

## *Ghibli Rocker-Type Dash Switches*

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Ghibli rocker-type dash-board switches are known for their problems. Switch malfunction stranded me with a full gas tank and a fuel pump that wouldn't work the first day I drove a Ghibli. Later, the headlights died at night on an interstate whilst returning from a Maserati meet. Both failures were due to dash switches and occurred before I learned to keep a wiring diagram and small jumper wires in the car. My wife was often impressed with how quickly I could "hot wire" or bypass a bad switch.

While picking up my last Ghibli, I nearly rewired the entire dash by flashlight during the ill-fated drive home. That saga provoked me to order all new switches as my Christmas present, but spring came, and no switches. I decided to rebuild my own and found that a to be a remarkably easy task.

After removing, testing and disassembling my rocker switches the problem was obvious. Many of the contacts were corroded and offered up to 5 ohms resistance when closed. More severe corrosion would cause no real contact. In high amperage locations, like the headlight switch, the current flow heats the switch interior components, eventually distorting or melting the nylon contact carrier. (My dead headlight switches suffered this fate.)

From these findings, I would recommend that all rocker switches on the dash of a Ghibli need to be rebuilt or replaced, and rebuilding is much cheaper. If you decide to rebuild, set aside a Saturday for the job. Mine took 3 hours for the lot. Buy: one replacement headlight switch, (the used one will provide a few parts for the other switches, but will likely have one bent contact carrier), a few #2-56 taps, assorted box of #2-56 bolts and nuts from Radio Shack (you need 10 bolts 1/2 inch long, 5 bolts 1/4inch long, plus extras that will never be found once dropped on the floor), a 1/8 "drill bit, ohmmeter, fine steel wool, and some 400 grit abrasive paper are also needed.

First remove the headlight switch carefully by gentle pressure from behind. Prying on the face will damage the chrome or crack the plastic under the chrome. Label wires carefully using any easy fool-proof method. Replace with the new headlight switch and first learn the reassembly on the used one. Your Ghibli remains driveable should you run into difficulties. Drill the head off the hollow rivet that secures the rocker and withdraw the rivet without damaging it. Tap the end of the rivet that was drilled away with a 2-56 thread at least 1/4 inch deep, very carefully. These are small, delicate taps and break easily, I broke 2, so practice a little and do this slowly. Drill off the now exposed

heads of the 2 remaining rivets. Carefully pop the switch apart, memorizing the positions of the springs on the inside. There are three different configurations. Inspect for damaged parts.

Clean the contacts with the abrasive paper. I used steel wool gripped in needle nose pliers to clean the contacts inside the switch housing. The tiny corroded points of actual contact were obvious once I looked very closely.

Assembly is tricky. I was tempted to make up a jig but found that with some luck that wasn't necessary. Assemble the contact carriers, and springs and slider and then carefully move the slider to the midpoint where the contacts lean against each other, and the slider is balanced. It takes a few tries to achieve this. Insert this carefully into the switch housing, and then in one smooth motion, spread the contacts with a screwdriver from the back end of the housing and press them into the housing. Do not let go. Carefully place the face over the switch and use the 1/2 inch 2-56 bolts and nuts to reassemble. Clean the rocker, and install *it*, re-using the rivet and fastening it in place with a 1/4 inch bolt at the drilled off end. Test with ohmmeter. Once mastered, it takes about 15 minutes per switch, the first somewhat longer. I also installed a headlight relay and a high blower relay to reduce the load on these 2 overloaded switches which showed signs of excessive heat.

If you run into problems with this method, I will happily discuss them with you.

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