



From the Garage -

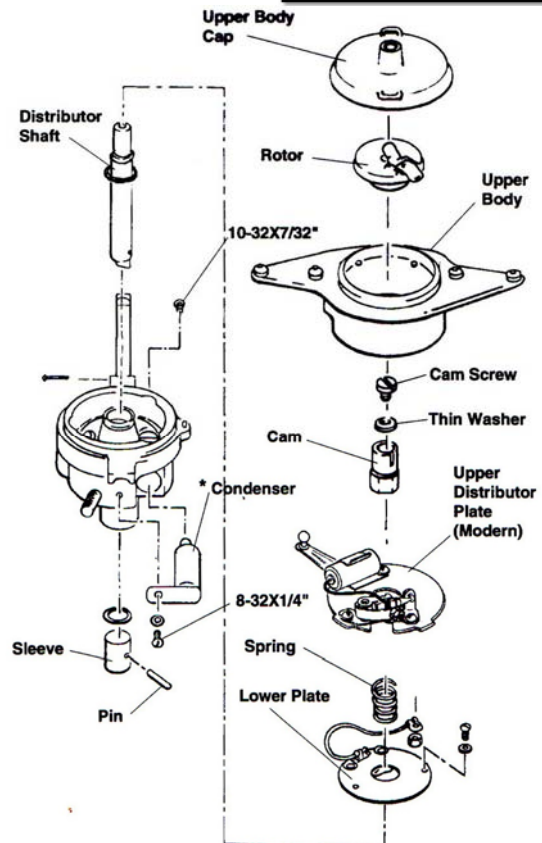
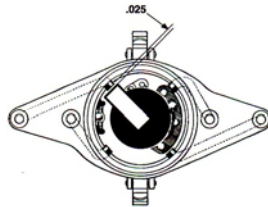
by Paul Hunter -



Distributors - by Lloyd Kerr



1. Be sure there is no play sideways or up and down in the upper shaft that the cam screws to. If there is, re-bush and ream to fit a new upper shaft and use a thin steel washer at the top and a thin fiber washer at the bottom. Eliminate all play..
2. Have good clean points that mate evenly. Original or modern are both acceptable: however, I prefer the original points.
3. Use a good cam.
4. Set the points at .018". The book says 18 to 22, but 018" is the best setting. New points wear down at the rubbing block requiring readjustment. As the points close up, you lose power and the engine runs rough.
5. Be sure rotor fits snug on the cam. If it is loose, put a small tab of electrical tape on the inside as necessary or purchase a new rotor.
6. Do the same thing to the upper body: use a small strip of tape on the distributor where the upper body fits, or purchase a new upper body. Make it tight, no play anywhere.
7. Now with the distributor off the car and in a vice, take the upper body cap off and rotate the rotor to each metal electrode in the upper body and measure the gap. I have seen some that touched on # 1 and had .080" or .090" gap at #3. Start at the widest gap, remove the bug, put the metal tab and plastic in the end of a vise with gentle pressure at the rivet and bend the metal tab up a little. This makes it longer. By trial and error, make that gap .025".



8. Now rotate to the next electrode. It will be too close or even touch. Take the upper body off and file that electrode until you get the same .025". Then do the same to the next two electrodes. This produces an even voltage for all spark plugs and an even burn of gasoline at combustion.
9. Set the gap on all four spark plugs at .045". The book says .035" but the A will idle better at .045". The car will even run at .075 but the larger the plug gap the harder the coil must work and will beat up. Try .045": you will like the idle. Keep everything at these settings and you will be surprised at how well your Model A runs. One last tip: any engine will run without a condenser. It won't run if the condenser is *bad and shorted out*. So, in an emergency, if you are all alone in the middle of nowhere and your condenser goes bad and you have no spare parts, take the condenser out and get home. The points will burn badly but the engine will run for 30 or 40 miles. Now you know what the condenser does; it cushions the spark between the points and keeps them from burning up. Many part suppliers sell burnout proof condensers to solve this problem.

Build a distributor as described above, and carry a spare distributor with a rotor-upper body-upper cap, all set up and timed to your engine.

I have checked my distributor as per the above and found that the rotor was exactly as above, way way too much gap, so with care, I bent the metal electrode until the gap was at about .025". We have the National Rally next year, so with winter coming on, now is the time to rebuild that spare distributor. My thanks to Arizona Model A Fords Club for the article in their latest newsletter (originally published in the Milepost, newsletter of the Model A Touring Club) - Editor