

STEVE WINTERS QUESTION & ANSWERS FOR ALL THINGS BOXSTER

If you have a technical question please do not hesitate to contact Steve at steve@jazweb.co.uk where he is always happy to give his expert advice.

QUESTION

Hi Steve

I'm after a bit of technical advice and wonder if you can help?

I have a 2003 Boxster S and recently the 'check' light came on for the oxygen sensors. I took it to my local indy who look after my cars and they changed the pre cat sensor. After approx 100 miles the light came on again, so I took it back and they replaced the post cat sensor. A few days later, the light came on again! There are no leaks to the system apparently, so could it be the cat that needs replacing? The car runs perfectly.

ANSWER

We have had similar issues but normally with Cat ageing problems,so basically the cat loses its efficiency. An ECU remap can be done for you which normally costs around £80 plus vat, easy to try that first, then if it still comes on oxygen sensor adapters can be made that raise the position of the sensor to fool the ECU, **MUCH** cheaper than a new Cat.

QUESTION

If the Cat isn't performing, but you raise the position of the sensors to fool the ECU will the car still pass an MOT OK?

ANSWER

Yes it will still pass the mot but if you have cat ageing it is only a temporary fix. The big problem is new cats are £1168 each for a 2000 m/y Boxster 986 and so will we see cars being scrapped for the sake of a cat ageing problem? Such a shame.

QUESTION

I am a Porsche Club member and am enjoying a Porsche Boxster experience for over 3 years now. Initially a 2.7 6spd and now a 3.4S, both 2007 models. My current Boxster (3.4S), does however use oil, at the rate of about 0.5litres per 500miles. The engine has completed 65k miles and there were no identified issues via an inspection report (which I had organised, as I was buying the car from a general car dealer) when I collected the car in December. I have been into the local specialist near where I work and the first thought was to try an oil change, just to make sure viscosity etc was ok. However, I continue to burn oil at the same rate. Before I go back, to try something else do you have any thoughts/suggestions?

ANSWER

Firstly what spec oil did you have fitted? I suspect it will be 0w/40 but we would maybe go for a 5w/ 40 considering it's mileage. Also I would check the air/oil separator. This controls the oil breathing system and when they give problems oil can get into the intake manifold and thus burn through the engine. It may only be a little so not enough for you to see while driving. So if your worried then try the different viscosity oil.

QUESTION

I have just bought a 2006 Boxster S 3.4. The car only has one key and I would like to have 2. I have been quoted £120+Vat (1 hour) labour + £150-200 for a new key. Do you have any alternative suggestions for where I might get a key?

ANSWER

A new remote handset can be sourced for £80-£120 depending on model year. If you require a metal key blade as well then there are two options. Firstly you can buy an emergency key blade to lock for circa £40.00 +vat, or if you want a full key blade that fits into the new handset the cost is circa £99 +vat. To program the handset usually costs circa £40.00+vat

QUESTION

My car is a 2001 986 S which has covered 75,000 miles. When I bought the car four years ago, the clutch pedal was firmer than it should be and I have now been advised that it would be prudent to replace this before it lets me down. Given that this involves removing the engine, would it be prudent to replace the RMS and IMS at the same time. I know many advise on replacing the IMS as a precaution, but notably some companies do not. And what of the flywheel and whether this too should be replaced?

ANSWER

One of the most common causes for a heavy clutch pedal is a broken power spring. Otherwise it will need a new clutch but we would check that first of course. We would only remove the gearbox and exhaust to replace the clutch. I do agree with the point about the IMS bearing upgrade. We monitor them by checking for glitter in the oil filters when we service them. We have never had an IMS failure on a Boxster but plenty on a 996, Maybe it's because the engine being the other way round it runs cooler perhaps. We would check the free play on the flywheel once it's apart and we can of course replace the IMS bearing support housing and seal if it's leaking.

QUESTION

I am a PCGB member and hope you can help. I am interested in purchasing a Boxster/Cayman or 911 as a daily driver doing around 8000 miles per year. My budget is £35k or less. My wife has a 981 2.7 PDK Boxster with 20 inch wheels and standard chassis (not PASM) and I like everything about the car except the ride quality which I find a bit fidgety and a little too firm. Your opinion regarding the following questions would help me narrow my search.

ANSWER

Porsche has never compromised it's sporting heritage so all models will feel firm when compared to other makes of cars. They pride themselves on sharp turn in and precise handling so hence why it may feel fidgety. Have you ever had the wheel alignment checked?

QUESTION

Would a similar 981 Boxster with 18 or 19 inch wheels give a much better/more settled ride?

ANSWER

I have a 987 Boxster running on 18 inch wheels and it does feel lovely but please bear in mind that whilst the 981 Generation may have bigger wheels they also have a larger tyre profile than a 987.

QUESTION

With everything else being the same, does PASM on normal setting offer a smoother ride compared to the standard chassis?

ANSWER

Set to normal I am sure it will be a smoother ride than a standard chassis and maybe a little too soft in my honest opinion.

QUESTION

Does the 981 ride better than a 987?

ANSWER

That's a hard one and really is down to personal preference as they are different cars with a totally different set up. The 981 does ride the bumps better but personally I prefer the overall feel of the 987 because I feel more connected to the car.

QUESTION

How would the ride compare between a 981 Cayman and a 981 Boxster with same standard chassis and same size wheels?

ANSWER

The ride will generally feel the same under normal speeds and conditions but I feel that the Cayman is more positive and sharper overall. Even though the 981 Boxster doesn't suffer from scuttle shake or body flex the Cayman still has the tighter ride in my opinion.

QUESTION

Where would a 997 Carrera (not S) on 18 inch wheels fit into the above in terms of ride comfort? Does PASM help in this instance?

ANSWER

The 997 Carrera (non S) is the most softest ride with standard wheels. The PASM does help as you then have the choice of soft or stiff when it suits you. A friend of mine has a standard 997 that he uses for commuting and he loves it as he finds it easy to drive and it's not harsh. Again I think it comes down to personal preference.

QUESTION

Apart from ride quality, would you advise Gen 2/PDK over Gen 1/Tiptronic for more trouble free motoring?

ANSWER

In our experience Gen 1 cars can give some trouble but not every Gen 1 that comes into our garage has a problem. We do see an awful lot just for servicing. We have recently started to get news of early Gen 2 997's suffering from carbonised inlet valves which is causing misfiring but to date we haven't had any major engine faults come to light. My last piece of advice is to either go for the newest car that you can afford or alternatively go for an older model such as a 993 for example if you are considering an appreciating asset!