

One of the unfortunate shortcomings inherent with a mid/rear engined car is the length of the throttle cable and its associated problems. When the car is regularly used the cables on the Europa normally last for a very long time but, when the car is used less often, condensation gathers in the cable casings and consequently promotes a build up of rust - result: a very sticky throttle (or clutch) operation.

In addition to this, Murphys' law dictates that if your cable is going to break, it's going to do so while you are dressed to the nines and on your way to an important function (or maybe a lustful party!) and also of course its raining again. Normally changing the throttle cable involves kneeling on the (wet) road, leaning into the passengers footwell and undoing the four or so self tapping screws that hold the cover over the throttle lever which also acts as the cable stop. Once this is done, it's carpet up and feed the new cable through into the engine compartment and from there up to the carburettor connectors. This task involves lying under the car, getting oily arms and really is best accomplished with the aid of an assistant and ramp. Being permanently poor and inherently lazy, I devised the following system and it has proved very successful over the last five or six years (now fifteen or so!). The basic setting up of the system takes about the same length of time as replacing an original cable but, once done the replacement can be carried out quickly, easily and cleanly by one person.

The items required for the conversion are: 1x MGB throttle cable complete (av. price £2); 1 x VW Beetle inner cable (this is usually sold as an inner and is around £2.40); 1 x length of heater hose; 1 x clip to suit; 2 x solderless nipples (obtainable from places like Halfords). (prices are 1986 so be aware!©)

1/. The throttle cover, inside the passenger compartment is discarded.

2/. The heater hose is positioned from the hole, just aft of the passenger seat, up and along the tunnel, to a point close to the throttle lever. The end should be attached to the tunnel using the clip in a position that enables full and even movement of the cable when attached to the lever.

3/. Find a large washer (or make up a plate) that will allow the MGB outer casing to sit in snugly whilst hard upon it's shoulder. The washer should be large enough and thick enough to spread the load and not buckle (you may also find it useful to glue the washer to the bodywork).

4/. Remove the MGB inner cable but retain the pivoting end. This end is attached to the throttle lever in the car. The cable (which has a threaded end similar to the standard Lotus item can then be attached to the carburettor bracket and fed through the engine bay to the washer position. You will find that the cable is an ideal length. From now on, the operation is the same as that to be performed if you ever need to change the cable again.

5/. Lubricate the MGB outer casing by dripping oil down from the carburettor area.

6/. Snip off the VW cable end and feed from the carbs down the MGB outer. The cable will appear at the throttle lever.

7/. Attach cable to the lever using the solderless nipple.

8/. Adjust carb end of cable to suitable position (fine adjustment can be carried out as normal using the nuts) and off you go! Obviously fine tuning can be performed later but at least you are going to be mobile. Replacement cost of the cable from here on in, will be around £2.40, compared to the usual £12. normally spent. Also, due to the short length of the MGB casing, which is easily lubricated, the 'sticky' problem should never occur again. Just by the bye, the 'hose' trick can be used for the clutch cable and can also be routed through the chassis, taking the speedo cable and oil pressure pipe from the dash to the engine bay - an otherwise painful task when replacing either of them! The conversion applies to Twin Cam and Special Europas but I am sure that it can be adapted for the Renault engined cars.

Pic applies to UK spec car

