

Bonnet Lock Mechanism All Models

Over time the bonnet lock mechanisms will accrue grit and dirt, while moisture will eventually penetrate the small amount of grease inside the units. It means that they steadily begin to stick and lose their arc of closure, giving the release cable a spongy feeling and the lever fails to return to its correct vertical position. Ultimately the mechanisms will fail completely, leaving the bonnet to rely on the latch lever.

The release works via three cables; one from the lever and one from each mechanism, meeting in a junction box fixed to the inner wing. Pulling the lever brings all three cables backwards, exerting on a lever in each mechanism which swings away from the locking pins and thus releasing the bonnet. Each mechanism contains a coil spring to return the lever back into a locking position.

Access to the mechanisms can be awkward due to the close proximity of the radiator, headlight units and fan. The bonnet locking platform is also a bulky item which descends down to behind the bumper plinth. It is possible to remove a mechanism without major disassembly but the platform will need slacking off, which in turn means removing the top fixings for the bumper. The units are held in place by two fixings on the platform, which screw directly into the housing. Releasing these will allow the units to be removed, and the longer length cable can be unsnapped from the retention clips mounted underneath the platform.

The cables are two different lengths, short and long, and unless they have been badly mistreated will not stretch an appreciable amount and therefore should not need to be replaced. Finally, it is recommended that only one unit be stripped at each time, using the other for reference on how it all goes back together.

The picture on the right shows a unit which has been removed. The housing is in two sections and is aluminium and plastic. The metal section is the bottom half of the unit. You will see the extent of what appears to be corrosion on the metal section.



Here is a unit ready to be split. You can just see that the lever is not even visible in the pin locator hole, meaning that it is stuck open and will not clamp the pin when it descends. The two halves are held together by the plastic section clipping to the metal part, shown here next to the thumbs in the picture. These prise away slightly and the two halves will split.....

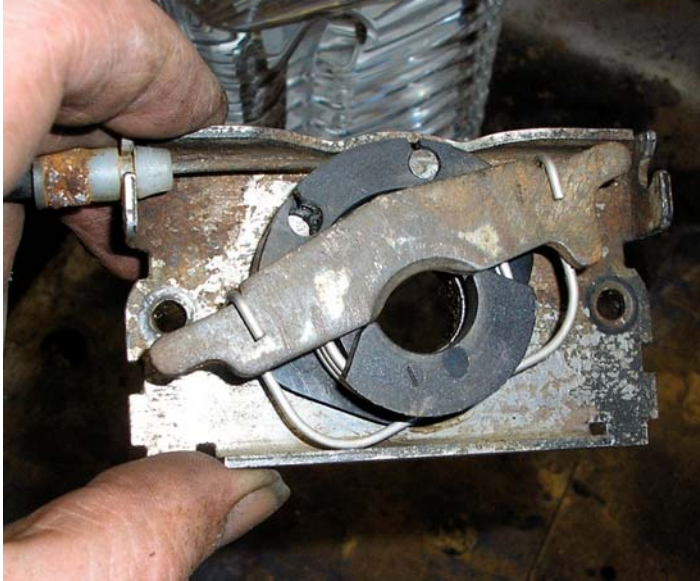
As shown in this picture the sections are being gently broken apart. The internal components are not fixed in place and so care should be taken to open whilst holding the unit level. You can also begin to see the amount of dirt inside.....



The unit now split. You can see the assembly of the parts despite the accumulation and their construction. Note the lever; the part must be assembled the correct way up with the chamfer edge on the striker area facing toward the plastic section.

The components shown after disassembly. Just five parts and they can all be easily removed and put together again without needing any tools. Note the circular pivot part towards the bottom left of the picture next to the spring. This is also plastic and so only requires cleaning in some white spirit along with agitation using a brush to remove the dirt – as the central hole locates it in the metal section it should not be scraped or attacked with abrasives. The metal components can be wire brushed back to remove the crud.





Now the same unit after cleaning, scrubbing and wipe dry followed by reassembly to check for operation. Again note the way in which the lever is mounted in the aluminum section with the chamfer on the striking edge facing out in the metal housing, and that it is now protruding nicely into the pin locator hole. The picture shows the lever at an upwards angle – it should be level to clear the two bolt holes for fixing back on the platform when pushing the housing together. The cable dowel should be pressed into the right-hand locator to allow for any slight stretching.

Finally, pack the mechanism in a good layer of grease and rejoin the two halves. As it sits in the front of the engine bay makes sure it will cope with a medium to high range of temperatures. Here copper grease has been used. Finally, before refitting do attempt to spread a thin layer of grease on the outer surface of the metal section to prevent corrosion, or paint it before assembly if you are not pushed for time.



When the mechanism has been refitted, connect the cables back up in the junction box and try the lever. It should move smoothly, not feel spongy and return to a vertical position in the footwell.