Clutches

by Harry MacLean

This article is about clutches. Since mine has failed I took some pics for people to see what can go wrong. Although mine is kind of an odd ball failure never the less it failed. Clutches on an MGB have two systems mechanical meaning the actual parts that engage and disengage or to make it do that as well as hydraulic. When a clutch fails there are a few things you can do to see what has happened. First you check the master cylinder for fluid to see if it's full . If it is then you need a helper so you can crawl by the car on the ground and watch to see if your slave is working and how far it's moving. It should be close to one half inch. If that is doing ok then go inside your car and with engine off see if you can shift to all gears. If you can then you might have diagnosed your own problem. If you can shift gears with engine off and the hydraulics work ok then you can pretty much assure yourself that your clutch has failed. Especially if it won't go in to gear while driving. The first picture that is going to be shown is what the pressure plate is supposed to look like.

It is hard to tell in this pic but there is heat checking on the metal piece but this clutch has been in the car driving for 17 years. When I got it apart this is what it actually looked like. Don't pay attention to dates as pictures were taken on 7/14/21 .

A piece is missing. What has happened is the metal piece broke the weld and I found it between the pressure plate and clutch disc.

The disc was worn but it would have been useable for a while longer. If this were an American car this would not have happened as they don't use the metal piece to push the spring in to disengage the clutch.

Also with MGB 's they use a piece of carbon to ride on the metal piece. I did not take a pic of that but mine wasn't too bad. The carbon can wear down and shatter and will give you the same result. Throw out bearings are available as well as the carbon piece does not like you holding the clutch in at long red lights or anything similar. Woodward Dream Cruise is another place you don't want to take an MGB.

One other item to check is the release arm which the carbon piece connects. It has a bushing that can wear an sometimes bend I had that happened on the 78 I had not only bushing bad but was bent as well. The rod going from slave to release arm can wear down as well as oblong at the release bearing. But as all things age mechanical things wear out.