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How To Fit rear disc brakes

Improve your stopping power by swapping the rear brake drums for a pair of discs. Here's how to do it.

Words and Photos Jon Hill

We've recently shown a more budget-orientated drum swap on our Cortina's English back axle (see April 2014 issue), but we've since swapped the actual axle for the narrower Anglia van casing. A period swap, it allows wider wheels to be fitted under standard arches since the axle is 2.75 inches narrower than the standard.

To go with the new axle, we've opted to fit a set of disc brakes using

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the kit that Old Ford Auto Services (OFAS) sell, which was developed by Milton. This is an excellent, well thought-out kit that's since been updated and is available in a couple of versions according to the type of English axle you have.

Our axle had all its brackets cleaned off it as it had been modified in the past by a previous owner, so there was a small amount of further preparation to do — but then we've had to do that

anyway as we've adapted the casing to fit our car. The kit is mostly bolt-on, but there is some halfshaft machining needed so that the flanges fit inside the hats of the discs. But this is easily sorted since OFAS offer this as a service, too at £24. You can also buy the kit in two options — complete with discs and handbrake cable (£157), or you can order the basic hardware and source your own (£98.50).

Here's how to switch to rear discs.



1 Our Anglia van axle casing came with halfshafts but no brakes, ready for us to sort out.



2 The flange plates are already loose as the brake backplates are missing — we'd normally need to unbolt these and remove the old brakes.



3 We still need to remove the halfshafts though, which we're doing with a slide hammer.



4 This allows us to pull the shafts free from the casing ready for machining.



5 You don't have to do this bit but previous kits have needed this face dressing back because, as you'll see there's a lip that needs removing. The rag protects from stray filings.



6 The lip that needed removing was this one — now you don't have to bother because the kit's been updated with...



7 This spacer plate, which allows the halfshaft keeper plates to sit flush.



8 We need to fit our calliper mounting brackets next and there are three of them, so we cleaned up the seat area around the back of the end flange.



9 Ours needed some dressing to allow the first of the plates — this spacer — to fit flush.



10 Anglia axles have threaded fixing holes in the mating flange, which need drilling out to 8 mm so that the new fixing bolts can be fitted.

how to: fit rear discs

11



For now, we're fitting the supplied Allen bolts the wrong way round — it makes it easier to slide all the brackets on one by one.

13



...is followed by the calliper bracket. These are handed and marked so you can't get it wrong!

16



...as you can see, the halfshaft flanges are too big to go inside the Mk3 Fiesta solid discs that the kit uses.

19



Before we can refit the shafts, we need to turn those bolts round; which we did one at a time so the lot didn't fall on the floor.



12 This thin spacer plate follows the first bracket, which in turn...

14



Halfshafts next — but they need some preparation first. The wheel studs will be too long so they need knocking out — a couple of swift hammer blows will shift them off their splines.

15



After that, we cleaned them up to remove the surface rust and crud, but...

17



OFAS can provide halfshaft machining — we turned the flanges down to 132 mm.

18



They now fit inside the Mk3 Fiesta disc's hats that the kit uses.

20



Next we slid the halfshafts into the casing and knocked them home with a copper/Hyde mallet, spread evenly across the flange face.

21



Then we fitted the halfshaft keeper plates over the protruding bolts, fitted the nuts and nipped it all up with a spanner and Allen key.

22



We need some wheel studs in the flanges yet — we could have done this on the bench but we didn't! Instead we knocked them half in and drew them up on their splines with a wheel nut.



23 The discs go on next, which simply slide over the wheel studs — you can fit a wheel nut if you like to keep them in place for now.

24



The kit uses Mk3 Granada or Mk1 Sierra 4x4 callipers. You can buy these outright but they're mega money — if you've some cradles, clean them up and use them, saving a fortune.

25



Pads next, which simply slot in followed by the sliding cradle.

26



Finished! It's now ready to go back in the car

27

We're not ready to put the axle in the car just yet so we can't hook up the handbrake cable — but here's the basics. We used a Mk1 Sierra 4x4 cable, which simply clips into the calliper.



28



The adjuster sits in this bracket which is supplied with the kit and bolts into the transmission tunnel on the opposite side to the original tensioner bracket.

29



NEXT MONTH
HOW TO FIT
AN LSD

The cable's yoke is then adapted to the original handbrake lever using this supplied rod.