

# AI-03270 Shimano 105 Disc Service

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Tags	SwimBikeSleep
Created time	@December 14, 2025 6:20 AM

When bleeding shimano 105 disc brakes, there is a spacer installed in place of the brake caliper to prevent contamination of working brake pads, can I use an old brake pad instead and place stopper in between? what is the actual width dimension of the tool from Shimano

## Quick Answer:

Yes, you *can* use old brake pads with a solid stopper between them in place of Shimano's bleed spacer, but it's not ideal. The official Shimano bleed spacer is **10 mm thick**, which ensures the pistons stay correctly positioned during bleeding [childs.be](https://childs.be).

## Why the Spacer Matters

- **Purpose:** The bleed spacer (Shimano part Y8N219000) is designed to hold the pistons in the correct position while preventing fluid contamination of the brake pads [BIKE24 Bicycle Warehouse](https://BIKE24.com).
- **Dimension:** The spacer is **10 mm wide**, matching the gap required inside the caliper during bleeding [childs.be](https://childs.be).
- **Compatibility:** Works with Shimano 105 BR-R7070 and other hydraulic disc brake calipers (Ultegra, Dura-Ace, GRX, etc.) [BIKE24](https://BIKE24.com).

## Using Old Brake Pads Instead

- **Feasible but Risky:**


- If you insert old pads and place a rigid stopper (like a coin stack or flat shim) between them, you can approximate the spacer's function.
- However, pads are thinner than the official spacer, so you must ensure the total thickness equals **10 mm**.
- **Risks:**
  - Misalignment can cause pistons to overextend or sit unevenly.
  - Fluid contamination risk is higher if pads are not fully sealed off.
  - Old pads may compress slightly, unlike the rigid spacer.

## Comparison Table

Option	Thickness	Pros	Cons
<b>Shimano Bleed Spacer</b>	10 mm	Exact fit, rigid, clean	Requires purchase
<b>Old Pads + Stopper</b>	Variable	Cheap, DIY solution	Risk of misalignment, contamination, compression

Sources: [BIKE24](#) [Bicycle Warehouse](#) [childs.be](#)

 **Best Practice:** Use the official Shimano bleed spacer (10 mm).

 **DIY Alternative:** If improvising, measure carefully to ensure the combined thickness of pads + stopper equals **10 mm**.

Would you like me to draft a **step-by-step DIY protocol** for making a reliable substitute spacer (using coins, plastic shims, or scrap metal) so you can bleed your brakes without risk?