

It was Phillip Wainman who put me in touch with 'Woolies'. If your leather upholstery is showing signs of cracking or losing colour, then these are the people for you. Their catalogue shows more than that too and is well worth obtaining. Details in NN4.

Spoked wire road wheels need more care and attention than the disc type. Check them regularly for loose spokes. The traditional way is to "ring" them with a small screwdriver, but it's not infallible.....best to take them off the car at least twice a season and examine them inside and out.....and make sure there is a good dab of waxoyl or similar inside the middle of the hub. Contrary to popular opinion you can't re-chrome a wheel.....the best you can do is re-chrome the rim, so long as there is no corrosion and then fit new chrome spokes. Painted wires may not look as good but they are much easier on the pocket for the D.I.Y. owner.

Almost every car will, with age, develop some electrical problems. Should your alternator fail, remove it from the car by disconnecting the wiring, unbolting, turn it on its head and lower out from underneath. It can cost less to repair than trade in, so see if you can find the right man. If the brake light switch fails, it's quite impossible to get at it without body surgery.....drill out the rivets that hold the vehicle identification plate, cut a square hole and expose the switch. Use the plate again to hide the hole. Replacement dash switches are now getting rare but they do turn up at Autojumbles, so buy them when you see them. Should you have a circuit failure and start losing the horns or lights or wipers, it is possible to spend hours trying to find an elusive fault.....several of us have done this ! The first thing to do is go and buy a set of relays (they live just above the fuses ). Fit the new relays and the odds are the problem will have gone without trace.

Fuel pumps can fail too, if your replacement fouls the brake servo pipe swap the pipe over with the vacuum pipe to the distributor, they are the same thread !

Over the years much has been written on the cooling system. Removing the thermostat housing is easy, getting the thermostat out of the housing may not be so easy. You may need to drill it out and this needs a little skill unless you can find another housing in the breaker's yard. The radiator is from an Austin Maxi and at least two different sizes were fitted to that car so take care you get the right one. If your car has come from a soft water area and been well cared for (with good quality anti-freeze changed at the right periods ) you shouldn't have a problem. It's worth undoing the cap on the top of the radiator and with a good strong light examine the tops of the oval water tubes. If there is sediment or fine gravel lodged here then you are heading for trouble.

Replacing the radiator core is well within the reach of a dedicated D.I.Y. mechanic but, it will take some time to do. The full story is to be found in NN9 & NN10. The worst part is screwing up the courage to start !

It's worth considering putting into your spares stock a reconditioning set for the front suspension and a set of wheel bearings. As Alan Staniforth has pointed out the basic design of the bits involved is now a bit ancient and the design is more