



Graham Smith

Ask Smithy

Have you got a question about your car?
E-mail Graham at grah.smith@bigpond.com

In the garage

Q I don't need to use my 2001 Holden Commodore Acclaim, but I would like to keep it. Can you give me a list of must dos when it sits in the garage.

Jack

It's not a good idea to leave a car sitting, so have a plan to take it out regularly. You'll warm up the engine, transmission and rear axle and circulate oil through vital components. I would recommend you buy a battery conditioner and leave it hooked up to the battery. Plan to change the oil, and perhaps also the coolant, say every year.

Too much idle time

Q My 1997 Falcon Futura has begun to idle roughly and vibrate when accelerating. I suspect the No 6 cylinder isn't working properly. There is no change when I remove the spark plug lead. If any other lead is taken out, the engine slows down. Could this be a result of a clogged fuel injector, or some other problem?

George Aguas

Could be. Try to isolate the problem by swapping components between cylinders and see if the problem follows the component. Swap injectors, spark plugs and leads a component at a time and observe results. Check compression. It sounds like more than a blocked injector.

Gas options

Q I am considering converting a 3.8-litre V6 Commodore sedan and need advice on best gas option. My main concern is cylinder head valve lubrication.

Peter McMaster

The 3.8-litre engine is fine on LPG, but to ease your fears you could add some upper cylinder lubricant to the petrol and that will help lubricate the valves and valve seats when you run it on petrol

as you should regularly do. Other possible solutions include a Flashlube kit, which takes care of the lubrication for you. I don't have experience with Flashlube but have recently been given a kit to test so I may have an answer on that soon.

Too clicky

Q When my AU Falcon XR6 is coming to a stop there is a clicking noise from the auto gearbox. It only does it in drive, not first or second. but I was told by an auto transmission specialist that I shouldn't worry about it. What do you think?

Harley

Consult another auto transmission specialist and get his opinion. If you weren't happy with the advice you were getting from your doctor, you would get yourself a second opinion, wouldn't you? That's what you should do in this case.

Braking down

Q The brakes on my 2005 Renault Megane grab very harshly when applied, often sending the passenger towards the windscreen. Emergency braking is very tricky indeed. They also grind loudly when reverse parking. Renault says both issues are normal, but the first problem particularly worries me. Can you help me out here?

Peter Ryall

Has it been that way since you bought it, or is it something that has developed over time? I would first go and test drive another Megane, without telling the dealer what you are up to, and see if that is the same, in other words see if it is as Renault says, normal for the Megane. If it isn't, talk to the dealer and get another opinion. It doesn't sound like it is normal — the brakes really should take up progressively as you apply pressure. It does sound like the brakes are coming on a bit too strong.

Smoke screen

Q After a complete engine overhaul because of a severely cooked engine in my Nissan Patrol that included a new cylinder head, bearings, pistons and turbocharger, the engine is now occasionally blowing smoke out of the exhaust. However, the problem stops if I disconnect the breather hose. Do you have any ideas that could help me on this one?

Geoff L

Did they hone the bores in the rebuild? If they didn't, or even if they did, I would be suspicious that the rings are properly seated on the bores and the smoke is blowing. It could also be because you didn't run it in properly after the rebuild and the bores have glazed.

On the edge

Q The left front tyre on my 2003 Nissan Patrol is continually scrubbing out on the outside edge. After numerous wheel alignments, I questioned the Nissan dealer and the tyre retailer who actually did the alignments and I was told that there wasn't much that can be adjusted and there was no guarantee an alignment would fix the problem. It didn't and it is still scrubbing the outside edge. Is this a common problem?

D. Campbell

You're not alone, it is quite a common problem. There is no provision on the Patrol to adjust caster or camber, and it is one of those that is the cause of your problem. The only adjustment possible is toe-in and that is probably what is being done. Take it to a reputable wheel aligner, one that works on four-wheel drives, and ask for a read-out on the caster and camber. Once you have that, take it to a 4WD specialist who will have kits available on adjustment of caster and camber.



Daily Telegraph
Saturday 18/11/2006
Page: 14
Section: Auto
Region: Sydney Circulation: 342,739
Type: Capital City Daily
Size: 345.53 sq.cms.
Published: MTWTFSS-

Brief: CIMC
Page 2 of 2



Standstill . . . a reader wants to keep his 2001 Commodore garaged



LPG Techniek Van Meenen – IMPORTER OF FLASHLUBE

We are searching for new dealers.

Contact us for more information.

www.vanmeenen.com