

Tech Tips:

This month's Tech Tip ... **DOC BROWN'S FLUX CAPACITOR**

Did you notice that Doc Brown never changed the 1.21 gigawatt Flux Capacitor in his DeLorean? That's because it worked. So there was no need to change it. Same for MGs.



- **Tip #1 ... Don't change your condenser (capacitor) unless it's defective.** *(Not applicable to electronic ignition)*
Original condensers usually last for years, often for the life of the car.
- **Tip #2 ... Carry an extra breaker plate in your car with a condenser and properly gapped points.**
If your condenser or points go bad, it only takes a couple of minutes to change the breaker plate and get back on the road.

Moss #163-700 (T), #551-055 (MGB & Midget); Advanced Distributors "25D Breaker Plate Assembly" (MGA)

Typical symptoms of a bad condenser are sudden loss of power especially under load, unable to rev very high, rough running, occasional backfire out the carburetor, may or may not die. About the only way to confirm a condenser is bad to replace it with a good one. Other conditions may cause some of the symptoms, including a bad coil, loose wire, fuel system, or MG gremlin. But I will stick to condensers in this discussion.

Most automobile manufacturers, including MG, eliminated condensers in the mid-70s when they changed to electronic ignition systems. Modern replacement condensers are often produced by off shore companies with little quality control. Failures are becoming common. Some new condensers are bad right out of the box.

Len Fanelli of Abingdon Performance (laf48@aol.com) recommends condensers by Standard products / Echlin (NAPA). The Distributor Doctor (http://www.distributordoctor.com/distributor_condensers.htm) claims that he makes condensers that work and fit most MGs. Jeff Schlemmer at Advanced Distributors (<http://www.advanceddistributors.com/>) may also have suggestions for good condensers that fit. Even those condensers may be bad or soon fail.



Just about all distributor condensers have the same electrical properties, but different mounts. Some MG owners have adapted higher production condensers for popular early-70s American cars to use in their MG distributor. To fit this 1970 Chevrolet condenser (*left*) into his T-series distributor, the owner ran the wire in the opposite direction. I found that a 1978 Plymouth Arrow condenser fits in my TF distributor. Or, drill and tap your breaker plate to accept condensers with various mounting brackets.

Yes, you can eliminate the condenser problem by installing an electronic ignition system. But that takes away some of the unexpected thrills of driving old cars!

I'm an MG newbie, so I write "Tech Tips" from a newbie perspective. Do you have a tip that you would like to share? Would you like to write a "TechTips" for more experienced MG owners? Contact me to participate.

Next month: It's car show season!

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