

WHEN TRANNY POPS OUT OF 2ND GEAR (REVISITED)

Quite a while ago Tech Manual article OODT046 was written concerning the method of curing the problem described by its title. Basically, it described how an Elan engine-transmission unit has to be removed to tighten the main-shaft nut. It suggests that a neglect to peen the washer over the nut flats has allowed it to slack off, permitting play in the second gear cluster to disengage the second gear. With 50,000 miles on my Elan, I experienced the same problem, even though the washer had been peened. Subsequently, I found a slightly easier method of retightening this nut.

The first thing to realize is that the main-shaft nut is accessible through the gearchange cover . . . just below the gear shift lever. Therefore, remove the molding from the driveshaft tunnel, exposing the gearshift lever cap. Unscrew this cap and remove the lever, seat, and spring. The gear change cover is now visible, although some of the fiberglass will have to be cut away to remove it. Take a hacksaw blade and enlarge the circular hole until it matches the space available between the frame flanges. A little work with an open-end wrench and a universal joint on your socket will remove the four cover bolts. The cover can then be worked up out of the hole.

You will then be able to see the offending nut, about 4 inches below the hole in the fiberglass. If the transmission is popping out of gear, the nut will likely be so loose that you can back it off with your fingers. Don't back it all the way off its threads, just enough to be able to swab the threads clean with some lacquer thinner. Bend the washer back if it has been peened over. Now, drip some 'Loc-Tite' "Nut Lock" on the threads and tighten the nut with your fingers. The gear selector shafts prevent you from getting a proper wrench in there, so final tightening will have to be done a-flat-at-a-time using a screwdriver or punch and a hammer. Slow, but a lot easier than removing the whole thing from the car. Before you leave it bend the washer over a couple of flats or three.

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