

Removing Lower Wishbone Inner Bearing

Three Views on how to handle this difficult task

I recently rebuilt the front end in the BJ8. Having struggled with removing these before I found it interesting how others do it.

David Nock writes:

We have tried all sorts of tricks over the years to get them out. We have used pry bars, porta powers , penetrating oils , and the last resort is always a torch and burn out the rubber. The problem is that the inner steel sleeve is rusted to the bolt , but you do not have to do any damage to the bolt once you burn the bushing out. What you need to do is once all the rubber is burned out you heat up the inner sleeve inside until it is red hot and then have an assistant pry on the bolt, when the sleeve is RED HOT the bolt will slide out . WARNING!!!! Be very careful there are many thing around there that can burn so be very careful.

Skip Saunders suggests:

Someone on the list a couple of years ago, posted a trick that I found to work well for me. On two different cars (the only two, on which I've done a front end rebuild) I experienced the same exact problem.

For me, the trick was to buy a short bolt that could fit between the offending bushing and the frame member that extends across the engine bay. On that bolt I threaded a nut and a couple large washers. I discovered that there was a hole in the frame member that directly corresponds to the axis of the bushing and so the short bolt with two nuts threaded on it. I stuck the thread end of the bolt into the hole such that the washers could be pressed against the surrounding metal.

Then I "unscrewed" the nuts until the head of the nut was firmly pressed against the bushing assembly. By further unscrewing the nut, very large pressure could be applied against the bushing assembly because the washer (at one end of the short bolt) was being wedged against the frame, and the head of the bolt was wedged against the bushing....

I simply sprayed the whole assembly with WD40 and went to bed. Next day, I further "unscrewed" the nut (thereby increasing pressure),, and I waited some more... around lunch time there was a big BIG "Bang" sound... the nut, bolt, and washer stuff fell to the ground, and the bushing was free.

I used the trick 4 times, and it worked every time exactly the same way...

Mike Salter added the final comment that was supported by many in the Healey trade: A comment on the lower inner bushes that you are trying to replace. Unless the area has been oil soaked it is unlikely that the bushes have really deteriorated despite being 35 - 40 years old. In the restorations that we have done if the bushes are still firm and are not oil soaked we left the arms on (the only thing I might add) when we send the frame out for cleaning. Some of these cars have now done over 80K miles after the restorations and the bushes are still doing their job perfectly. IMHO this is a case of "If it ain't broke etc. . . ."