

Checking Differential and Gearbox Oil

Moggie Mechanic

In a previous Moggie Mechanic article I described the routine maintenance that you should do on your Morgan and mentioned checking the oil in the differential and gearbox. In conversations with Morgan owners, I have realized that some are not quite so mechanically minded as others and would like explicit instructions on how to do these two tasks. So those of you who are mechanics should read no further. The rest of you I hope will understand what I am trying to describe and enjoy knowing a little more about your car.

Differential oil is easy to check either from under the car or by removing the back platform behind the seats. The differential has two plugs. One is for



draining the oil and the other is for checking and filling. The drain plug is situated at the lowest part of the differential and is a bolt with a square head. The fill plug looks almost the same but is situated about three inches up the rear face of the differential.



To check the oil in the differential remove the fill plug carefully. No oil should come out when you remove it. Put your finger into the hole and check to see if the oil is more or less level with the hole. If it is more than half an inch below the hole you need to add more oil.

This can be done with a funnel. If you have changed the oil and know what is in the differential then just add a little more. But if you don't know the type of oil, it is advisable to drain out all the old oil by removing the drain plug and refilling with new oil.

Morgan recommends that the oil in the rear axle be changed every 5,000 miles with a maximum of 10,000 miles and it is better to be safe than sorry at a later date. The oil in the differential should be an SAE 90, significantly different from the oil you use in the engine.

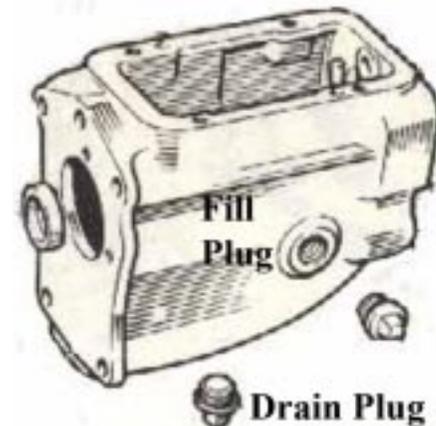
When you have drained the oil, make sure that you carefully wipe that drain plug clean before reinserting it and make sure that it is tight. To avoid potential leaks wrap the threads of the plug with teflon plumber's tape. Fill the differential using the fill plug hole. Add oil until it just begins to drip out of the hole and then reinsert and tighten the cleaned fill plug. You will drive a lot more relaxed knowing your differential is ready for another 5,000 miles.

Checking the oil in the gearbox is very easy if you have a Moss box as in the +4 or early +8 as there is a dip stick under the little upholstery flap on the top of the gearbox. You can check this the way that you usually check your engine oil and replenish or change as required. Morgan recommends that the gearbox oil be



checked every 3,000 miles and replaced every 10,000 miles.

If you have a 4/4 the process is a little more difficult but very similar to the process for checking the differential. First remove the upholstery covering the transmission. You will find a circular hole in the metal transmission cover. An oil level and filler plug is situated on the left hand side of the gearbox and is accessible through a hole in the transmission cover forward in front of the seat.



Check the oil level the same way as you check the oil in the differential by inserting your finger into the hole after you have removed the plug. If it is down, add more oil. Clean the plug and retighten. The gearbox should be drained through the drain plug, which is located at the bottom of the gearbox and refilled with oil at least every 10,000 miles.

Remember if you don't drive your car many miles that the oil may deteriorate before you reach the magic 10,000 miles and oil is much cheaper to replace than a gearbox. The recommended oil for gearboxes is again SAE 90 and not engine oil.

Remember that you will have a lot more confidence in your car when you know that routine maintenance is done regularly and you could save yourself some big bills.

Happy Motoring M.M.

BRBC Reminder

Pat Sparks

A Brits 'Round BC reminder: join us June 26-30 as we enjoy driving British cars on BC's open roads. For details visit www.oecc.ca/brbc.

Starting in Kamloops, we'll tour the beautiful roads of the Kootenays where the traffic is light, the scenery terrific. The itinerary on our website just might tempt you! Late registrations are no problem and Morgans are encouraged!