



SAVVA Technical Tip 175 - Oil Filters

Many owners of early cars express concern about the lack of an engine oil filter. This concern is quite legitimate as early oils settled the gunk to the bottom of the sump to be drained out at the next oil change – usually at every 1000 miles. Modern oils suspend the gunk and the filter removes it – if you have a filter that is. The concern is – what if you don't have a filter – the junk just keeps circulating wearing out the engine components prematurely.

In the early 30's through to the 50's many cars, especially the posh ones, had simple disposable "by-pass" oil filters fitted. Obviously, they weren't as effective as modern full flow filters but were better than nothing. Unfortunately, nowadays even these replacement by-pass filters are very difficult to find. However, depending on your engine, there is an alternative filter one can use which will give you a bit of peace of mind knowing that the oil will pass through it every few minutes.

If your engine is an OHV and has an oil line that travels externally from the bottom of the engine up to the cylinder head where it feeds the rocker arm and tappets, one can tap into this line and fit a by-pass filter. Attached is a picture of such a fitment on a typical G.M. engine. These filters take the modern "screw on" disposable oil filter.

An ideal filter body would be the one used on Valiants. It was external and fitted on top of the engine having two flexible oil lines to the engine. The question is – what happened to all the Valiants? I'm sure there are numerous other cars using a similar arrangement that we can use.

Years ago, Doep du Plessis from Vrede, a top restorer, fitted full flow filters to his side valve Chrysler engines by drilling into the block near the oil pump. The oil was pumped out, through a filter, and back into the block. - I don't know the details but it can be done.

This picture is of a typical GM engine conversion using the housing from a diesel engine that was purchased at a flea market for a few Rand.



• Apply film of oil to gasket.
• Screw on firmly by hand.
• Start engine.
• Check for leaks.
• Do not exceed recommended
change intervals.

OIL FILTER

OUT

MINI

BERNARD