



JEEP HOSPITAL

Each month Dr Jeep (Tony Whitehead) takes us through the trials and tribulations at his "Jeep Hospital", USA 4X4 Jeep Specialist in Melbourne, Victoria. Over 20 Jeeps are admitted weekly for servicing and suspension work through to differential, transmission and engine rebuilds. Dr Jeep explains the diagnosis, the corrective surgery and future care of these vehicles.



Tony Whitehead (Dr Jeep)

USA 4X4

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IGNITION SWITCH

This is a typical steering column from a TJ or an XJ shown with the cowl removed from around the ignition column by removing three screws from underneath. There is a weak little cast allow mechanism between the ignition barrel where the key inserts to the actual ignition switch that's a plastic black jigger on the left. The link bar snaps off and you end up with no ability to turn the Jeep on or off, we see this problem regularly here.

Once you take the ignition barrel out by poking a screw driver up through an access hole in the cowl you will be able to remove the ignition barrel cover with two small security torx bolts (security torx have a hole in the base of the male tool to clear the pin in the security torx bolt) and the key barrel carrier will come out with a wiggle from the housing once you pry open off the ignition switch.



Here is the problem, the outer cast alloy rod has snapped in two. The other problem is its not a spare part you can buy so you will need a complete column to rat just this from to get your self sorted. It will be a problem on 15 years plus Jeeps like it was on my 96 TJ just recently.

TJ BRAKES

A TJ showed up for some love here at the Jeep hospital that had just been through our state government Vic Roads road worthy test. Someone has fitted new brake rotors on the TJ but not new pads, trying to cheap skate the road worthy test I guess. You can see the old pad has been worn badly prior and now its not going to bed the new rotor in properly, it now needs to be machined lightly AND new pads to match, doing half a job is common out there apparently.



CLASSIC CJ

This is our old 82 CJ 7 Laredo, the floor has had a very hard time so the best option to save it and make it usable and rust proof will be a Rhino lining. This little Jeep will be left pretty original, just a pair of seats and a bikini top is the plan for summer.



IDLER BEARING

When servicing your Jeep loosen off the serpentine belt so you can hand spin the idler bearings, air conditioner bearings, water pump and power steering pulleys to check for noise and looseness. This faulty idler bearing was found on a 95 XJ. It was noisy but it still hadn't exploded, if its a metal pulley you can generally replace the bearing if it hasn't worn the pulley completely to death. Unfortunately the plastic pulley wheels are not serviceable. We stock replacement bearings or complete idler pulleys as well as most belt spring tensioners. After you replace the worn bearing/s inspect the serpentine belt by flexing it backwards, any cracks on the ribbed inside or hot spots on the flat out side and it will need replacing (keep the old one in your spares...I zip tie them in the engine bay for an emergency). Refit the belt, I always draw my own belt routing diagram before I start as often the sticker, if is has one, is for another set up. I find if its not a self tensioning belt adjust the belt up so that you can just get the longest straight section of the serpentine belt to twist to 90 degrees.

Failure to maintain this system will result in throwing a belt so you will have no power steering, alternator or cooling effectively making you stuck.



These bearings will press or knock out easily, before you knock the old one out make sure you check where it was set in the pulley wheel so you can leave the new bearing in the same position when your done.