

work it is possibly the sender or the fact that only one of the tanks located under the seats is filling up. Fuel smells in the car will indicate that the seal at the top of the tank where fuel lines and senders are located has become broken. These can be resealed. There is an engine bay fan that is fused on the same circuit as the cigarette lighter. This fan is controlled by a solenoid above the heat shield over the exhaust manifold, and it should work once the car has been run and has then stopped. The fan is there to prevent engine bay high temperatures and heat soak. If it does not work it could be a fuse or the solenoid or a burnt out fan motor.

Oil leaks from the rocker cover mean that a new gasket should be fitted or the cover has worked loose. Oil breather leaks will sometimes deposit oil over the engine so look for signs of damaged hoses. These cars are best not run on synthetics, the best oils are 10/40's or 20/50's for longevity unless the car has had a proper rebuild. Oil leaks from the oil drain plug indicate that a new washer was not fitted last time an oil change was carried out. Oil leaks from the drive shaft oil seals are common, this is usually because a car has been standing and corrosion has occurred on the drive shafts, pitting them, which allows oil to escape between the seal and pitted areas. Another cause for fail is the overfilling the box this effectively causes the oil to be pumped out of the seals. New seals alone will not stop the problem and attention is needed to the drive shaft ends. Syncro mesh problems in the gearbox is an expensive affair, but a linkage adjustment between the lever and the box is not and is easily fixed.

The heart of the car is of course the turbocharged 1397cc engine, bullet proof if looked after. Check for worn valve guides and any ominous rattles which is normally poor tappet adjustment, worn timing chain, or a sign that the car is on its last legs. Whilst in the engine compartment it is worth checking on the manifold, this will normally have been repaired due to cracks forming in the welded joints. Good quality repairs must be made for maximum efficiency of the turbo unit. If possible try to assess if the turbo oil seals are on the way out. Get a friend to drive behind the car to see if any oil smoke or discharge is coming from the back of the car. Excessive oil consumption, this can be achieved by looking in the bottom hose of the intercooler for oil pools, too much oil in there will tell you a seal is on its way out. If left you will blow the turbo and cause more damage potentially.

Worn turbo seals will destroy an engine, beware! The condition of all hoses is important, especially the oil lines and water pipe flexible-hoses. The intercooler hoses if not in good order will allow leaks into the system and poor idling and general running, check for cracks or perishing.

Air often gets into the water cooling system, this can easily be bled via a valve on the top hose in the engine bay, with the engine running and the water top up bottle held sealed and as high as possible. "Another Achilles" heel is the main electrical supply that runs to the starter and alternator, this cable runs along the chassis rail and

gets cooked by the exhaust manifold, which can lead to shorting the chassis and a dead earth. This could boil up the battery or cause other loom damage. The heat from the exhaust also dries out the starter solenoid and this "piggy back" solenoid then has to be replaced. A couple of final problems that occur commonly are, the throttle pedal comes loose from its mooring in the foot-well, the rear hatch piston sometimes fails and engine mounts do wear so they sometimes need replacement.

Now it is worth remembering that the youngest cars are at least 13 years old so if you are buying a car and it is worth re - building most of the mechanical components, just due to their age apart from anything else. Re - building is also

becoming more difficult due to parts supplies starting to dry up and this will only get worst with the passage of time. Re - manufacturing of components is another option, if enough owners get together this can be done cheaply.

Now I hope I have not put you off buying one of these immensely enjoyable cars, most have been cared for over the years and I am painting a picture of the worst scenario. It is true that there are still some "sheds" out there still and I would advise you to get the best possible professional support when going to look at a car. Not just a mechanic but someone who knows there way around the car. If you buy a cheap car it will cost you dearly in the end, unless you are intending a full nut and bolt rebuild.

