

Maintenance Tips

During the winter months coming up, while you're out there washing and waxing your pride and joy (and freezing while doing it all), take the time to do a corrosion inspection. Pull up your carpet, trunk mat, seats, etc. and look for rust. It sure beats finding that rust after its had a good start! This should be a once a year inspection and if you drive that Mustang on winter roads, its doubly important to do such a corrosion inspection every spring and nip that rust before it gets a head start on you. They don't call it "cancer" for nothing.

Preventative maintenance also is the key to keeping that C-4 Cruise-O-Matic in good operating condition. Ford Cruise-O-Matics are not very forgiving of maintenance neglect. You may wonder why Ford automatics use their own type fluid: Ford Cruise-O-Matics run very hot and use different seals. Using a non-Ford type fluid can cost you in the long run, but this is not a major problem as most people do use the correct ATF. Letting the fluid level get low is the number one reason why most Cruise-O-Matics are "done in" before their time. Once or twice a year a transmission tune-up is important with Ford automatics, both the C-4 and the C-6. A transmission tune-up consists of changing the fluid and filter, plus adjusting the bands. If you follow this, your C-4 or C-6 can last indefinitely. High heat is the primary reason for failure of these transmissions. By keeping up with your transmission maintenance, you will enjoy years of trouble-free service.

Be certain that the correct fluid is used (Type F only). When checking this, it should be red-pink in color. If it is brown, it is either burnt or is not transmission fluid! If you find the brown color here, it is a reminder that it is time to do a transmission tune-up.

Power steering difficulties seem to plague some Ford fanatics. Using the correct fluid (Ford Type F Automatic trans fluid) and keeping the level up are

essential operations. Check those hoses for damage and replace any of them if they look even half way questionable. Exhaust manifolds love power steering hoses because they seem to contact with depressing frequency. This results in loss of your power steering when the hose melts through. Hoses being too close to the exhaust manifolds result in heat damage as well. Using the factory-equipped clamps will save you a lot of headaches by keeping the hoses far away from the manifolds. Another item, although not stock on Mustangs before 1971, is a power steering fluid cooler. This item makes a big difference in the cooling of the fluid and, consequently, in the life of the components. This cooler goes in the return (non-pressure) line to the reservoir. They can be found on 1968-up full size Fords and on some mid size models after 1970. Changing your power steering fluid once a year will greatly extend the life of all the components. These components are quite expensive, so it pays off in the long run. Remember, preventive maintenance is the key to long life, no matter what the component or system.

Jim Smart
Salisbury, Maryland

Part Holder

A very useful item for any toolbox is floral clay. Floral clay is used in making flower arrangements and is available at almost any florist shop. It's similar to modeling clay, but is very sticky. It is excellent for holding screws to screwdrivers, bolts and nuts in sockets, and small parts in place during installation in hard-to-get-at places.

Peter De Groot
Corpus Christi, Texas

Cable Confusion

This is one of the strangest problems I have ever had with a car. Let me start with the symptoms: a problem with not

turning over after a long trip was the first one noticed. The following items were replaced over the course of a pretty thorough mechanical restoration: starter, solenoid, battery, and all battery cables. For a long time, the only time the problem would appear was after four to six hours on the road and it was obvious that it was not a battery related problem because the car would push off with ease.

Finally, after a five hour trip from Gatlinburg to Atlanta the car died just a few miles from home. A quick diagnosis discovered that no current was reaching the coil and a jumper wire allowed me to roll the car to a start and to proceed home. When I began testing the electrical system the next day, all seemed fine! I had twelve volts at the fuse box, no problem. Then I discovered that when I turned any accessory on, the voltage in the system dropped to less than eight volts, depending on the current draw of the device turned on. After many fruitless hours spent looking for a bad connection or ground, I discovered the problem: a bad battery positive cable. This would allow twelve volts to pass when it was cold but when hot it would demonstrate high resistance and impede the flow of the necessary voltage and current. The infuriating thing is that the cable was less than a year old! It was, however, a cheap aftermarket cable and when replaced by another but better quality aftermarket piece, the problem disappeared for good.

Gregory Wells
Chamblee, Georgia

Free Funnel

A handy hands-off funnel for refilling a drained radiator can be made by cutting the bottom out of a two-liter plastic beverage bottle. The end where the bottle originally had its cap is inserted into the radiator and holds the funnel fairly stable during use. One can fill the funnel with a respectable amount of coolant and then let it drain into the radiator. This also helps prevent the

fluid level from overflowing onto your freshly detailed engine compartment.

Bill Rodgers
Pleasant Grove, Alabama

Boss Rods ID

Here's how to tell the difference between the three types of Boss 429 connecting rods as used in the three types of Boss 429 engines:

	Part No.	Casting	Bolt	Length
S engine	C9AZ-6200-A	C9AE-A	1/2"	6.549"
T engine	C9AZ-6200-B	C9AE-B	3/8"	6.605"
N engine	C9AX-6200-B	C9AX-B	1/2"	6.785"

Of course, the material for all of these is forged steel. This information is courtesy of Steve Strange of the Boss 429 Mustang Directory.

Collecting Your Hinges?

For those folks undertaking a restoration on a 1967-68 Mustang, I'm sure you've found your door hinges are shot. During the late 1967 model year Ford went to a stamped-steel type door hinge on the Mustang as well as other compact and mid-size Fords. This hinge has a poor reputation for durability and often results in sagging doors. It will get to a point where you must lift the door to get it to close properly. This type of door hinge continued through the 1968 model year as well. 1969-73 were also plagued with this type of hinge. Unfortunately, there is no real hope for 1969-73 owners, except to replace the hinge with a new one of the same type.

However, there is, for 1967-68 owners, something that can be done. Early in the 1967 model year, Ford used a heavy iron hinge on the Mustang that used a bronze bushing and a stamped steel check mechanism (to hold the door open). This hinge has only two

weak points and with the help of a good machine shop, you can rebuild these hinges better than when new! This can also apply to 1965-66 owners too as they use a very similar hinge.

If you have a late 1967 or model year 1968 Mustang, throw away those worn-out stamped steel hinges, you won't need them. Visit some nearby wrecking yards and locate a complete set of early 1967 door hinges. Make sure the check mechanism on the lower hinge is still intact. You'll need the parts

from that check mechanism to rebuild your hinges properly. Your local machine shop will have all the facilities to rebuild your hinges. It will cost as much as new hinges (in some cases more), but these will be better than new. Upon driving the hinge pins out of the hinge, it will come apart. Have the machine shop bore out the old bronze bushings and make new bushings out of stainless steel (if available) or brass. The hinge pins must be replaced. Your machine shop can make new ones out of tool steel. Do not permit the machine shop to overbore those bushing bores as it will weaken the hinge. Bore just enough to remove the old bushing. If the check mechanism is torn up (pin and roller sheared off), your machinist can drill it out and make a new roller and pin for it, too. The stainless steel bushing will last the longest. You can even cross drill the hinges and install grease fittings so you can lube them on a regular basis. They will last forever if you are able to lube them at every lube job. I've been fortunate enough to know an excellent machinist, and this made the job a lot easier. For 1965-66 owners, you can do the same thing with those heavy iron hinges. 1969-73 owners, no heavy iron hinges were ever available for your Mustangs, and

they all had stamped steel hinges. Those stamped steel hinges can be rebuilt and even easier than the iron hinges. It is a matter of making bushings and installing new pins. Perhaps someone undertaking a restoration on a 1969-73 Mustang can enlighten us on rebuilding the stamped steel hinges.

One thing is apparent: rebuilt door hinges will give your Mustang the sound cars are famous for, a solid sound when you shut the door, kind of like a bank vault slipping shut, don't you know.

Jim Smart
Salisbury, Maryland

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