

OWNER'S NOTES

AIR CONDITIONING

The rotary dial for the air conditioning is very sensitive. If you so much as brush it suddenly the fan will be blowing. You can turn it off, you just jiggle it carefully around the off position (I found that it usually sits on off when it's rotated a little bit clockwise from dead center on off). I learned to keep away from it, but it's really easy to brush it when you're inserting the ignition key.

Continuing with the air conditioning. Right now it's disconnected. Not the belts and pulleys, just the wiring to the compressor. I'll attach a photo to this email. If you look at the compressor, which is on the left side, you will see a disconnected wire down just behind it. If you reconnect it it will engage again when you turn the switch on. I've never used the AC. The previous owner, who I found was very honest about everything, said that it blew very cold and was almost too effective. That said, I don't know how long it's been since it's been charged. But anyway, it's there, it has a history of working well, it's just been disconnected during my ownership.

COOLING FANS

From the factory, the two cooling fans mounted on the radiator come on in two situations. One is when the radiator temperature gets up to a trigger point. The other is when the air conditioning compressor is on. The whole thing is controlled by a temperature sensor and relay mounted on the front of the radiator at the upper right. The English seem to call it an otter switch. However, all the commentary is that that switch is notoriously unreliable, and became even more so when the whole air conditioning part of it got plumbed into the wiring on these later cars.

So this car currently has a workaround that the previous owner created and I've maintained, that's mentioned on a lot of the message boards. You disconnect the otter switch up by the radiator and you jump the circuit. That way, the two radiator-mounted cooling fans are always on. I will attach two pictures (below) showing how the leads are disconnected and then showing the jumper in place.

With this workaround, I have found that the temperature runs cool, barely getting above the N in the word normal on the temperature gauge. I felt much better just having the fans on and never having to worry about it. The previous owner had it set this way too. It also means that if you use the air conditioning the fans are automatically on anyhow, and you don't have to also worry about the relays covering the fans through the air conditioning circuit.

The caveat associated with that is that I do not know whether the otter switch on the radiator is working at this point. So, if you eliminated the jumper, and rewired it so that the otter switch was in use, I don't know if it trips the fans at a reasonable temperature. Again I never bothered to check because it was just easier to have the fans running.

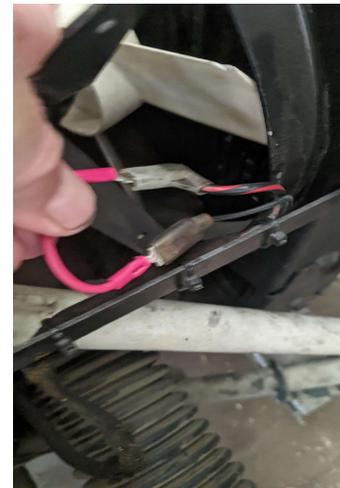
There's only one downside of the bypass. It's again common knowledge on the message boards that sometimes the number six fuse will blow when you initially start the engine. That fuse controls those fans and a couple of other things including brake lights and the tach. You can tell immediately if the fuse has blown because the tach won't work. It only happened to me once. You can also tell because when you turn on the ignition key with the engine off, the fans should come on, and you can hear it. If you turn the ignition key so that the electrics are on, before you engage the starter, and you don't hear the fans, that means again that the fuse has blown.

It's such an easy fix if the fuse does blow that it's no big deal. You unscrew the two set screws on the middle portion of the dash and fold down that middle portion, which exposes the fuses. The number 6 fuse is the second one down in the right-hand column. You just pop the old one out and the new one in.

They're 35 amp fuses and I have a spare set in the glove box just in case. But again, it only happened once.

On this car, there is also a high-capacity pusher cooling fan that is an aftermarket accessory, mounted in the nose, forward of the radiator. It's a manually controlled fan. If you look on the lower dash, to the left of the steering column, just about where the curved plastic panel ends above the footwell, you will see a tiny little metal toggle switch. That controls the pusher fan. I never really used it. I tried it early on, and I tried turning the factory fans off and the pusher on. I found the pusher did not do much at all on its own. In addition to the factory fans, it might generate more airflow to the radiator, but my view is that it's hard to add much to the efficiency of those two factory fans that pull air through the radiator very effectively.

The last point on this, there's also a somewhat translucent-looking green (or blue, I tend to confuse colors) toggle switch higher up on the dash, to the left of the steering wheel. That toggle switch, which was much nicer, used to govern that pusher fan. At some point, possibly because there was a problem with that wiring, the second little toggle got added. So that funky translucent green switch doesn't do anything at this point.



The red wire is the jumper that bypasses the otter switch. To reconnect the otter switch, just pull out that red wire and reconnect the two leads. I wouldn't do that, for the reasons described above. And I'd certainly test the otter switch to make sure the fans come on if I did decide to do it.

POWER STEERING

The power steering is disconnected, and the belt is removed from the pulley. It felt to me like kind of a travesty to have power steering on that car, it was the Americanization of the design, as they softened it to try to make it a luxury coupe. It doesn't need power steering. The previous owner had disconnected it for the same reason. Again, historically I believe it worked just fine. Neither he nor I wanted it, and it was easy to disconnect. Without it, it's just nice classic Jag steering.

THROTTLE

The throttle pedal is sensitive when engaging. I've been told that the linkages are so long and complicated that it's hard to get them working exactly right. It's very smooth everywhere except when you first press it down from "off". Both my mechanic and I instinctively wound up driving it without shoes. The footwell is so cramped anyway, and the throttle pedal is up on the transmission tunnel, so I found it either needs some of those glove-soft driving shoes or just no shoes at all. I am sure that a little fiddling with how the throttle linkage sits on the pedal at idle would fix the sensitivity, I just never got around to it.

BONNET

As with all E-Types, the bonnet is just a tad off. You can't see it, you only encounter it when you're closing it. It's biased a little bit to the left. So to close it most easily, lower it down onto the safety latch, and then close the driver's side first. To do that, press gently but firmly down from above on that edge, and concurrently, press it in from the side. That sideways pressure will guide it down into alignment with the body. Once you've latched that side, go to the passenger side, and give it a fairly firm little shove down. It'll snap into place on that side. If the latch still won't go all the way in and rotate, give it a slightly firmer shove down from above. It's just a matter of a fraction of a millimeter, but sometimes it needs that extra help.

The Jag expert here says yes, you can align them, but please leave it with him for a couple of weeks and expect a nice healthy bill for the work. He said this one was well within what he would view as reasonable tolerance limits.

RECENT WORK

I bought the car last December from a very nice guy here in Tucson who had had it for a decade. He had always wanted one. I think it was just enough for him to know that it was in his garage. He kept it meticulously and made a ton of notes on it. You will see his notations on the yellow-lined pages in the binder.

He told me he had driven it less than a thousand miles in the 10 years that he owned it. When I got it, it was beautiful, but it had a couple of deferred maintenance items. It had a driveline vibration, a pretty bad clunk when coming on and off the throttle, and it was not holding charge.

I pulled the alternator and had it rebuilt by a good shop here. The electrics are now strong. Then, I took it to my very good vintage mechanic here in town. He dropped the rear end, pulled the drive shaft, had it balanced dynamically, and replaced the u-joint bushings. That was transformative work. It's now smooth as glass and there is no clunking.

I called the owner who did all of the mechanical refurbishments, which happened now about 25 years ago. Sadly he had passed away, but his wife remembered the car. She said I was welcome to come up to the house and poke around and look for any photos or any other mementos if I'd like. She is in Grass Valley. She said her husband had a big shop there and had redone multiple e-types. She remembered the car and she said she believed that when he got it it had the same paintwork on it that it has now. She said he mainly did mechanical work in his shop.

If that's the case, then the less-satisfying little bit of bodywork that was done on the left side behind the door was done more than 30 years ago. That would kind of make sense because the cars were worth way less back then, and I guess it was probably more typical just to do a patch. Anyhow, it appears that the car won multiple awards, back under his ownership, with the body in the state that it currently is in. The records are in the binder.

The new wheels, which were bought by the guy who owned it from 2000 to 2010, I think look cool. They give it a much more muscular stance. They are also sort of correct. They are d-type replica mags from a place in California, the receipt is in the binder +\$800 per wheel).

So at this point, I don't think there are any deferred maintenance items. It is a really strong driver. It gets all kinds of compliments. I think the color suits it well. In my view, this is an exceptionally solid driver-quality car, capable of getting awards at local shows. It's not Concours, not one of those rotisserie cars. When I bought it from him, he said that he thought this was what was getting hard to find with e-types: driver-quality cars that were neither needing restoration nor over-restored. I think I agree with him.