

Tech Talk

John,

Do you have a schematic or can you tell me how to find the wiring in my 1976 B as I would like to convert this car to an overdrive set up and use the windshield washer switch to do this. I am aware that the 76 model was fitted with that switch there. I would ask you to do it for me but I live in New York and it would be hard to get it to you without great expense

Thanks —Bill McCall

Bill,

The overdrive wiring on the 1976 MGB is already there for your use! The wiper switch incorporates the overdrive switch function (fore and aft). This powers a YELLOW wire which runs down to the rear of the right inner fender where it is available for you to connect to the overdrive. This YELLOW wire is one of many at the junction between the main loom, the rear loom, and the gearbox loom.

The overdrive has a 3-4 lockout switch located on the top left of the remote control. Connect the YELLOW wire to the lockout switch and the other side of the lockout switch to the overdrive solenoid. Test that lockout switch twenty times before installing the overdrive as the lockout switch is the least accessible electrical component in the MGB.

John,

On a 1973 MGB, where is the vacuum advance connected? Carb or intake and how? —Jimmie

Jimmie,

The 1973 MGB uses manifold vacuum for the advance. There should be a fitting on the manifold (actually, there should be two) from which you can run a vacuum line to the distributor.

I find that the car runs best when you time it about 15-degrees before top dead center at 1500 rpm, vacuum disconnected. Once the vacuum is connected, it will pull the idle advance to about 45 BTDC. The rule of



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timing is to have 32-degrees maximum timing (at about 3-4000 rpm), but that distributor has an 18-degree advance (36 on the crank), and setting it at 32 max sometimes leaves you too retarded at idle.

Hi John,

I'm having a strange problem with the OD of my 1975 V8: I'm driving in 4th gear, 35mph, 2000 RPM, no OD engaged. I switch/turn on the OD. The OD engages smoothly and quickly, about 1600 RPM now. Waiting some time and turning off the OD and holding speed on throttle. OD seems to disengage, because RPM goes slowly back to 2000 RPM. But taking the foot aside the throttle, RPM falls quickly down to about 1500 RPM. It's like driving and depressing the clutch and idling. Putting the foot back on the throttle RPM goes up to 2000 RPM like it should with disengaged OD.

This behavior stops after 20 miles. Then the OD is working very well. I drained the oil (it was black, I drove about 10 miles with this oil), changed the solenoid (and plunger), o-rings and fit a complete new oil pressure relief valve. I think it's not an electrical problem, because I every with a test lamp. Any ideas? Thanks, —Marcus

Marcus,

Let me restate the problem you are encountering: In direct drive you have no issues with the overdrive; In overdrive there are no issues; BUT just after switching off the overdrive the engine will fall to near idle with the foot off the throttle and will not re-engage until you bring the rpm back up. If I have interpreted your problem correctly, then I would sug-

gest that the overdrive is not disengaging totally, but remains partially engaged after switching off. This is probably a fault with the oil pressure relief valve (up above the 3/4" bolt in the bottom of the overdrive).

Clean that valve and, at the same time, remove the solenoid and then use carburetor cleaner and compressed air to blow out all the passageways. I talk to so many owners who have purchased a new solenoid, yet in my 40 years experience I've encountered only one solenoid that was faulty!

John,

While cleaning the overdrive pump, I dropped roller part of overdrive pump inside overdrive. It will not fall out. What do I need to do?

—John Layman

John,

Magnet? Long pliers? Bright light? Patience? Don't work on it for more than ten minutes at a time. Good luck!

John,

I have a 1967 MGB that I've been driving for twenty years. I just rebuilt the engine last year. Two months ago, after a long day of driving, the ignition started sputtering, and after trying everything, I ended up changing the spark plugs, rotor, condenser, points, and installed new sport ignition coil. The car started up perfectly.

Fast forward to this weekend; after an hour of brisk driving in perfect weather, the car suddenly lost all power and wouldn't start up. After checking that the fuel pump was working well, I moved to the ignition again. Couldn't get a spark out of the ignition coil (and no power from the white wire to the ignition coil). I then jumped power from the ignition key directly to the ignition coil and tried again, but still no spark. Tried the old, original ignition coil as well (both terminals on both coils), and still no spark. Also rechecked the points and they are good.

Thanks, —Jeff Dagowitz

Jeff,

Temporarily running a wire from the fusebox to the WHITE side of the ignition coil would diagnose the problem to connections around the tachometer, which is where I suspect the problem lies. Many MGBs have been changed from positive to negative earth — resulting in the WHITE wire loop, the impulse loop, on the back of the tach being cut and reversed. Maybe one of those connections has come loose.

John,

When I take the plugs out, the starter turns over great but when they are in it won't turn. I have tried a stronger battery and jumping the starter directly but it just won't turn. I have read about high torque starters, but I don't want to waste money on a new starter when the old one is still good. The head has recently been machined with hardened seats. I believe this has increased compression causing this problem. My mechanic friend says I am not getting enough power but I believe he is wrong. The jumper wires get hotter than heck when I hook the starter up directly to a big battery from a Chrysler Merada. I am sure it is getting good power. Is a high torque starter going to alleviate this dilemma? I could really use some help.

Thanks! —Ian Suskovich

Ian,

If you have an MGB, then I'm surprised that the starter doesn't turn the engine — especially since it did before you worked on the cylinder head. A couple of notes: Is the ground strap connected to the chassis frame? Does the starter motor move when you are operating it (either loose from the engine or starting to disassemble itself)?

If you have an MGA, Midget, or T-Series — those starter motors are much smaller. They can and do fail. In these cars, replacement of the starter motor is inexpensive and advised. You can write back with the year and model and I'll be able to help you out a lot more!

Hi John,

I am writing from Nova Scotia Canada. I just installed a pair of HIF4