



How to change front  
strut mount on **BMW 3**  
**Saloon (E46)** –  
replacement guide

### SIMILAR VIDEO TUTORIAL



This video shows the replacement procedure of a similar car part on another vehicle

#### **Important!**

This replacement procedure can be used for:

BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 318i 1.9, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 328i 2.8, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 320d 2.0, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 323i 2.5, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 320i 2.0, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 316i 1.9, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 330d 2.9, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 330xd 2.9, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 330xi 3.0, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 330i 3.0, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 320i 2.2, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 325i 2.5, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 325xi 2.5, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 316i 1.6, BMW 3 Saloon (E46) 318i 2.0, (+ 3)

The steps may slightly vary depending on the car design.

This tutorial was created based on the replacement procedure for a similar car part on: BMW 3 Saloon (E90) 318i 2.0

**REPLACEMENT: STRUT MOUNT – BMW 3 SALOON (E46). LIST OF THE TOOLS YOU'LL NEED:**



- Wire brush
- WD-40 spray
- Brake cleaner
- Copper grease
- Combination spanner #13
- Combination spanner #15
- Combination spanner #18
- Combination spanner #22
- Drive socket # 13
- Drive socket # 17
- Drive socket # 18
- Drive socket # 21
- Torx bit T45
- Wheel impact socket #17
- Ratchet wrench
- Torque wrench
- Flat chisel
- Hammer
- Flat Screwdriver
- Hydraulic strut spring compressor
- Hydraulic transmission jack
- Wheel chock
- Fender cover

**Buy tools**

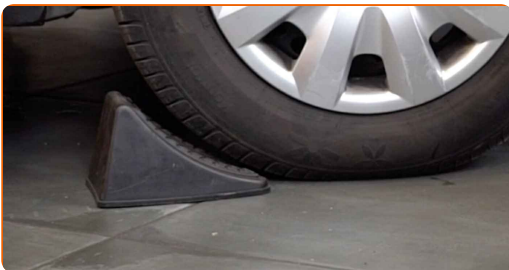
Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). AUTODOC experts recommend:

- The replacement procedure is identical for the mounts of the left and right shock struts of the front suspension.
- All mounts of the front shock struts should be replaced simultaneously.
- Be sure to replace all self-locking nuts and bolts during installation.
- Please note: all work on the car – BMW 3 Saloon (E46) – should be done with the engine switched off.

**CARRY OUT REPLACEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:**

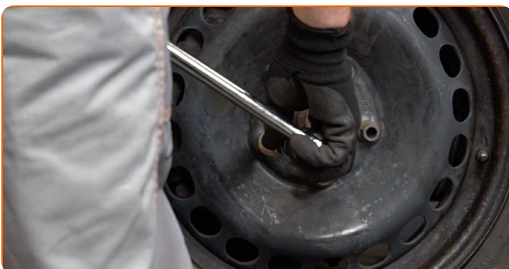
1

Secure the wheels with chocks.



2

Loosen the wheel mounting bolts. Use wheel impact socket #17.



3

Raise the front of the car and secure on supports.

**4** Unscrew the wheel bolts.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Warning! To avoid injury, hold the wheel while unscrewing the fastening bolts.  
BMW 3 Saloon (E46)

**5** Remove the wheel.



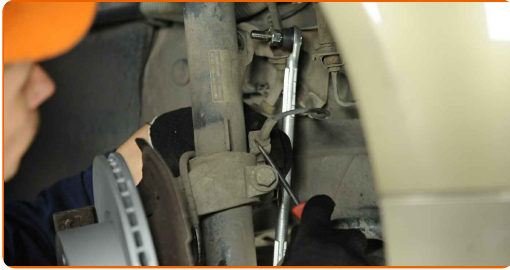
**6** Clean the stabiliser link fasteners. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**7** Unscrew the fastener connecting the stabilizer link to the shock strut. Use a combination spanner #15. Use a drive socket #17. Use a ratchet wrench.



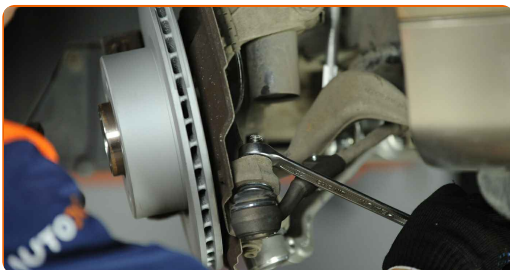
**8** Remove the stabilizer rod.

**9** Disconnect the ABS sensor wiring. Use a flat screwdriver.

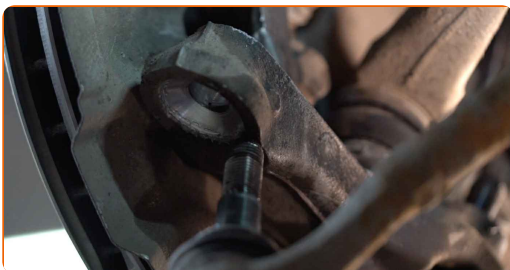


**10** Clean the fastener connecting the tie rod end to the steering knuckle. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**11** Unscrew the end fastening nut to the steering knuckle. Use a combination spanner #22. Use Torx T45. Use a ratchet wrench.



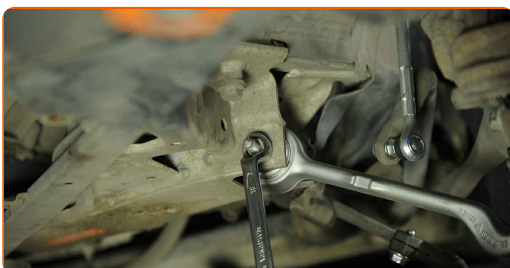
**12** Disconnect the tie rod end from the steering knuckle.



**13** Clean the fasteners connecting the control arm to the subframe. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**14** Loosen the front fastener of the control arm. Use a combination spanner #18.

**15** Unscrew the rear fastener connecting the control arm to the subframe. Use a combination spanner #18 (2 pieces).



**16**

Remove the rear fastener of the control arm.

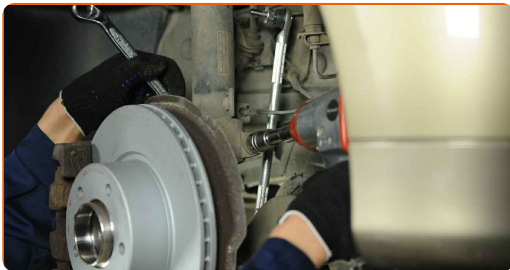


**17**

Clean the fasteners connecting the shock strut to the steering knuckle. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**18**

Unscrew the lower fastener connecting the shock strut to the steering knuckle. Use a combination spanner #18. Use a drive socket #18. Use a ratchet wrench.



**19**

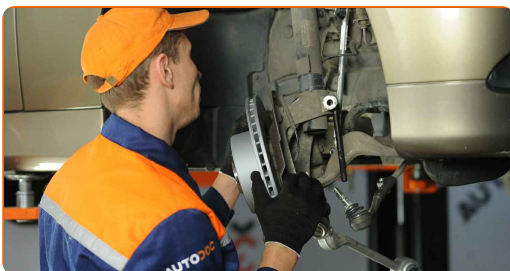
Remove the fastening bolt.

**20**

Release the lower fastener connecting the shock strut to the steering knuckle. Use a flat metal-working chisel. Use a hammer.

**21**

Disconnect the steering knuckle from the shock absorber strut.



**Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). AUTODOC recommends:**

- Make sure that the steering knuckle is supported.

**22** Lower the car.

**23** Open the bonnet.

**24** Use a fender protection cover to prevent damaging paintwork and plastic parts of the car.

**25** Clean the fasteners of the shock strut upper mount. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**26** Unscrew the top fastening of the shock strut mount. Use a combination spanner #13. Use a drive socket #13. Use a ratchet wrench.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- BMW 3 Saloon (E46) – To avoid injury, hold the suspension strut while unscrewing the fastening bolts.

**27** Remove the suspension strut.



**28** Set the shock absorber strut on the spring compressor tool.



Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). Tip from AUTODOC:

- Note that when using a spring compressor, spring coils need to be securely gripped, compressing the spring on the opposite sides.
- Ensure the correct position of the spring in the retainer.
- Make sure that the spring coils tightly entered the lock handles.

29

Compress the spring.



30

Treat the shock strut rod. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.



31

Remove the strut piston rod nut. Use a drive socket #21. Use a ratchet wrench.



**32** Remove the top strut mount. Use a flat screwdriver.



Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). Tip from AUTODOC experts:

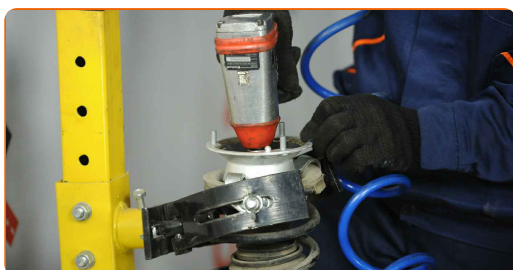
- Examine the shock absorber dust cap and the bump stop. Replace them if necessary.

**33** Clean the mounting seat of the shock strut mount. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.

**34** Install a new top shock strut mount.



**35** Tighten the shock strut piston rod nut. Use a drive socket #21. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 64 Nm torque.



Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). Tip:

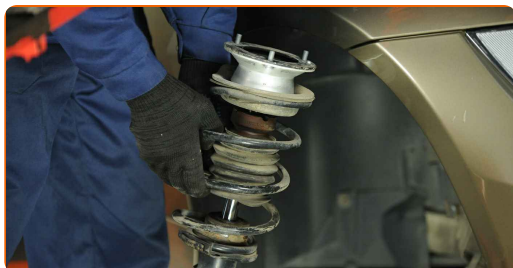
- Check to make sure the spring is positioned correctly. Avoid its misalignment.

**36** Decompress the spring.

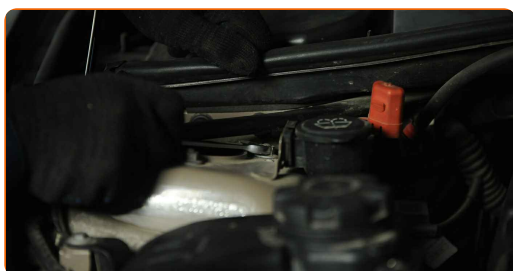


**37** Remove the assembled shock strut.

**38** Install the shock strut into the wheel arch.



**39** Screw the top fastening of the shock strut mount.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- BMW 3 Saloon (E46) – To avoid injury, hold the suspension strut while screwing in the fastening bolts.

- 40 Tighten the upper fastener of the shock absorber strut mount. Use a combination spanner #13. Use a drive socket #13. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 34 Nm torque.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

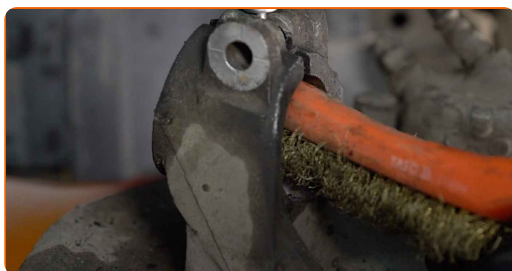
- To avoid injuries, hold the shock strut when screwing the fastening bolts in.

- 41 Remove the fender protection cover.

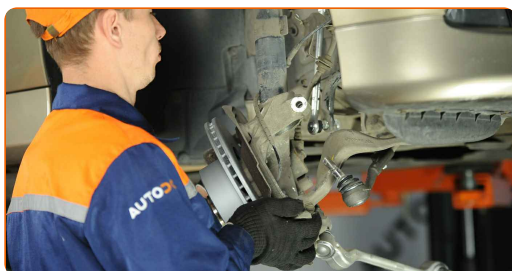
- 42 Close the hood.

- 43 Raise the front of the car and secure on supports.

- 44 Treat the shock strut mounting seat on the steering knuckle. Use a wire brush. Use WD-40 spray.



- 45 Fix the shock absorber strut on the steering knuckle. Use a flat metal-working chisel. Use a hammer.

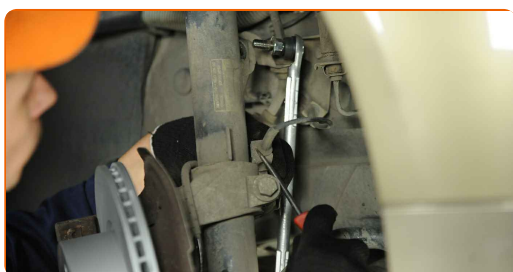


**46** Install the fastening bolt.

**47** Tighten the lower fasteners connecting the shock strut to the steering knuckle. Use a combination spanner #18. Use a drive socket #18. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 81 Nm torque.

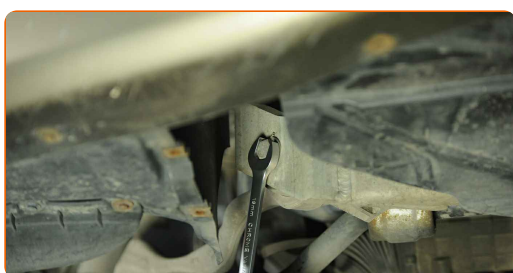


**48** Connect the ABS sensor wiring.



**49** Install the rear fastener of the control arm.

**50** Screw the rear fastener connecting the control arm to the subframe. Use a combination spanner #18 (2 pieces).



**51** Install the transverse stabilizer link.

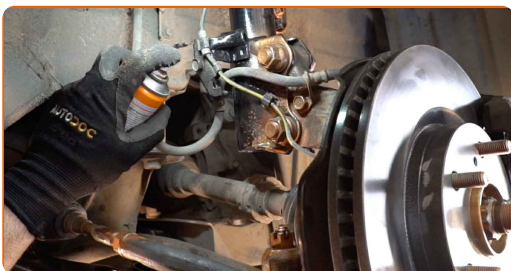
**52**

Tighten the fastener connecting the stabilizer link to the shock strut. Use a combination spanner #15. Use a drive socket #17. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 58 Nm torque.



**53**

Treat the shock strut fasteners. Use copper grease.



**54**

Connect the tie rod end to the steering knuckle.

**55**

Tighten the fastening nut connecting the tie rod end to the steering knuckle. Use a combination spanner #22. Use Torx T45. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 165 Nm torque.

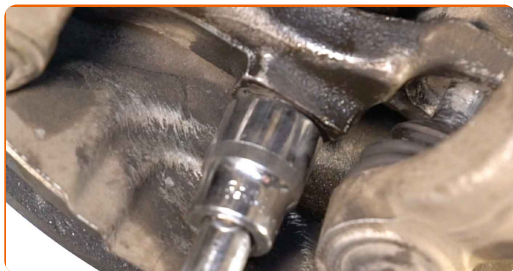


**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Important! Be sure to use new fasteners.

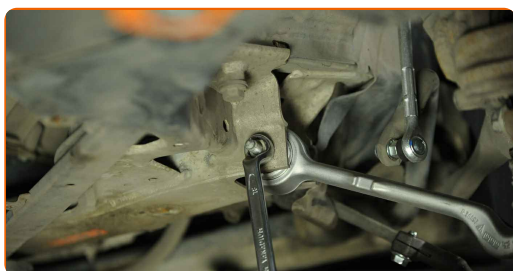
56

Prop up the steering knuckle. Use a hydraulic transmission jack.



57

Tighten the front fastener connecting the control arm to the subframe. Use a combination spanner #18. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 68 Nm torque. +90°



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Important! Be sure to use new fasteners.

58

Tighten the rear fastener of the control arm. Use a combination spanner #18 (2 pieces). Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 68 Nm torque. +90°

**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Important! Be sure to use new fasteners.

59

Treat all joints of the arm. Use copper grease.

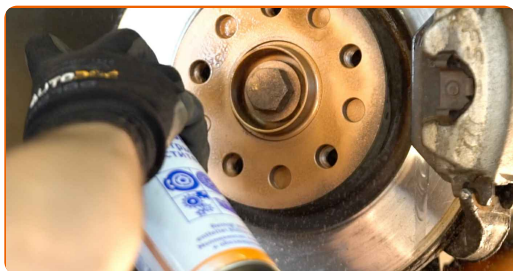
**60** Remove the support from under the steering knuckle.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). Lower the transmission jack smoothly, without jerks, to avoid damaging components and mechanisms.

**61** Treat the surface where the brake disc contacts the wheel rim. Use copper grease.



**62** Clean the brake disc surface. Use a brake cleaner.



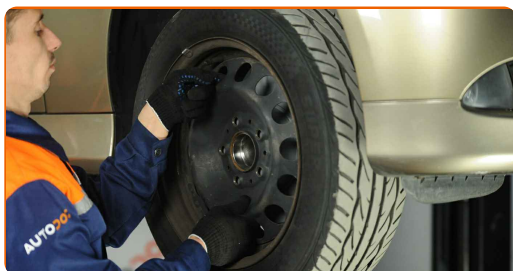
**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Replacement: strut mount – BMW 3 Saloon (E46). After applying the spray, wait a few minutes.



63

Install the wheel.



**AUTODOC recommends:**

- Warning! To avoid injury, hold the wheel while screwing in the fastening bolts on the car. BMW 3 Saloon (E46)

64

Screw in the wheel bolts. Use wheel impact socket #17.



65

Lower the car and working in a cross order, tighten the wheel bolts. Use wheel impact socket #17. Use a torque wrench. Tighten it to 120 nm torque.



66

Remove the jacks and chocks.

**WELL DONE!** 

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