



BMW 325 - Failed Heater Blower

One of the regular problems, across a whole range of vehicles, is the failure of the heater blower motor. Very often the rheostat will fail, leaving the fan operating at only one speed: Fast!

When this happens, it is still possible to at least demist the screen when needed. On this 2001 BMW 325Ci, the heater rheostat is an electronic unit and can have a variety of different symptoms when it fails. This is common across the BMW range. As well as failure of the blower fan, symptoms can include a flat battery

after leaving the vehicle overnight. This is due to the rheostat drawing current when it shouldn't.

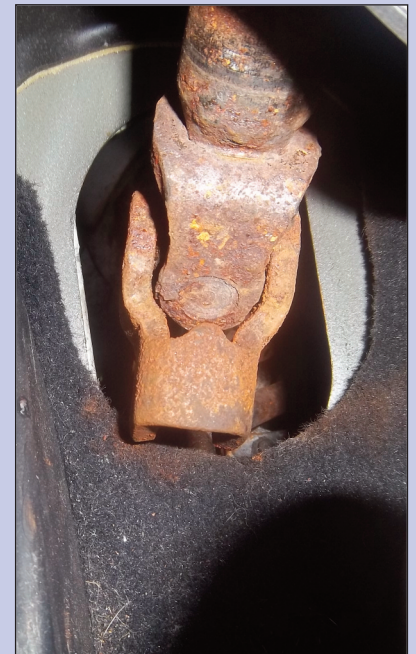
The electronic unit is covered in spiky fins to allow the components to stay cooler, and this outward appearance gives it the nick name of "Hedgehog".



The hedgehog is fitted up under the driver's footwell with limited, but not impossible access

On this 325, the unit is tucked up under the drivers footwell. Access is tight, but not impossible. After confirming that the rheostat was at fault, by plugging the new unit into position, we then set about the fiddly task of actually fitting the unit into its proper place.

MINI Cooper S - Notchy Steering



Rust had seized the joint solid, a good soaking returned it to a serviceable state.

The steering on this 2002 Mini Cooper S was far heavier than BMW had intended. This was accompanied by a squealing sound from the electric steering pump. It could have easily been concluded that the steering pump was the source of the problem, but we investigated a little deeper.

Not only was the steering heavy, it also had a notchy feel, which was reminiscent of the old Ford Cortinas when the steering coupling seized. For this reason, we decided to check the steering column couplings out first.

With the boot at the base of the steering column removed, we could see a very rusty universal joint which when disconnected, proved to be seized solid. BMW would like to sell the joint, complete with the column and due to the modified part, they will also say the upper column is needed. The total cost of all these parts is around €600.

We soaked the universal joint in a bowl of penetrating fluid overnight, and by the morning it had freed up nicely. We then immersed it in a bowl of hydraulic fluid to completely lubricate the joint before re-connecting it. The result was smoother and far quieter steering.

Scenic - Failed Clutch Due to DMF

The owner of this 2006 Renault Grand Scenic had not been aware of a previous problem, when the clutch pedal suddenly dropped while in use. The clutch still worked after the incident, but the driver was aware that something was not quite right.

Continuing to use the vehicle for the next

few days, he booked the car in with us to check out the problem. We didn't like the feel of the clutch and could also see a trail of fluid coming from the base of the bell housing. It was agreed by all that the next step would involve the removal of the gearbox.

With the gearbox out, all was revealed. The

DMF had collapsed and had allowed the slave cylinder to be pushed out further than it was designed to do. The extra travel had allowed the fluid to leak and would have soon caused the clutch to fail completely.

A new Dual Mass Flywheel and complete clutch (including the concentric slave cylinder) was fitted. When all was put back together, the customer was pleased that the clutch felt much lighter than it had in years.



The collapsed DMF allowed the concentric slave cylinder to extend past its intended travel, until it started to leak

