

HINTS FROM AUSTIN'S MORRIS GARAGE

Hello again,

It's that time of month once more, and here is still another article from the past. It appeared in the Sep 18, 1972 Octagon Topics under the usual heading of SPARES AND SERVICE. Hope you not-so-expert owners will derive some benefit.

This month, we'll try and give a few pointers to the ladies and novice mechanics in our group.

When experiencing the problem of the car not starting, there are two basic things to look for. First, there must be spark or ignition.

To check for the presence of the spark that is necessary to ignite the fuel, first make sure the key is turned on. When this little detail has been checked, it's time to raise the bonnet. Open the left side and make sure it can't fall down on you or that new paint job. Next, locate the distributor. It's the thing near the center of the motor and has five large wires coming from its top.

Make sure all these wires are in place in the cap, and follow four of them to the spark plugs (in the cylinder head atop the engine). Make sure they are connected. Next, locate the small wire on the side of the distributor. This wire (along with the fifth large wire) should travel to the ignition coil. These two wires should also be secure at both ends.

On the coil is another small wire that goes into the wiring harness. This should also be tightly connected. If all these wires are secure, proceed to the next step.

Remove one of the large wires from a spark plug (the rearmost one is best). Now the procedure becomes a little tricky. While holding the insulated part of the wire, hold the end of the wire near the spark plug from which you removed it. And, while holding the wire so, you must pull crank the engine, with the key on, and with all this, detect if there is a spark jumping from the end of the plug wire to the plug itself. If there is, then you have proven you have spark.

If not, there are a number of things that might be wrong.

I'll only list them here, and you'll have to check for each one when the service man arrives:

1. There may be a faulty coil or condenser;
2. The distributor cap may be cracked or the inside center contact worn or broken.

3. Moisture may have penetrated the insides of the distributor;
4. There may be an open circuit in the low voltage or primary wires;
5. Finally, the points may be improperly adjusted or even broken.

Any single or combination of these faults will cause an absence of spark.

Next, there must be fuel. Gasoline is pumped from the tank to the carburetors by an electric pump located either under the hood (TC/TD/Y) or on the frame at the right rear (TF).

To see if the pump is working, first, remove one of the fuel lines on one of the carburetors (the proper wrench should be in the tool kit). Then turn the key on (without cranking the engine), and fuel should spurt from the open end of the line you removed.

If not, you may be out of gas if the pump clicks rapidly and nothing comes out the line. If you hear no clicking, the fuel pump may be faulty or disconnected. There may also be a blown fuse (the fuse box is on the left firewall, next to the voltage regulator). A remotely possible fault is that a fuel line may be plugged or carb needle and seat may be stuck. At any rate, you may be able to trace the problem and repair it without having to call a mechanic.

Have someone who knows what the various and sundry items under the bonnet are under the protection of the bonnet, and while they're at it, have them show you what to look for when you have a no-go problem.

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If you can't fix it yourself, consult one of the helpers under **Club Services — Technical Assistance**

All MG car clubs who focus on pre-1956 MG cars and all Vintage MG owners are encouraged to join our club and enjoy the many benefits of membership. Please write for an application or visit our Web site at vintagemg.com to view, print, and fill one out.

Regards, Jerry

