



## Handbrake Adjustment All FWD models

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*Details kindly provided by Eddie Barnes*

### Overview

The 75 handbrake is completely separate from the foot operated rear disc brake except insofar as they share the same casting.

The handbrake is an internal expanding single leading shoe brake and is located immediately behind the wheel centre inside a drum which forms part of the brake disc. See picture – this is how the brake looks inside the drum! Its sole purpose when applied is to lock the wheel and should therefore never wear out nor need any further adjustment once it has been set properly.



Operation is by means of a cam which is turned by pulling on the brake lever in the car. The cam prises the shoes apart at one end until they are jammed up against the inside of the brake drum. The other end of the shoes pivot on two separate fulcrums and it is here where the adjustment is made.

The objective is to set the fulcrum end of the shoes so that they are just a fag papers thickness away from the drum when not in use such that a minimum amount of movement is required at the business end to apply the brake and render the vehicle immovable.

The fulcrums are held in place by a double ended bolt in the centre of which is a small wheel or capstan. Rotating this wheel either pushes apart or pulls together these fulcrums depending on which way it is turned and will therefore move the fixed ends of the shoes towards or away from the inside of the drum.

Setting the brake can be time consuming and fiddly but at least if you know what you are looking for and understand what you are trying to do it will make life a lot easier.

The official procedure refers to re - setting the cable in the car too but this does not always make any difference – the cables are far too stout to stretch even with the most determined of owners!

If you have fiddled with this in the past in an attempt to make the brake work then reset this so that there is no more than 25mm of thread showing. It is possible that if it is over adjusted the cam could be pulled over centre and the brake could lock on!

### The Procedure

You will need the following items before starting.

- Jack
- Wheelbrace or correct socket and bar
- Pair of sturdy axle stands
- A pencil torch
- A long bladed narrow screwdriver (for slot headed screws)
- An old towel, jumper, or similar on which to rest your head – assuming you don't have a ramp in the garage.

**UNDER NO ACCOUNT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WORKING ON YOUR CAR WITHOUT SUITABLE SUPPORT.**

**IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THE CORRECT LIFTING AND SUPPORTING GEAR THEN DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS PROCEDURE.**

- Uncrack all the rear wheel bolts whilst the wheels are still on the ground with the hand brake applied, then jack up the back of the car and mount on axle stands one at a time. Spin off the wheel bolts and remove the wheels
- Release the handbrake completely
- Lay the nearside wheel next to the hub and pop the towel or whatever on top of it
- Lie down next to the car feet towards the front and rest your head on the makeshift pillow  
Get yourself into a comfy position where you can peer into the hub
- The adjuster is mounted behind the hub casting at about one o'clock and can be seen through any one of the bolt holes. Ignore the Torx fastener as this does not need to come off. You are looking for a small wheel which is positioned between the top ends of the brake shoes. It can be turned by poking the narrow bladed screwdriver through the bolt hole and pushing on its perimeter. Only a tiny amount of movement can be made at a time. It also took me some time to spot it – you definitely need a pencil torch for this. Before making any adjustment, turn the disc and try to get some feel for the amount of drag from the calliper itself.
- Moving the adjuster under as opposed to over should push the shoes closer to the drum. Unfortunately, it is necessary to keep removing the screwdriver and disturbing the position of the drum to test if it has started to bind and it's this that makes it such a tedious business as you now have to go looking for it again!
- Eventually the small adjustments and getting used to the feel of it will have an effect and the drum will become reluctant to spin
- Next, wind back the adjuster by two positions and confirm that the drum isn't binding.
- If you want to be absolutely sure that all's well, take off the calliper lest it might be clouding your judgement!
- Repeat the procedure on the other side.

If you have had to make any amount of adjustment then you can probably assume that the brake requires adjustment.

- Get in the car and apply the handbrake several times to centralise the shoes. It should feel better already with a shorter pull
- Check that the drums are still free and then put the car back together reversing the procedure. Don't forget to nip up the wheel bolts once the car is back on the ground.

The handbrake should now be working fine

A good tip is to take the car for a drive for a few miles using the brakes as little as possible. If the drum is cold when you return this means the brakes are not binding.