

Replacing Wiper Blade Rubber -- by J. Scott Morris

You tend to avoid taking your pride and joy out into the wet. But this time you got caught. So on go the wipers. And then you find that the rubber wipers have split. The wiper is lousy and metal begins to rub on glass. You know the sound. With a sinking feeling you know you have ignored and taken the wipers for granted far too long.

Lets say you got lucky [Murphy took a holiday] and spotted the deteriorated rubber portion of the blade while in the comfort of your garage. A quick check in your recent catalogue shows a price of about \$ 30.00 for 2 blades. And it will take at least a week to get them by mail—if your lucky. What are the options ?

Ok ! I have an Austin Healey 3000. And I let the rubber of my blades get into such a poor state that they would disintegrate at the slightest hint of rain. I also got lucky. I spotted the problem before the blades had to be used; and I'm also cheap.

So here's what I did.

Tools Used : slot screw driver, needlenose pliers, & exacto knife

Step 1. Remove Wiper Arm Assembly

Having ensured that arms were in their normal parked position, I used a screwdriver to ease back the clip in the hub of the arm and then pulled the arm from the splines of the drive spindle. The entire arm and blade was then taken into the house to work under good light conditions on the kitchen table. {Fig. 1}

[fortunately, my wife was elsewhere at the time and my daughter was tied up in a good book]

Step 2. Remove & Inspect 9" blades

The old blade was removed by turning it towards the arm & then disengaging the arm from the slot in the blade. { Fig. 2 } Using needlenose pliers, one end of the metal blade was carefully bent up to allow removal of the rubber wiper, which slide [fell] out of the metal blade with little trouble. The rubber wiper was torn on the edge and at the base. Scrap. A close look revealed some letters and numbers which hinted that I was dealing with an after-market refill that had seen too many years.

Step 3. Acquire rubber refill

A visit to my local auto parts store [Canadian Tire] resulted in the discovery that the required refills are no longer readily available. However, all was not lost. The counter person took one look at my old rubber wiper, shook her head in doubt, and checked her cross-reference manual of blade makes. No luck. She didn't give up though. She located a universal wiper refill that looked as if it might do the job [Motomaster part #21-1148-4]. It fits metal and Tridon blades from 11" to 19" and, upon close examination, its shape approximated the rubber wiper I needed. [2 wiper refills per package — \$5.74 tax included] { Fig. 3 }

Step 4. Trim 1 rubber wiper

This wiper refill has a plastic backing into which part of the rubber wiper fits [nobb]. With this portion trimmed off, the universal refill would be almost an exact fit. Using an exacto knife, I carefully trimmed the "nobb" and plastic backing off. I then simply cut two 9" lengths from the 19" wiper refill, leaving 1" of scrap.

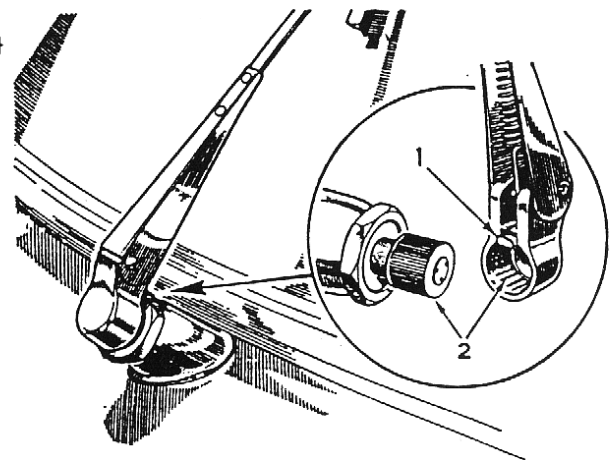
Step 5. Fit rubber wiper into blade

Holding the blade upright on the kitchen table, I carefully inserted one end of the rubber wiper into the blade and then, using 2 hands to avoid stretching the rubber, pulled the wiper all the way through the blade. The second wiper was likewise inserted into the other blade. Finally, the metal stops were "carefully" bent back down to prevent the rubber wipers from sliding out.

Step 6. Put blades back onto the car

And that is that. For \$5.74, I now have two refurbished wiper blades to install [reverse Step 2 & 1 — see Fig 1 & 2]. And I have one 19" refill wiper to store away for future use. In other words, for \$2.87 & 1 hour of my time, I saved \$30 and have, albeit not original, new rubber wipers in the windshield wiper blades.

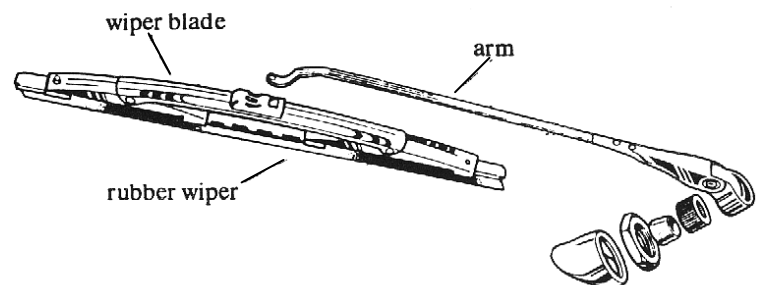
{ Fig. 1 }



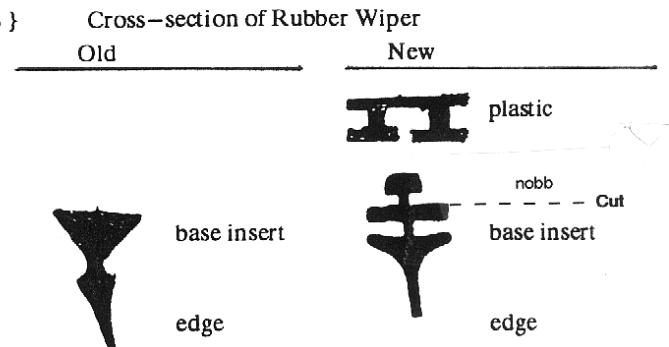
1. Retaining clip.

2. Splined drive.

{ Fig. 2 }



{ Fig. 3 }



Update 2008-04-24

The above article was written in the mid-90's and I figured I had better check to see if the product is still available and what the prices might be today.

Well, you can get a refill rubber blade for the Austin Healey BN2, BN4, BN6, BN7, BT7 from Moss Motors [part no. 164-977] for \$4.35US, plus shipping, and the BJ7 and BJ8 [part no. 560-390] for \$7.65US, plus shipping.

Canada

Now a quick check at our local Canadian Tire store [Simcoe, Ontario, Canada] for the Motomaster part #21-1148-4 refill rubber blade resulted in a fine of 5 on the shelf at \$6.77Cdn tax included.

In short, prices may have changed but replacing the wiper blade rubber yourself is still a realistic option.

Note: **Motomaster** is a line of automotive products sold exclusively at Canadian Tire stores. Products branded as Motomaster range from small items, such as oil filters and air filters, to larger items, such as the Motomaster line of tires.

In some product classes, Motomaster has created its own sub-brand to distinguish high-end merchandise. 'Motomaster Eliminator' identifies premium batteries and power-related products, while 'Motomaster Roughrider' is a line of truck tires. 'Formula 1' is the name used on premium Motomaster oils and additives.

The Motomaster line has shrunk somewhat in recent years as the store has moved towards brand name products. For example, in early 2003, the line of Motomaster spark plugs was fully discontinued in favour of carrying only brand names such as Champion, NGK and Bosch. In 2004, the Formula 1 line of oil filters was discontinued, and in 2002, the 'Motomaster 60' line of batteries was replaced with the more generic 'Sure Start'. One reason for the graduation reduction of the Motomaster line is the existence of the PartSource chain, of which 63 locations are fully owned and operated by the Canadian Tire Corporation as of May 2007. Though these stores carry many of the same products and share much of their supply chain, there is no formal affiliation between PartSource and Canadian Tire stores.

Although the Motomaster name remains on a wide variety of tires, the selection has shrunk recently. Since 2004, the Sentinel A/S and Touring 160 tires have been discontinued, with no Motomaster replacements expected.

Generally, Motomaster is regarded as the "base" or "starting" quality and price point line.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motomaster>

U.S.A.

As part of the Healey List discussion, the email below by Alex Mendelsohn outlines a Tridon product available in Maine, U.S.A.

[**Tridon All Season-Plus 18 with an 83P-18R part number**]

Re: [Healeys] wiper blades
Date: Thursday, April 24, 2008 3:55 PM
From: "Alex" <alexmm@roadrunner.com>
To: healeys@autox.team.net

Inspired by Scott's excellent article, I went over to my local VIP store here in southern Maine, and the friendly salesman helped me find a wiper "refill" that works.

It's a Tridon All Season-Plus 18 with an 83P-18R part number. There's enough material to make four blades for a big Healey.

The refill includes a nice backplate that fits the holder on my BT7 perfectly. There's a clip on one end to keep it in place.

I used a hot soldering iron to slightly deform the plastic on the other end to keep the blade retained. Works like a champ.

== Alex in Maine "The Blue Mainie," 1960 Austin Healey 3000 BT7 "Conkling," 1946 MG TC #1321
Former owner 1957 A-H 100-6, 1967 A-H BJ8, 1965 MG Midget <http://users.adelphia.net/~alexmm/ai2q.htm>

Enjoy & Good Luck !!

J. Scott Morris; Simcoe, Ontario, Canada; Austin Healey 3000 -- '60 MkI BN7 & '62 MkII BT7
Keep Smiling, Murphy Lives