

How NOT to change the gear box oil in an MX-

■ Words & photos: Ross McKinnon

It all started with what I thought was a simple request to change the gear box oil in my 2004 SE.

I am new to MX-5 ownership, having recently bought an NB. It seemed sensible to change the diff and gear box fluids as the service records did not state when they were last renewed.

The diff was easy. However, I could not raise the car high enough at home to access the box, so I took the car to my trusty garage, who have done many jobs for me in the past and have provided excellent service.

"Your car will be ready tomorrow," they said ... would have been the same day except they had to buy a new oxygen sensor. "Wonderful," I thought.

Thus began a saga that was to last nearly four weeks.

Let me explain. Nick, real name, rang me a day or so later to tell me there was a little problem. "Oh." I said, "please explain ..."

Well, they had the car on the hoist, and Nick and his apprentice had commenced the job. Part-way through Nick was called to reception, and in his absence the apprentice had removed what he thought was the filler plug on the driver's side of the box.

For expert MX-5 owners, who know, this is a large-headed pin that holds a cross-shaft/counter-lever from dropping into the bottom of the gear box, which would prevent selection of fifth and reverse gears. »



MX-5 fire extinguishers

■ Words & photos: Peter Ferguson

Does your MX5 have a fire extinguisher?

If not, it's a good idea to protect your car in case, some time, the worst should happen – or to someone else's car and you want to be able to help.

(Of course, if you do fit one, you will have just carried out all the preparation work you need for the car to go in a khanacross! *So what's stopping you?*)

So where to fit one? ... there isn't much room in an MX-5.

The Club sells excellent brackets on the website Merchandise section, and they are only \$25.00 plus postage:

- » **NA/NB brackets:** (<https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-na-nb/37287>)
- » **NC brackets:** <https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-nc/37265>

(There is an ND one coming also.)

A fire extinguisher can be bought for \$25-\$30 from lots of auto accessory shops.

The brackets the Club sells tuck neatly under the passenger's legs, directly in front of their seat (see photos). I have had them in both my cars for a couple of years and not once have they ever gotten in the way of the passenger.

Fitting is a breeze: the plates come with slots that are slipped between the seat and the floor after the front seat bolts are loosened (do not need to be removed). You MAY need to just ease the ends of the plates with a *knockometer* to bend them slightly to fit, depending on how thick your carpet is. Then simply tighten the bolts back down to clamp it in place.

You'll also need to drill holes suitable to mount the extinguisher to the plate – do this before fitting to the car. **Again, this is an easy job that most should handle with ease.** ■



NA bracket position - under seat rail



NA: easy clearance under passenger's legs



NC bracket position



NC extinguisher position