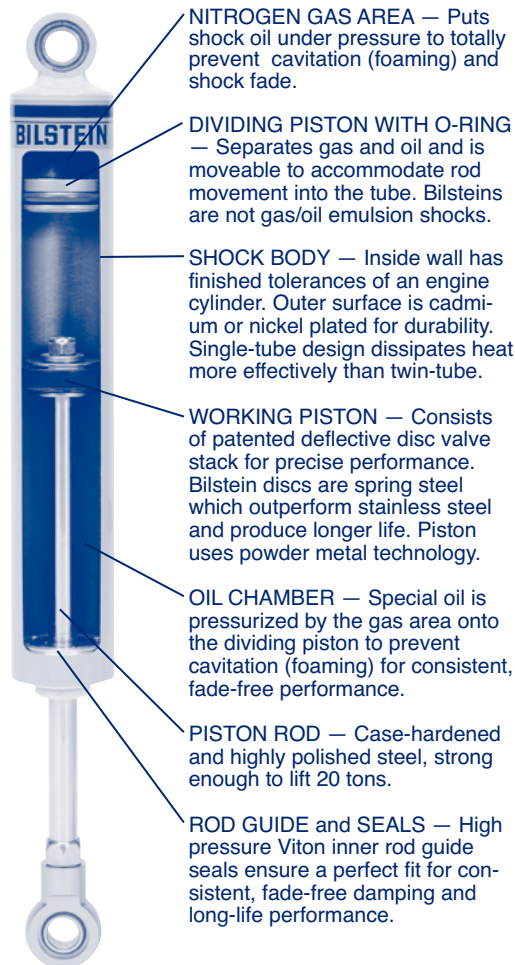
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MONO-TUBE VS. TWIN-TUBE

by Terry Kane



There are basically two types of shock absorbers: the mono-tube and the conventional twin-tube. In both types, changes in the internal oil volume occur. As the piston rod moves in and out of the shock absorber, the volume of the portion of the rod inside the oil chamber changes. Also, as the working temperature of the shock absorber changes, the oil volume will change.

The twin-tube shock absorber has base valves that allow oil to flow to and from a reserve chamber. This chamber is in a tube around the working tube of the shock absorber, thus the name "twin-

tube." The mono-tube shock absorber has a moving piston that divides oil and high-pressure gas chambers. The gas chamber is at the closed end of the mono-tube shock absorber.

A shock absorber converts kinetic energy (motion energy) into heat energy, which must be dissipated. The source of the heat is at the point where the resistance takes place: the valves inside the shock absorber. Already, the mono-tube shock absorber has a clear advantage. The heat only needs to travel through a single tube to the outside air. The heat has to travel through the inner tube, the