

WIRE WHEELS

In the case of pre-war wire wheels there are certain things to be regularly checked. Like all wheels they can be damaged by violent bumps and contact with high kerbs, so periodically jack up the car and spin the wheels on the hubs to check for running out of true. At the same time check for loose and/or broken spokes. If found, the wheel should be sent to a specialist firm for repair. Well base rims (which all pre-war Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars have) are prone to fatigue cracks around the sharp corners of the rims and should be carefully examined from time to time.

For cars fitted with wheel discs it is a good idea to adopt the old chauffeurs trick of putting a small piece of oil soaked sponge inside the discs. This moves around with rotation of the wheel and keeps the wheel coated with a thin film of oil, thus avoiding rust and creaks from the spokes.

Check the splines for excessive wear. This applies particularly in the case of pre-war Bentleys with their much finer and more heavily loaded splines than on Rolls-Royce cars. They should also be kept well greased and the wheel nuts should be fully tightened. Once a spline becomes worn the wear will accelerate rapidly due to the constant reversal of drive between the wheel and the hub.

Wheel balance is important even if you do not drive fast. Good balance achieved by adjusting the three sets of lead and bakelite washers to give static wheel balance on a free running front hub helps to avoid the alarming front wheel tramp and shimmy to which all the pre-war cars with semi-elliptic springs are prone.

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