

STORING YOUR MORGAN

by Lorne Goldman (NA 1984 Plus 8, UK 1990 Plus 8. NA 002 Plus 8), Robert Wright, Dan Ehrmann (NA 2000 Plus 8 & Jordan Court (UK 2006 Aero) This article will apply to earlier cars as well.

If you are reading this article then it is either that time of the year or you will be abandoning your baby for a period. You southerly types should restrain your smugness. A long annual down time allows for major maintenance and continuing restoration that makes a northern Morgan a great buy. In the immortal words of HFS himself.. "Always buy your used Morgan from a northern mechanic". (wry smile).

There are a number of factors that effect storage. The temperatures of the storage space, the ongoing access to the car, the air circulation and of course the length of the storage. As this article will try to address all storage situations, many of the steps may not apply as much as others, but none will hurt. Where a suggestion is *de rigueur*, I will place an asterix (*)

For the UK especially, the ideal storage space is a clean environment, with good air circulation, regular humidity at temperatures of 10-15C and easy access to permit weekly startups. Store your car indoors, and not on an earth floor, to prevent chassis rust. Cover your car to protect its finish from dust and pollutants in the air. There are number of car bags or car cocoons made that help but avoid any without a circulatory air pump feature.

WATCHPOINT: Extremely cold storage Has special problems. Leather can become brittle if pushed or kicked. Knobs can break off of radios. Windows snap out and break. Window glue no longer holds. If your car is stored during a period of these temperatures...DO NOT

1. YOUR MEMORY *

Always place a list of the things you did to store the car in a very prominent place. You will need it as a check list when you "un-store" your Morgan.

2. STABILIZE THE FUEL *

There are products on the market made specially for this (Fuel Stabilizers), but you could also just add double the amount of STP fuel treatment to the gas and run it for a few miles. This will work just as well as anything for a few months storage. Remember, if you have an EFI Morgan, you need to run it to get the mixture into the fuel injectors so they don't gum up during the storage period. The amount of petrol to put in depends on the storage space. If the space has good air circulation fill your tank to the top to prevent fuel tank condensation. If the storage space is badly ventilated, fill half the tank.

3. CHANGE THE OIL *

Change the oil and the oil filter. Old oil is contaminated with acids that result from combustion. It can eat away soft bearing surfaces if left in the engine. After changing the oil, crank the car with the ignition disconnected to allow the upper surfaces to become coated properly.

4. OILING THE CYLINDER SURFACES

This is an old racers trick. Remove the the spark plugs and put a teaspoon or two of a very light weight motor oil. **PUT BACK THE SPARK PLUGS.** Crank the engine with the ignition disconnected to allow the cylinder surfaces to be coated. This is better idea if you plan for a very long storage (more than 6 months) without a startup.

5. FLUSHING THE COOLANT SYSTEM

If you are among the more cautious, it is an idea to flush the cooling system. Or not, depending on whether you have an all-cast-iron engine or aluminum. If you've got iron, flush and replace with fresh fluid. If you are storing it for a longer period, drain the system completely including the engine block. In the case of aluminum Plus 8 engines, (and assuming you are using a coolant specially made for this motor), I would not empty the system unless you are dealing with an extremely long storage.

6. REMOVING THE RAD CAP *

Remove your radiator cap to prevent moisture buildup from being trapped in the system.

7. STARTING IT UP OR TURNING IT OVER *

I choose to NOT start my car every few weeks. It adds to the strain on the engine. However, you can turn its engine over with the distributor of plugs disconnected to avoid a set in the valve springs and keep the innards covered with oil.

8. FLUSHING THE BRAKE FLUID

It is a good idea to flush the brake system and replace it with new fluid. You don't want old, brown, moisture laden fluid sitting around for the winter. The moisture could cause corrosion, among other things.

9. DRIVE BELTS*

Give your drive belts some relief: If possible, slightly loosen the drive and/or accessory belts to take pressure from the pulley bearings.

10. THE BATTERY *

For both non-EFI and early EFI Morgans: Take your battery out and store it on a shelf, not on a concrete or dirt floor where it will slowly discharge due to moisture. A battery tender can be used to keep the battery charged.

For later EFI Morgans: Some ECUs in these cars have a default setting which the car will return to if the battery is disconnected. In the newer EFIs, certain elements of the programming have been altered for your Morgan and/or certain of your driving characteristics are stored in the ECU which will be lost if the battery is disconnected. In others, the radio settings will be lost. It is wiser to leave the battery connected and use either a battery warmer or a trickle charger to keep it fresh and functioning. JEGS makes an excellent trickle charger...(1 amp only!).

However, there are also risks to some cars in charging or jump starting with the battery connected.

WATCHPOINT: Some of today's charger systems [use a high amperage \(75amp\)](#) and/or higher voltage to speed a successful start. Specialty chargers can even use a [double charge](#) to get you started. [For example, the popular MAYPOLE or RHYAS or BOSCH chargers in the United Kingdom all come with 24 volt charging options in both home and professional versions.](#) These can play havoc with your ignition system (especially those installed in performance applications which have been switched to more reliable, but more sensitive ignition systems and add-ons). And though these often reduce the ignition system voltage with ballast

resistors, these cannot fully protect against a heightened charges. Illadvised charging can damage delicate components like photo optics. By way of example, **Mallory UNILITES**, the most popular distributor worldwide for pre-GEMS Plus 8s, *distributed by Rimmer Bros, Real Steel, RPI, V8 Developments and J.E. Engineering etc in the UK*, as well as **MSD addons**, should not be connected when battery charging under any circumstances. **Do not ignore manufacturer warnings. Read the small print.**

11. GREASING AND OILING*

Grease and oil all grease points, hinges, cables, etc and a touch of lubricating oil in the distributor if you have one. Change your differential oil and check and top up your transmission.

12. CLEANING, TREATING AND WAXING *

Hose out under the wheel wells to remove dirt that can hold moisture and cause rust. Wash the car and then wax it to protect the finish. Use a leather treatment (Connelly's Hide Food) on the leather and a vinyl treatment for the vinyl and plastic and a rubber oil for the rubber parts. **YOUR CAR MUST BE COMPLETELY DRY BEFORE YOU COVER IT UP.**

13. REMOVE YOUR TOPS *

Remove your tops and tonneau and store them in a warm dry place. They will shrink on the car and can rip at the seams.

14. THE TYRES & SUSPENSION *

Tyres can become "squared" during long storage and are then ruined. Of course, you can just jack the car and remove them. You can also add an extra 15 pounds of pressure. You can also drive them onto "car forms". However, if you are looking to relieve the pressure on the suspension and the suspension bearings the best idea is to simply jack the car and place it on 4 stands...tyres still on. This avoids the squaring problems and and takes the pressure off the suspension and shocks. To jack the car properly click [here](#).

15. THE TRANSMISSION *

For non-hydraulic clutch Morgans: Put a wood 2 X 4 block between the front seat and the clutch pedal to hold the clutch disk away from the flywheel so it won't stick. (Don't do this to a car equipped with a hydraulic clutch because it will pressurize the actuating system.)

16. DESSICANTS*

A good idea would be dessicants (moisture absorber) in the passenger compartment and perhaps the engine as well. California Car Cover sells Sta-Dri pouches. Alternatively, put a couple of ceramic dishes of baking soda on the floor of your car to absorb moisture and odors.

17 A LAST FAREWELL *****

Kiss the cowl just above the Morgan wings and pat the nearer wing a few times.

18. SEALING HER UP *

Put a plastic bag over the tailpipe and carb to keep the moisture, mice and rodents out. Cover the car with your choice of cover.

19 INSURANCE

Change your insurance over to fire and theft only, saving yourself some money during the storage period.

[Bringing Your Car Out of Storage](#)

Many thanks to all who contributed to this article. If you have any comments or suggestions or corrections please email the [Webmaster](#). Everything submitted will be appreciated and thoroughly researched.

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