

Lash Adjuster Warning

It's easy to think 'she'll be right' and hope that the lifters will bleed down themselves. However, leaving it to chance can be an expensive mistake to make.

This information has been provided by Geoff Gillam, from All Head Services, Hallam, Victoria.

Warning

Avoid bent valves by bleeding the hydraulic lash adjusters before installation.

Concern

All Head Services have had numerous occasions where a customer has fitted a cylinder head that has bucket style hydraulic lash adjusters, only for them to call with an issue. The engine either fails to start due to lack of compression or even worse, the cylinder head having to be removed and sent back with bent valves!

Causes

Many engines, such as the Holden Astra X20XE and X18XE and the Nissan Patrol RD28, use bucket style hydraulic lifters. These lifters are not supplied with exchange cylinder heads and are generally swapped over from the original cylinder head by the technician prior to fitting the exchange head.

The lifters are usually still full of the original oil and as such become like a solid lifter and if not bled prior to fitting.

There is a significant chance that the lifters will hold the valves open resulting in no compression or worse still the valves being bent due to valve to piston interference. This results in an expensive rework, cost to the workshop and inconvenience to the customer.

Service Fix

The following simple steps show how to bleed the hydraulic lifters and ensure that this issue does not occur in your workshop.

Simply reusing hydraulic lash adjusters without bleeding can quickly cause bent valves.

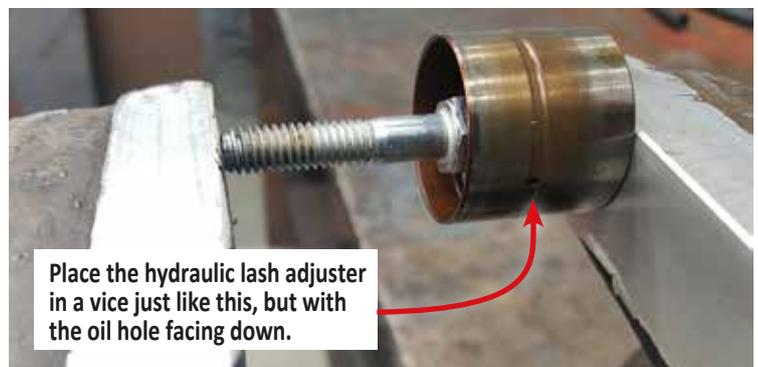
Filled with oil, a hydraulic lash adjuster can become virtually solid and prevent the plunger from moving under spring pressure.



Compress the plunger to expel oil and ensure it does not hydraulic lock.

Note: Each of the lifters must be bled the same way.

1. Set the lifter in a vice with soft jaws fitted and the oil hole facing down.
2. Use a socket extension or a suitable bolt to push on the lifter plunger.
3. Operate the vice to gently squeeze the lifter plunger in and out to remove any oil.



Place the hydraulic lash adjuster in a vice just like this, but with the oil hole facing down.

4. Continue to squeeze the plunger in and out until you can feel with your hand that there is approximately 2 to 3mm of movement under slight spring pressure.

While this procedure might seem a bit tedious, it's worthwhile to ensure that there are no issues with the lifters holding the valves open. 🛠️

We would like to thank Geoff, from All Head Services, for sharing this practical information and photos.