

Hauling Long Stock in a Chevy Bolt, Version 1.0

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My 2023 Chevy Bolt has the same cargo capacity as my old 2013 Honda Fit. When conduit or PVC pipe was more than 8 feet long, I used a roof rack to transport it. Yes, I could have opened the liftgate a few inches and let it stick out, but the risk of sucking carbon monoxide into the cabin would be too great.

The rules are different with my Chevy Bolt. With no internal combustion engine, there is no risk of deadly fumes.

A small cover plate inside the hatch reveals an anchor point. I saw the plate but didn't bother to pop it open – tying from that point to the latch bail would put a lot of side force on the hinges because they are not in vertical alignment. Besides, I'd have to put up with the “door open” warning all the way home.

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Looking through my junk drawer, I found a forged shackle. The critical dimension is that it is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. It must be no thicker than 0.3 inches to fit into the latch.

Plenty of room exists to slide a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch strap through the shackle.



The removable bar nicely engages with the latch mechanism inside the lift gate. This also tricks the car into thinking the liftgate is latched, so there are no annoying warnings.

As an alternative, Ace Hardware sells welded rings for under \$2. I strongly discourage using key rings or toy carabiners for this task.



The strap feeds through the anchor point at the bottom.

As I tighten this strap, the downward force is aligned with the latch and anchor, so there will be no side-ways stress on the hinges.

I will secure the strap to the rear seat anchor points from inside the car. I want the lift gate to be snug against the load, but the strap must not be so tight as to distort the anchor hardware. I will use one or more additional straps to secure the load.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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