Jackson Racing B 18 Supercharger

Unlocking Hidden Power: The Jackson Racing B18 Supercharger Experience

For enthusiasts of the Honda B18 engine—whether it lives under the hood of an Integra GSR, a Civic Si, a CR-V, or even a Del Sol—the quest for more power is a familiar journey. While many turn to turbochargers for big numbers, there is a different path, one that offers immediate throttle response, linear power delivery, and a driving experience that feels OEM-plus. That path is supercharging, and few names are as respected in this arena as Jackson Racing. The **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** kit is a legendary piece of engineering that has transformed countless B18-powered vehicles into responsive, reliable, and exhilarating machines. This article will explore everything you need to know about this iconic forced induction system, from its design philosophy and performance characteristics to installation considerations and long-term ownership.

What is the Jackson Racing B18 Supercharger?

At its core, the Jackson Racing supercharger kit for the B18 engine is a roots-type, positive displacement supercharger system. Unlike a centrifugal supercharger, which builds boost progressively at higher RPMs, a roots blower provides immediate boost from low in the rev range. This characteristic makes the Jackson Racing B18 supercharger particularly appealing for daily drivers and road course enthusiasts who value instant throttle response over peak horsepower numbers.

Jackson Racing originally developed these kits in the late 1990s and early 2000s, capitalizing on the burgeoning import tuning scene. The company partnered with Eaton, a leading manufacturer of superchargers used in vehicles like the Mini Cooper S and Ford Mustang GT, to create a system specifically engineered for the Honda B18 engine family. The result was a bolt-on kit that significantly increased power without the complexity and lag associated with turbocharging.

The **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** kit typically includes the supercharger unit, an intake manifold adapter plate, a larger fuel injectors, a rising-rate fuel pressure regulator, a boost bypass valve, and all necessary belts and pulleys. Early kits were designed for the OBD1 and OBD2 B18 engines, including the B18A, B18B, B18C1, and B18C5, making them versatile options for a wide range of Honda and Acura models.

Key Features and Specifications of the Kit

Understanding the technical details of the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** helps explain why it has maintained such a strong following over the years.

Eaton M45 Supercharger Unit

The heart of the kit is the Eaton M45 roots supercharger. This compact, robust unit is known for its durability and efficiency. The M45 displaces 0.45 liters of air per revolution, which is perfectly matched to the B18's displacement. At the standard 6 psi of boost provided by the Jackson Racing kit, the M45 operates well within its efficiency range, producing cool, dense air without excessive heat soak.

Boost Bypass System

A standout feature of the Jackson Racing design is the integrated boost bypass system. When cruising or at light throttle, a vacuum-operated bypass valve opens, allowing the supercharger to circulate air internally rather than forcing it into the engine. This reduces parasitic drag, improves fuel economy, and extends the life of the supercharger. The moment you step on the throttle, the bypass closes, and boost is instantly available. This is a key reason why the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** feels so natural in everyday driving.

Fuel System Upgrades

Any forced induction system requires a proper fuel delivery setup, and Jackson Racing engineered their kit with this in mind. The standard kit includes a set of 310 cc or 440 cc fuel injectors (depending on the generation and intended power level) and a rising-rate fuel pressure regulator. The regulator increases fuel pressure in direct proportion to boost, ensuring the engine receives the correct air-fuel ratio under all conditions. Later kits often included a return-style fuel rail and provisions for a standalone engine management system for those seeking to maximize performance.

Drive System Reliability

The supercharger is driven by a dedicated serpentine belt that runs off the crankshaft pulley. Jackson Racing designed the mounting bracket and tensioner system to be robust and reliable, minimizing belt slip and alignment issues. This attention to detail has made the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** known for its long-term reliability when properly maintained.

Performance Gains and Driving Experience

What can you expect when you install a Jackson Racing supercharger on your B18? The numbers speak for themselves, but the real story is in the driving experience.

Horsepower and Torque Gains

A stock B18C1 (Integra GSR) produces around 170 horsepower and 128 lb-ft of torque at the flywheel. With the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** kit running a conservative 6 psi of boost, output typically rises to approximately 220 to 240 horsepower and 180 to 190 lb-ft of torque at the wheels. This represents a gain of roughly 50 to 70 wheel horsepower, which transforms the character of the car entirely. The torque curve becomes much flatter and broader, with substantial pull available from as low as 2,500 RPM. This makes the car feel significantly faster in everyday driving, eliminating the need to wring out the engine to redline for passing or merging.

For those who want more, increasing boost to 8 or 9 psi with a smaller pulley and supporting modifications can push output to 260 to 280 wheel horsepower. Some enthusiasts running intercooled setups and standalone engine management have even achieved over 300 wheel horsepower with the M45 supercharger, though this pushes the unit near its efficiency limit.

The Linear Power Delivery

The most celebrated aspect of the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** is its power delivery. Unlike a turbocharger, which can surge with boost and create a peaky torque curve, the supercharger builds boost in a linear, predictable manner. This makes the car easier to drive quickly on a road course or autocross, as the driver can focus on corner entry and exit without worrying about a sudden surge of power. The immediate throttle response also makes daily driving more enjoyable, as the car always feels responsive and eager.

Sound and Character

Let's be honest: the whine of a supercharged engine is one of the most addictive sounds in the automotive world. The Eaton M45 produces a distinctive, high-pitched whine that is unmistakable. With an aftermarket intake, the sound is even more pronounced, providing an auditory experience that turbocharged cars simply cannot replicate. The **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** turns every drive into a sensory event, from the initial startup to the full-throttle pull to redline.

Installation Process and Considerations

Installing a **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** is a project that many experienced DIY enthusiasts can tackle in a weekend, but it is not without its challenges.

Skill Level Required

The kit is designed as a bolt-on system, meaning no drilling or welding is required. However, the work is still involved. You will need to remove the intake manifold, install the adapter plate, mount the supercharger bracket, route the intake tubing, and connect all vacuum lines and electrical connections. A solid understanding of engine mechanics and fuel systems is essential. If you are not confident in your ability to perform this work correctly, professional installation is strongly recommended.

Time Commitment

A typical installation takes between 6 and 12 hours, depending on experience level and whether any unforeseen complications arise. Having a second set of hands is helpful for lifting and positioning the supercharger unit, which is heavier than it looks. You will also need a torque wrench, a set of metric sockets and wrenches, a pry bar, and access to a hydraulic jack or engine hoist for support.

Supporting Modifications

While the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** kit is comprehensive, there are a few supporting modifications that are highly recommended. Upgrading to a high-flow fuel pump, such as a Walbro 255 lph unit,

ensures adequate fuel delivery under boost. A high-quality aftermarket exhaust system and header will help the engine breathe more freely and maximize performance gains. Finally, a proper engine management system, such as Hondata S300 or a standalone ECU, is essential for tuning and realizing the full potential of the supercharger.

Cooling Considerations

The standard Jackson Racing kit is not intercooled, relying on the bypass system and the thermal characteristics of the roots supercharger to manage intake temperatures. For moderate boost levels (6-7 psi), this is generally sufficient for street driving. However, for track use or higher boost levels, an intercooler is a worthwhile addition. Several aftermarket companies offer intercooler kits specifically designed for the Jackson Racing supercharger, which can reduce intake temperatures by 30 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit and allow for more aggressive tuning.

Tuning and Fuel Requirements

Proper tuning is critical to the success and longevity of any forced induction setup, and the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** is no exception.

Engine Management Options

Early Jackson Racing kits were often run with the included rising-rate fuel pressure regulator and the stock ECU, which worked reasonably well for low boost levels. However, modern tuning solutions are far superior. A standalone ECU or a flash-pro device like Hondata S300 allows for precise control of fuel and ignition timing across the entire RPM and load range. This results in more power, better drivability, and improved fuel economy. It also provides critical safety features such as boost cut, air-fuel ratio monitoring, and knock detection.

The Importance of Ignition Timing

Under boost, aggressive ignition timing can lead to detonation, which is the enemy of engine reliability. A good tuner will retard ignition timing in the boosted region to keep cylinder pressures under control. This is where a proper engine management system shines, as it can make these adjustments dynamically based on boost pressure and engine speed. Running a **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** without a proper tune is a recipe for disaster, especially if you are using higher octane fuel or running more than 6 psi of boost.

Fuel Quality Matters

With any forced induction system, fuel quality is paramount. The **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** kit is designed to run on premium pump fuel (91-93 octane). Running lower octane fuel can cause detonation even with conservative tuning, leading to engine damage. For those seeking maximum performance, a water-methanol injection system can be added to provide additional knock resistance and cooling, allowing for more aggressive timing and boost levels.

Maintenance and Long-Term Reliability

One of the most appealing aspects of the **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** is its reputation for reliability when properly maintained.

Supercharger Service Life

The Eaton M45 is an incredibly robust unit. Many Jackson Racing superchargers have been in service for over 20 years with nothing more than a simple oil change. The supercharger has its own oil reservoir, and Jackson Racing recommends changing the oil every 20,000 to 30,000 miles. This is a straightforward procedure that takes about 15 minutes. Using the correct oil is important; Jackson Racing sells specially formulated supercharger oil, or you can use an equivalent high-quality synthetic fluid.

Belt Maintenance

The drive belt is another wear item that should be inspected regularly. A worn or loose belt can slip under boost, causing a loss of power and potentially damaging the belt or pulley system. The good news is that the belt is easy to inspect and replace, and it is a common part available from most auto parts stores. With proper tensioning and replacement every 30,000 to 40,000 miles, belt issues are rare.

Engine Health

A well-maintained B18 engine with a **Jackson Racing B18 supercharger** can last for many years. The key is to ensure the engine is in good health before installing the kit. Worn piston rings, valve seals, or

bearings will be accelerated by forced induction. A compression and leak-down test before installation is always a wise idea.