

## Replacing front hub felt seals.

Currently available front hub felt seals are much thicker than the originals and may cause problems. This is an old chestnut but may be worth raising from time-to-time.



Current v original felt sea.

Current felt seal installed

Original felt seal installed.

It seems front hub felt seals are no longer available to the original thickness and those offered by suppliers nowadays are much thicker. Suppliers say there is no problem, “Been using them for years” they say. Well, I found the thicker seals would not allow me to set the bearings end float correctly so I disagree and offer this note.

When using new felt seals, the preferred way to set axle bearings end float is not to have the felt seal installed initially. This to avoid any compression of the seal influencing the bearing setting.

To set bearings end float:-

1. Offer the hub to the axle with bearings fitted but no felt seal.
2. Tighten the axle nut to correctly set the bearings end float.
3. Mark position of the axle nut (centre pop it).
4. Remove the hub.
5. Fit seal into hub, lubricate seal with oil or grease then re-assemble hub to axle.
6. Tighten axle nut to position previously marked and split pin to secure.

If the felt seal is of proper thickness (not too thick) when the axle nut is tightened to the set position the bearings end float will be regained and it will compress the seal just enough to give an effective seal.

If the felt seal is too thick it will compress solid (I found) before the axle nut can be tightened to the set position, ie. before the the inner bearing has abutted to the vertical link shoulder. Thus, the assembly becomes clamped between the felt seal and the outer

bearing to give false impression of bearing end float. There is then a temptation to back off the nut to allow the bearing freedom to run. Bad!

If original thickness felt seals cannot be obtained I suggest the new thicker seals be cut down to thickness size before fitting. I measure original felt seals to be 5mm thick.

Once again, we thank Alan for yet another very informative article.

Many thanks Mick