

Auto Ideas

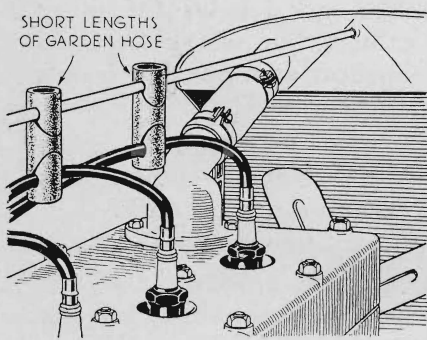
*Time-Saving Suggestions
For Car Owners Made by
Our Experienced Readers*



How a storage battery wired to a key can be used to thaw the ice in a car-door lock

WHEN an ice-filled lock makes it impossible for you to open the doors on your car, try the simple hook-up shown in the illustration at the left. Borrow a storage battery and several pieces of heavy wire from your neighborhood garage. Attach one wire to the key and insert it in the lock, and ground the other wire to some metal part. Then, after making certain of good connections, momentarily touch the other ends of the wires to the battery terminals. The short circuit will generate enough heat in the key to melt the ice and allow the lock to be turned. If no auxiliary battery is available, current can be tapped from the unit in the car by connecting the key wire to the battery-circuit terminal on the starter motor.—J. C.

Ignition-Wire Clips Made from Garden Hose

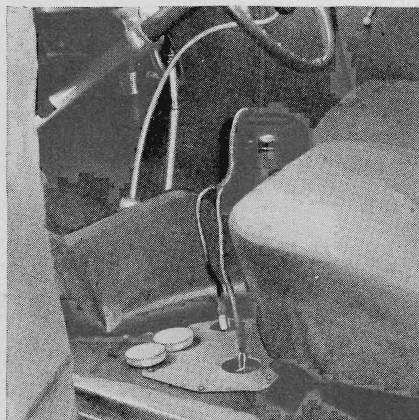


The clips hold the wires up out of the way

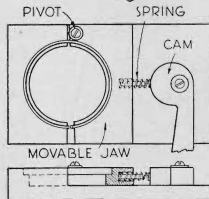
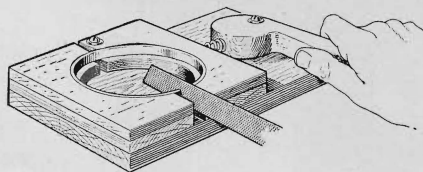
HANDY clips for holding spark-plug wires up out of the way can be made from three-inch sections cut from an old garden hose. As shown at the left, they are provided with two pairs of slits and holes—one to fit over the radiator brace rod, the other over the wire. If the holes are made smaller than the diameters of the spark-plug wires and rod, the slits will provide enough tension to grip the parts firmly and prevent slipping. Being made of rubber, the clips are nonconducting, will not rattle, and can be slipped on or off quickly. If you wet your knife, it will be easy to cut the rubber.—A. H. B.

Holes In Battery Cover Simplify Recharging

IF YOUR car is equipped with heater, windshield defroster, and radio, and you find it necessary to charge the battery periodically, you will find that connection holes cut in the battery-box cover will save time. The charger then can be placed nearby on the floor and the battery charged without removing it from the car. Use large rubber stoppers to cover the holes.—R. T.



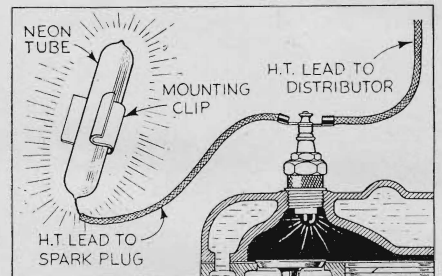
Small storage-battery charger in use in car



Details of the piston-ring fixture, and how it is used. Cut from plywood on a band saw, it can be assembled with glue and screws

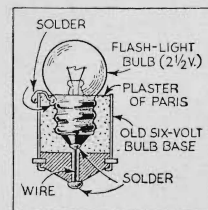
Jig Holds Piston Rings for Accurate Filing

MUCH of my success in installing new piston rings in my car, I lay to a simple fixture that I designed to hold the rings while the ends were filed. It consists of two semicircular jaws, a base, and a cam lever. When a ring is placed in the jig, the file is inserted between the ends and the cam turned until just the right spring tension is provided. By trial, the tension can be adjusted to correspond with the amount of metal to be removed by the filing operation.—E. C. H.



Dashboard Indicator Reveals Stalled Motor

A NOVEL dashboard indicator that will show at a glance whether or not your motor has stalled during a traffic stop can be made from an ordinary spark-plug tester. Obtain a pencil-type tester and remove the tiny neon tube from its center. Mount the bulb behind a small window cut in the dashboard and connect its single wire to one of the spark plugs, insulating it carefully. Each time that particular plug fires, the neon tube will flash. Besides serving as an engine indicator, the "flasher" also can be used as a revolution counter.—C. V.



Small Bulbs Save Battery

BY MAKING a slight alteration in your car's wiring, you can use your parking lights for long periods without putting too much of a drain on your battery. The change consists of installing an auxiliary tail light and fitting it as well as your parking lights with two and one-half-volt flash-light bulbs instead of the usual six-volt lamps. Simply provide the bulbs with standard bayonet bases, as shown, and place a 150-ohm resistance in the parking-light circuit to reduce the battery voltage.—P. R. T.