

MGW T-56 Shifter In Review

By Tony Sorrentino

All aftermarket shifters are about the same or are they? While many have had to settle for amplified transmission noise from their shifters, MGW has come away with a shifter so unique and "whisper quiet" that you won't believe it. MGW's Mustang accessory history goes much further back than just shifters, as they make quality driven precision products priced competitively.

If you are going to make products for the US government, then you better have it right the first time. MGW's reputation is known for paying extreme attention to details. They have produced a shifter so unique that it is basically "custom fitted" to your needs.

Follow along as we give you the installation instructions and illustrations. Let me add that MGW provides the best set of detailed instructions with their shifters. They also had everything organized in individual plastic bags and a "check off" sheet to make sure everything was included in the box.



(It's all there, as MGW provides everything you need to install their shifter with the exception of a few common hand tools. Two different kit handles are optional and can be obtained for an additional cost.)

We first started the project with collecting all of our tools. You will need the following tools:

- Razor blade
- Socket wrench
- 8mm, 10mm, and 13mm sockets
- Socket extension
- RTV silicone sealer
- Spanner wrench (in the kit)
- 3/32 Allen wrench head (in the kit)
- 3/16 Allen wrench head (in the kit)

Once you have all of your tools ready to go, you can begin by making sure the car is on level ground, the emergency brake is pulled up, and the transmission is in neutral. You will first want to remove the stock shifter knob. To remove the old stock 6-speed shifter knob, simply twist it counterclockwise till it comes off.



(Stock 6-speed shifter)

Next you take off the console shifter cover plate. Simply reach under the top panel from the inside and pull gently up till the tabs unlock from the console.



(Arrow pointing toward console tabs)

Next you will remove the lighter socket wire assembly so you can remove the plastic cover plate completely. Just depress the tab on the wire connector and they will come apart.

One thing that looked sort of neat about these supercharged beasts was the markings on the inside of the console. They basically told the assembly line workers that this console was for a Cobra.



(Take a close look and you will see the words "SN 95 CNSL Cobra Coupe".)

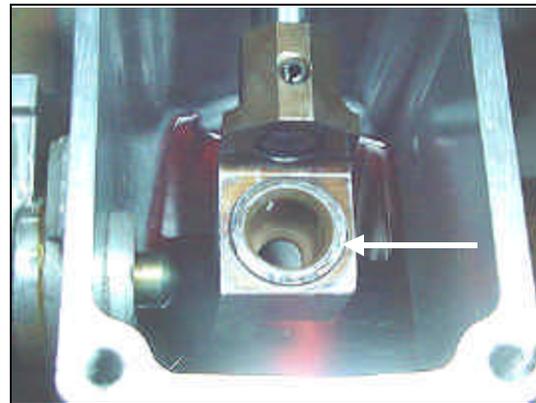
Once the console cover plate is off, you will then need to remove the stock shifter handle using the 10mm socket wrench. You can also take off the rubber boot and cover plate from the body of the car. You will need a 8mm socket to remove the four bolts.



(This is what you will see when you remove the four dust cover plate bolts.)

Take the shifter dust cover off (optional) and remove the four 13 mm bolts that hold the shifter down in place. Once you have all of

the bolts removed the shifter will come loose freely. If your shifter doesn't come loose right away, then you will want to move the lever from side to side and not straight up and down to free it up. Be careful not to damage any of the components by forcing the shifter. Simply install the shift knob back on and use it for leverage to free the shifter from the transmission by using the side-by-side movement.

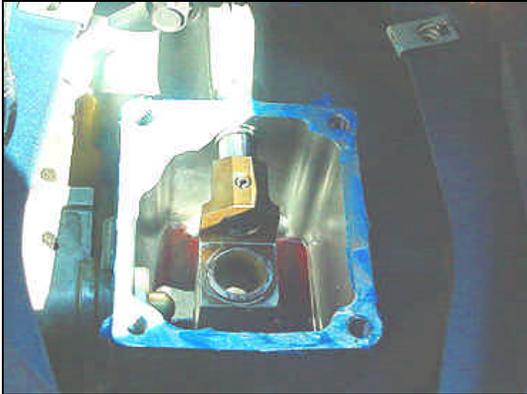


(Make sure the bushing is in the control rod.)

Once you take the shifter out, make sure that the plastic bushing is down in the control rod and not on the end of the shifter. In my 2004 Cobra, the bushing seemed to be a permanent fixture in the rod.

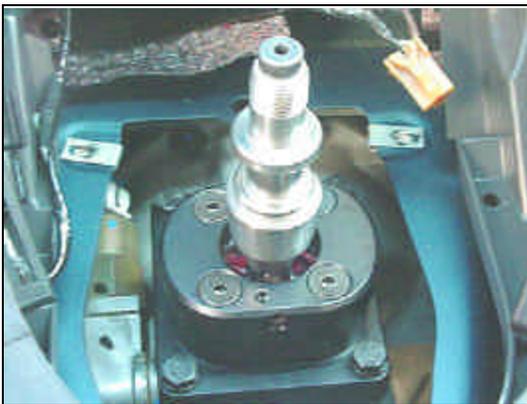
Using the razor blade, you will need to scrap any gasket material or sealer that is left on the shifter-mounting surface. Next comes the RTV sealer by Permatex. You will want to use Permatex to give your transmission a good seal, free from leaks. Make sure the adhesive is high temp sealer.

Note: MGW supplies a gasket to use in case you do not have high temperature sealer but it is strongly recommended to use the sealer if possible. The sealer can be purchased at any automotive parts store like Autozone or Advanced Auto.



(Blue sealer was used to reattach the new MGW shifter to the transmission.)

Now you are ready to put the new shifter on the transmission. Be sure that the MGW logo is closest to the engine when installing the shifter.



(MGW shifter installed without shift handle on it.)

Be sure to tighten the bolts supplied by MGW to the shifter but do not over tighten them as they are going in an aluminum housing and you could possibly strip the threads out of the housing and then you would be in big trouble.

Once the shifter is bolted in place, you will need to follow the directions supplied by MGW on how to set the "shift stop" screws. You will need to use the Allen wrenches they supplied with the installation kit.



(I installed the factory dust cover back on the MGW shifter. The directions omitted this step, as it is not necessary.)

Next comes the shifter handle, which is attached by screwing down a spanner nut and lock-washer with a Spanner wrench.



(MGW lock washer and lock nut)

Make sure you use the following sequence for securing the handle to the shifter. Lock-washer goes first, then the handle of your choice, and finally tightened with the spanner nut. Make sure that the setscrews are not sticking out of the bottom of the nut when tightening it up to the shifter.



(You will need to use this special tool called a Spanner wrench to tighten the shifter's locking nut)



(This is what the final assembly looks like before the rubber boot and shifter knob are reinstalled.)

Use the reverse procedure to put your rubber boot, dust cover, and shifter handle back on the shifter.



(Be sure to order one of those cool MGW shifter knobs when you purchase your new shifter)

So how did the new shifter fare? I found that the MGW shifter allowed me to find third and reverse gears much more easily. Many times I would go into first gear instead of third when downshifting. This has become a thing of the past. It was also so quiet that it was like no other aftermarket shifter. You would expect transmission noise from an aftermarket shifter, but not this one. I believe it has truly earned the reputation as being "whisper quiet".

Fore more information about MGW you can go to:

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