

Blocked Brake Lines

I was having trouble with sticking rear brakes on my 1973 MGB and after looking at the brake slave cylinders found that they were OK (well one was leaking a bit, so, I rebuilt it), but after reassembly I was still getting rear brake drag. I determined that it must be the flex line to the rear axle. I replaced it and problem solved. I ran into an issue with my first MGA back in 1982 where the rear brake line was fatigued and let go on a stop coming off the highway on an offramp. This was my first indication that old brake lines are suspect. Over the years I have encountered numerous occasions where a front caliper was sticking on one side or the other (or both) on MGAs and MGBs and found the flex line to be almost completely blocked by deteriorated rubber in the inside. This is true on the clutch flex line as well. On my second MG Midget back in 1979 I found I could not shift gears and determined that the flex line for the clutch was EXPANDING when I pressed the clutch pedal and not providing enough force to disengage the clutch (this was on a car that was only 4 years old!) Obviously on each spring tech session or prep to get the car out for summer driving it makes sense to examine all the flex lines (and other rubber parts on the mechanicals) to determine whether they at least are not leaking or showing other signs of fatigue. So, the moral of the story is that if you acquire a car that you can tell that the brake lines have not been replaced in a while (say 20 or 30 years) it behooves the owner to replace the flex lines regardless of how they look on the outside!

Safety Fast!

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Clogged brake lines

