

SLUGGISH STARTING 6 VOLT NEGATIVE EARTH MORRIS 8 CARS 1934-38.

Badly fitted or incorrectly specified starter cable and connectors/clamps, inadequate earthing straps and connectors/clamps and the wrong type of battery are often to blame.

Other mechanical maladies, and faulty starter motors and switches can be culprits too.

For the purposes of this article, I have assumed that the starter motor and switch is in good working order with fully serviceable brushes etc. I have used Autosparks reference numbers as a guide, but other suppliers stock similar items.

Items to be checked.

- a) You need to have a fully charged 404 size 6 Volt battery of around 80 ampere/hours; **the type used for tandem installations in MGB etc. is not adequate.**
- b) The positive battery terminal to starter lead needs to be a 61/0.9 copper core of 40mm², covered in black braid over the insulation (as Autosparks C162) with a soldered eyelet (C286) at the starter end and a soldered tinned clamp (C373) at the battery.
- c) The negative battery terminal to bulkhead panel earth braid needs to be tinned copper earth braid (as Autosparks C132) with a soldered eyelet (C293) at the bulkhead end and a soldered tinned clamp (C372) at the battery.
- d) For reliability do not use the screwed type clamps, soldered ones are better.
- e) Ensure that the bulkhead connection area is free of paint and corrosion, and that it has an adequate bolt, nut and washer.
- f) For good measure it is often worth fitting an additional earthing braid (similar to item c) above but with a soldered eyelet at each end) between bulkhead panel and body/chassis to overcome partial 'insulation' due to paint and the rubber gasket at body joint.
- g) Keep all battery/starter/bulkhead connection surfaces clean, assemble with a coating of vaseline and ensure that bolts and nuts are tight.
- h) **Make sure** that you have an earth braid (similar to item f) above) fitted between a gearbox tail-housing bolt and the chassis cross member. THIS WAS NOT FITTED TO EARLY CARS, WAS SUBJECT OF A MORRIS MOTORS DATA SHEET, AND SOMETIMES IS MISSED OFF DURING A REBUILD.
- i) When starting ensure that you are in neutral, and that the clutch pedal is NOT depressed.

Either 61/0.9 or 315/0.4 cable will provide 40mm² sectional area, either will be satisfactory but 61/0.9 will be stiffer and harder to bend. The references describe the number of strands in the cable and their individual diameters.

Important Note.

Do not use the wrong type of battery, or the readily available 'thinner' battery cables that you can buy for modern 12 volt cars from your local store.

Neither are man enough for the job!

Please Note.

Apparently the C162 battery to starter lead is no longer available from Autosparks; a pity because to replicate the original equipment as far as possible a stiffer braided cable was needed and the C162 appeared to be ideal.

They suggest their C189 item, which meets the performance criteria but is pvc covered and is of the more flexible core specification.

BOB BRYAN 2010

bobbryan@waitrose.com

(amended Dec 2010 and May 2012)

(amended Mar 2017 re C162 no longer available)