

Replacing Rear Springs

By Steve Weil

Sometimes we accept our cars eccentricities. I've had my BJ-8 for 18 years and got used to the fact that the rear scraped going over my driveway curb. Sure I knew the rear had a slight tilt. I had never changed leaf springs on any of my 3 vintage English cars but had attended a seminar on the subject so had been thinking about it. So, I called Moss and ordered rear springs last winter. It was finally warm enough got around to replacing them this spring – how appropriate.

Everyone warned me about letting the nuts soak in Liquid Wrench which I did for a day or two. The wrench turning space is so tight that I cannot imagine what I would have done if any had been fully seized. Fortunately while they were tough to turn they all came off as intended. The correct sequence is to remove the axle u-bolt nuts first, the rear shackles second and the front shackles last. Nothing was said about removing the exhaust system which blocked the front shackle on the driver side. Those bolts of course broke off.

While the book recommended jacking up the axle plate to reposition the new spring nothing was said in detail. I came up with a trick that made it easy. When I removed the old springs the leafs came apart because the center nut holding them together had broken off many miles ago. So I had the smaller leafs loose and slipped one under the fender wall so to protect it while I jacked up the center of the of the new springs so that they would spread into the shackles in front and back. This worked smoothly.

The really amazing thing is that the replaced springs not only leveled the car but raised the rear end about 4" which now means I no longer scrape over the most minor things. What a concept!

Now I guess it is time to replace the exhaust system which no longer is the cushion for the underside of the rear end...

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