

AWAKENING A SLEEPING MGB CHECKLIST

So, let's wake her up:

- ___ Put the car on 4 jack stands & remove wheels.
- ___ If there was an old battery in her, remove it to use as a core for a new battery.

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- ___ Disconnect fuel lines at carbs.
- ___ Remove spark plugs & turn engine over by hand checking for compression at each spark plug hole (I'm not interested in the amount of compression, just that I still have it!).
- ___ Install new battery (DO NOT ATTEMPT TO START ENGINE!).
- ___ Turn ignition key on & allow fuel pump to drain any gas remaining in the tank (&, in the event you didn't drain it before laying car up, you'll probably have 'dead' gas in there.)
- ___ If fuel pump doesn't operate, stop & rebuild fuel pump and repeat process of draining gas tank. While you're under there, replace all flexible gas lines to fuel pump.
- ___ Adjust valves.
- ___ Change engine oil and filter. (In cold months, I use 10W-40 Castrol; in warm months, I use 20W-50 Castrol.)
- ___ Install new, properly gapped spark plugs.
- ___ Rebuild distributor (if electronic, check manual closely).
- ___ Install new spark plug wires.
- ___ Check the ignition circuit for proper operation (AGAIN: DO NOT ATTEMPT TO START ENGINE! At this point, all I want to know is if I have 'fire' at the plugs.)
- ___ Drain all fluids (radiator, engine, transmission, rear end, brakes/clutch)
- ___ Inspect radiator for signs of leakage (the proper way to store a radiator is with anti-freeze inside; you can tell if there's been any leakage by the tell-tale wierd, green patina on the core or along the edges of the tanks.). If there are signs of leakage, remove radiator for cleaning, pressurizing, and repair.
- ___ Back flush the engine cooling system to remove any built-up crud.
- ___ Replace engine thermostat.
- ___ Remove the plug in the water pump & add a bit of grease.
- ___ Remove all belts from front of engine.
- ___ Bench check alternator/generator for proper operation.
- ___ With proper spray cleaner & one of [GEM Enterprises'](#) special purpose brushes, clean all Lucas wiring harness connectors. Once cleaned, coat them with a LIGHT film of conductive grease (I mean every one you can see with the hood up! Take 'em apart & clean both ends of the bullet connectors). Pay especially close attention to the fuse block.
- ___ Replace all belts with new ones and reinstall alternator/generator.
- ___ Reinstall the radiator along with all new hoses.
- ___ Fill windshield washer tank.
- ___ Refill the cooling system with the proper mixture of water and anti-freeze.
- ___ Remove carbs & rebuild/clean them as necessary. Replace air filters.
- ___ Inspect engine mounts & replace as necessary.
- ___ Replace all fuel/vacuum lines in engine compartment.
- ___ Replace fuel filter.
- ___ If so equipped, renew all emissions items to include recharging charcoal

- canisters. If equipped, remove the hoses from the air pump & spray lithium grease up inside the pump.
___ Turn engine over with ignition switch to check compression (AGAIN, DO NOT START ENGINE!).

UNDERNEATH CAR

FRONT

- ___ Remove front rotors & check for warping.
- ___ Turn/replace rotors as necessary.
- ___ Check calipers for proper operation.
- ___ Replace all flexible brake lines.
- ___ Install new brake pads.

CENTER

- ___ Replace fluid in transmission with the same oil you put in engine.
- ___ Grease universal joints/check for looseness.
- ___ Inspect transmission mounts & replace as necessary.
- ___ Visually inspect exhaust for rust/holes, proper installation, etc.
- ___ Visually inspect underside of car for rust.
- ___ Lubricate hand brake.
- ___ Clean all Lucas wiring harness connections & coat with a LIGHT film of conductive grease.

REAR

- ___ Remove brake drums. Visually inspect & replace/turn as necessary.
- ___ Replace wheel cylinders (NO! Don't even try to repair - just replace them!)
- ___ Install new brake shoes.
- ___ Replace flexible brake line on passenger side of car.
- ___ Drop gas tank & visually inspect for rust.
- ___ Remove gas sending unit & check for free operation of arm.
- ___ Have gas tank boiled/cleaned as necessary (I take mine to my local radiator repair shop).
- ___ Install cleaned & newly painted gas tank.
- ___ Replace all flexible fuel lines to fuel pump/gas tank.
- ___ Fill rear end with SAE 90 Gear Oil.
- ___ In trunk, if so equipped, replace flexible lines to vapor separator & gas tank.
- ___ Put 93-octane gas in tank & pressurize fuel system to carbs.
- ___ Clean all Lucas wiring harness connections & coat with a LIGHT film of conductive grease. ___ Top off brake & clutch master cylinders
- ___ Bleed clutch slave cylinder & check for proper operation of clutch.
- ___ Bleed brake system starting with driver rear wheel.
- ___ Reinstall wheels & adjust rear brakes

DON'T TAKE OFF JACK STANDS YET!

- ___ FIRE 'ER UP!
- ___ Allow oil pressure to come up & note where it stops at idle.
- ___ Allow car to idle until temperature has come up to normal operation range.
- ___ Make any adjustments to carbs or timing.
- ___ Depress clutch & verify its proper operation.
- ___ Check operation of transmission through all gears.
- ___ Check operation of hand brake.
- ___ Check operation of wheel brakes.
- ___ TURN ENGINE OFF.
- ___ Visually inspect for any leakage along gas, clutch & brake lines, at wheel cylinders & calipers, in cooling system.

- ___ Install & balance new 185x70R14 tires (tubes also if wire wheels) - HEY!
They're probably dry rotted!
- ___ Install wheels, adjust rear brakes & take car off jack stands.

BODY

- ___ Check operation of all exterior lights.
- ___ Replace windshield wiper blades & check operation of wiper/washer system.
- ___ Spray lithium grease door, hood, & trunk hinges and latching mechanisms.
- ___ Install one of [GEM Enterprises](#)' emergency hood latches.
- ___ Lubricate top bows, seat rails & adjusters.
- ___ Check operation of all dash, interior, & trunk lights and switches.
- ___ Clean all Lucas wiring harness connections & coat with a LIGHT film of conductive grease.

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- ___ After engine has cooled down, readjust valves.
- ___ Check/refill cooling system as necessary.
- ___ Check engine oil level.

NOW, its time for a short test drive. Once around the block only. While driving, pay particular attention to status of gauges, check for proper operation of brakes, watch for tell-tale signs of smoke from exhaust. Back in garage...

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- ___ Recheck all engine fluid levels.
- ___ Check belt tension.
- ___ Check clutch & brake master cylinder levels (look for signs of leakage in engine compartment, under dash, and on garage floor under car).
- ___ Put car on jack stands.
- ___ Recheck rear brake adjustment.
- ___ Tighten lug nuts (or wire wheel center cap).
- ___ Put her on the ground.

At this point, feel free to drive down to the nearest filling station and fill up with 93-octane gas. I know, I know! Some of you are going to tell me that's not necessary. But, hey, that's all I ever put in my cars. I personally feel its needed all the time but should be used at least once every few tanks full.

Now, after a good wash, wax, and interior detailing, she's ready for daily use. From this point on, follow the maintenance guidelines in your owner's manual.