

Eddie Loader also sends this helpful information.

Those of us who still use original pre-war or early post war H/T coils will observe on close examination, that the coil top connections are clearly marked SW and CB either side of the h/t king lead take off. SW meaning feed from ignition switch and CB meaning, feed to distributor contact breaker.

So on first reflection, it's perfectly straightforward to wire up the coil in the correct configuration, as per the symbols on top of the H/T coil, but be very aware that Austin changed their cars' polarity from negative earth to positive earth from December 1935 onwards. This configuration remained until the post-war A35 ceased production in the late 1950's.

The reason for the change was to combat electrolytic corrosion in the car's bodywork and also on the battery terminals. Both of these theories were unfortunately not very successful.

So unless you can be very sure that your cars H/T coil is the original one fitted when the vehicle was manufactured there is going to be an element of doubt as to whether the coil is connected up correctly. It is very important to have the correct polarity because a coil will still work even if the polarity is reversed, but it will lose approximately 30% of its efficiency. So it is imperative to establish correct polarity, this can be done by a skilled auto electrician with the right equipment. But a combination of the two, is extremely hard to find.

If you would like to retain the earlier coil, there is a way to test for correct polarity.

This procedure was originally printed in that bible of curb side mechanics namely the Practical Motorist (August 1961 edition), a truly wonderful magazine for budding motor mechanics.

Procedure :

Step 1, run engine until normal operating temperature is reached.

Step 2, prepare a full length pencil with a sharpened point.

Step 3, using a well-insulated pair of pliers remove one of the plug leads a sufficient distance to effect a misfire (approximately 3/4 of an inch).

Step 4, now insert the pencil point into the gap between plug and detached lead, the engine misfire should now cease.

Step 5, closely observe the flame pattern around the pencil point, if the flame feathers and has a slight orange tint on the plug side of the pencil, coil polarity is correct .

If the flame pattern flares or feathers on the HT lead side of the pencil tip, the coil has been incorrectly wired, to correct this fault the HT coil low tension wire connections need to be reversed.

Lucas coil with the standardised marking system of SW and CB, this type of identity marking was used from the onset of coil ignition right up to first electronic systems in the 1970's.

Correct wiring instructions for a original type coil:

Do not consider the SW&CB wiring positions as correct until the coils polarity is established , see previous article for information.

Correct wiring instructions for coils with plus & minus markings:

First establish the battery polarity, this can be quickly checked by observing what side of the battery is connected to an earth point.

Then the correct connection to the distributor must match the earth polarity of the battery, for example if the cars electrical system is positive earthed then the wire to the distributor must be connected to the positive terminal on the H-T coil.

Correct wiring instructions for Bosch and other continental H-T coils which use a number system instead of plus and minus are:

Plus is equivalent to number 15

Minus is equivalent to number 1



And finally, here are the Bosch coil markings.

