

SPARE PARTS AND TOOLS FOR TOURING

by Bill Reeder

Editor's note: As you prepare to drive your Model A to Dallas next summer, I thought it would be helpful to repeat a classic piece that appeared in the May-June 1971 issue of The Restorer. Even 20 years later, Bill Reeder's words still offer may helpful hints on traveling in your Model A.

Possibly an old-timer will scoff a little at carrying a complete set of spares, tools, and supplies in your Model A. But if you could look under the front seat of his original unrestored '29 Pickup, you would probably find an old gunny sack wrapped around a script spark plug wrench and a working square-tailed monkey wrench. The dust and junk in the corners will probably also include some Western Auto points, a carefully wrapped condenser, scraps of bailing wire, and a little pile of bolts and nuts - Ford sizes. So really we are all in the same game. If we suddenly need a tool or part, either we have it or else we have to get it. If it's a rare item, our phase of the tour may come to a three-day halt.

The list that accompanies this article has been made up from actual needs that have arisen on various tours with Jewel City Chapter over the past eight years. Every item on the list has been required on the road. Other items were needed, too, but not all can be carried. This list presupposes some long solo tours as well as group tours. The emphasis is on (1) tools and spares that are peculiar to the Model A, and for which there are no modern substitutes available; and (2) items that will enable you to keep running as far as a good garage.

The list seems long, but in reality all items can easily be stored in the car. Many of the pieces are very small, and weigh next to nothing. These can be wrapped in plastic and tucked into corners and voids under the seat, after the larger tools are stowed. The total additional weight over and above the standard Model A tool kit is only about 35 pounds, which is hardly a struggle for an "A" to carry.

The list is divided into two major groups: One group lists spares, tools, and supplies that should be carried at all times, under the seat and in a small tool bag kept within easy reach. The other group lists additional items to be taken on longer trips, where it would be impractical to call home and have Neal Moline or Bill Phillips bring you a carburetor before dark. These items can be carried in a small canvas bag. Along with this second group we always take a two-gallon container of drinking (and radiator) water, where on the Mojave, these two might save you from a divorce later.

Some random comments on storage and usage of spares are given below, with one or two thoughts on touring in general, in the hope that they will save club members a few of the minor griefs we've experienced.

1. All rubber items, ignition coils, condensers, and insulated wire should be stored away from the heat of the muffler.
2. Fragile parts can't make it if just thrown in with the jack and tire irons. Wrap them in rags and store them in band-aid cans.
3. Parts that must be kept clean to function should be wrapped in plastic and sealed with something like masking tape. (Valve cores, points, etc.)
4. Test *every* spare part, actually running it on your Model A, before placing the part among your spares. Test both for fit and for function. Some Zenith replacement jets have come across the counter without any holes in them. The water pump that worked fine on your daughter's Coupe may not bolt up on your Town Sedan (because Larry Boef built up some weld on the end of the shaft).
5. Pre-lubricate any spares that require it. (Generator, water pump, etc.)
6. Check the condition of the spare once a year. Hoses deteriorate; soldered connections shake loose.
7. Don't use a "knock-off" puller on your rear wheel hub. These pullers are light and easy to carry, but they can cause chipped gears and stripped axle threads when used by us back yard mechanics. K.R. Wilson made two excellent hub pullers, and many other brands also exist. Have some fun finding one at a swap meet, and carry it in your "long trip bag." Wilson pullers are numbers ABV-156 and A115BV. (AVB-156 won't fit some early hubs.)
8. Carry new gaskets and mounting hardware, including cotters, for each spare part. Protect the gaskets by wrapping between sheets of heavy cardboard.
9. In the door pocket, carry a list of all the spares and tools you carry, showing under which seat or in which bag.
10. Use only copper-asbestos head gaskets. The wartime black composition gaskets show a beautiful Ford script, but they have an iron insert which rusts out, sometimes in less than a thousand miles of service.
11. Never get under a jacked-up car. Either work strictly from the side, or replace the jack with a strong, wide-based jackstand.
12. The 5/8" brass drift is for replacing front wheel bearings; it should be 8 to 10 inches long.

13. It's a good plan to install a 20 to 25 amp fuse in the wire running from the starter switch up to the terminal box. This will prevent burning up the whole wiring harness and ammeter, should you have a short occur anywhere in the system except in the starter circuit. The starter circuit is very hard to burn out, and is easily repaired. If you use 50 candlepower headlights, you will need the 25-amp fuse.
14. Always check the ammeter whenever you stop the engine. If all lights and accessories are off, it should read zero. If it reads 2 to 5 amps discharge, the cutout is probably stuck closed. Try rapping the top of the cutout cover sharply with your knuckles. If this fails to open the circuit, restart the engine and stop it again. If it still sticks, disconnect all electricity at the battery, and replace the cutout. But don't discard the cutout if it is an original Ford script unit. They can be repaired - even rebuilt.
15. Try to locate an original Ford Model A adjustable (monkey) wrench. The best kind has a 3/8" square drive on the tail of the handle. Pay more attention to good working condition than to its having a Ford script. (They are just as correct without the script.) This wrench opens very wide, and will fit several important Model A nuts which are too large for the typical modern adjustable wrench.
16. Don't try to work on a timing gear nut with a chisel or punch. The nut will be damaged, and your brand new timing gear may part with a tooth. Either the standard Model A monkey wrench above or a Ford timing gear wrench will fit this nut.
17. Don't try to drive more than 250 or 275 miles a day. Stop early for a swim. Also stop every hour or two for a walk around. If the engine is running near the boiling point, swing the front license plate up into the horizontal position. Keep the speed down to 45 to 50 miles per hours. The forces on fan blades, rod bearings, etc., increase as the *square* of engine speed.

Bill was MAFCA's president in 1969 and wrote many restoration articles for *The Restorer*. He drove his 1930 Town Sedan to the MAFCA National Convention in Dallas in 1968 where he won first place. Bill died August 9, 1981. Yearly, since 1982 the author of the best technical article in *The Restorer* has been honored to receive the Bill Reeder Literary Award.

KIT No. 1 - Carry every day, under front seat:

TOOLS

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Jack and handle | Battery terminal puller |
| Starting crank | Flashlight |
| Tire Pump | Inner tube patch kit |
| Ball peen hammer | Electrical circuit tester |
| Socket wrench set, 5/16 - 7/8 | Distributor shaft wrench |
| Adjustable wrench, small | Tire irons (2) |
| Box wrench, 5/8 x 3/4 (generator) | Knife, scout type |
| Box wrench, 1/2 x 9/16 (battery) | Scissors, for gasket work |
| Screwdrivers, set of 3 | Emergency flashers or flares, red |
| Pliers | Ford "A" spark plug wrench |
| Wire cutter-crimper-stripper | Drift, 5/8 diameter brass |
| Ignition tools-feeler gauge, file, etc. | Ford "A" adjustable wrench |
| Grease gun (for your fittings) | |

PARTS

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fan belt | Stop light switch (tested) |
| Radiator hose set | Starter switch |
| Light bulb set | Starter drive |
| Wiper blade | Coil (tested) |
| Water pump packing | Set of fuel lines, fittings |
| Accelerator spring | tire valve cores (2), caps |
| Ignition points | Brake spring assortment |
| Condenser (tested) | Timing gear (check size) |
| Spark plug | High tension coil lead |
| Ammeter (tested) | Fuel shut-off valve |
| Ignition switch (tested) | Rear axle key |
| Cable for ignition switch | Rear axle taper shims |
| Generator cutout (tested) | Front wheel bearings, races |
| Tie rod and drag link spring | |

SUPPLIES

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Copper wire, #12 insulated (10 ft.) | Assorted small springs |
| Iron bailing wire (10 ft.) | Set of carburetor gaskets |
| Heavy string | Sand paper, fine grade |
| Electrical tape | Soap and talcum, for tires |
| Assorted bolts, nuts, cotters, etc. | Length of wood, 2 x 4 x 6 inches |
| Gasket sealing compound | Fuses |
| Gasket material, 12 inches square | Wheel bearing grease |
| Fuel valve packing | Service Manual |
| Rags | MAFCA Roster |
| Waterless hand cleaner | |

KIT No. 2 - In a special bag, for long trips

TOOLS

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Timing gear wrench, Ford tool | 5-Z 1832 |
| Valve guide remover | |
| Valve spring compressor | |
| Rear hub puller, screw type | |

PARTS

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Water pump, pre-greased | Distributor cap, lid, rotor |
| Water pump gasket | Valve springs (2) |
| Fan (inspected for cracks) | Valves (2) |
| Generator, oiled and tested | Valve guides (2) |
| Carburetor, tested | Head gasket |
| Distributor, tested | Manifold gasket |
| Distributor lower shaft | |