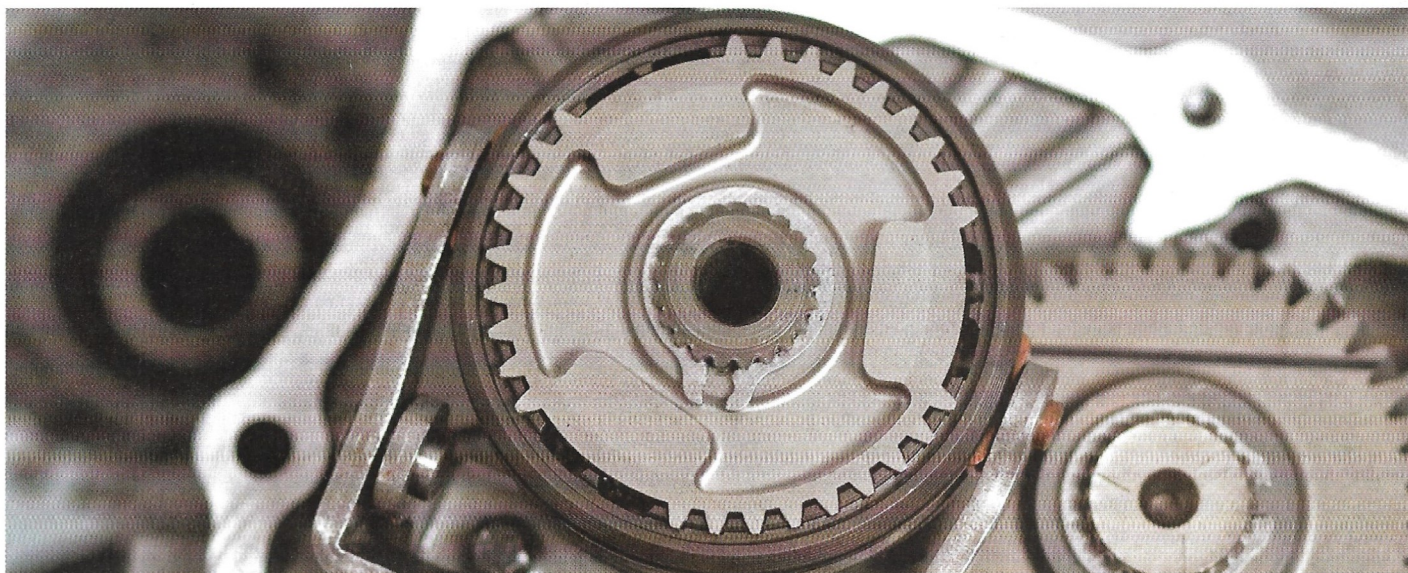


# AUTOMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE

The clutch and transmission system is being adapted as vehicles evolve. All the latest on technology and methods



**F**or garages looking ahead on the transmission front, automatic is the way to go, according to Colin Cottrell, Marketing Director at LKQ Euro Car Parts observed: "Since 2020, SMMT figures have shown that automatic vehicles have been routinely outselling vehicles with a manual gearbox."

He continued: "As EV adoption increases, this trend is only accelerating. Not only are automatic vehicles easier to drive, but they offer a smoother ride than manual alternatives and perform better in stop-start traffic. However, this efficiency boost means that any issues with a vehicle's transmission are more immediately noticeable, and can have a real impact on the driving experience."

On what issues to look out for when working on an automatic, Colin observed: "With an increasing number of drivers making the leap to automatic, it's important that both technicians and their customers are aware of the telltale signs of a transmission issue. These include hesitation, slipping, or trembling sensations during gear changes, as well as a grinding noise from the gearbox. In extreme cases, vehicles may begin to emit a burning smell, which usually points to gear fluid failure."

"Checking gear oil and fluid is an important first step in any transmission service, and technicians must also make sure to explain to their customers why it needs changing when it's due. Resolved transmission problems are something customers will really feel the benefit of, so

even just taking small steps such as this can go a long way towards driving customer satisfaction and encouraging repeat custom.

"It's key that technicians can provide the most suitable fluid type for each vehicle. It's hard to understate the importance of staying on top of fluid usage in automatic vehicles. Failing to change the fluid with the right product risks causing damage to the vehicle.

"LKQ Euro Car Parts offers the OEM-approved MPM gear and engine oil ranges, which cover more than 99% of automatic transmissions and manual gearboxes. We also offer all of the specialist equipment required to work with automatic vehicles. This includes the ATF Machine CAT501S, from Launch."

## Modular

Meanwhile, UniClutch, a new clutch offering from Australian manufacturer Clutch Industries, recently launched in the United Kingdom, with two products, UniClutch and UniClutch Sport. These are being made exclusively available via Alliance Automotive Group (AAG).

Julian Patane, Product Manager at Clutch Industries, said: "The patented UniClutch system revolutionises installation, doing away with the need for flywheel machining, thanks to the innovative integrated flywheel friction surface and pioneering Flexi Fit system that enables the system to be modular and offer a swift, bolt-on installation. At the heart of UniClutch lies its modular dual-core

technology, which substantially amplifies torque capacity while preserving drivability. What sets it apart is its adaptable design and integrated flywheel friction surface, tailored to fit a wide array of vehicles, thereby streamlining inventory management, and drastically reducing installation time."

Julian added: "Furthermore, it presents an ideal solution for enthusiasts seeking to make their cherished vehicles a daily driver, as it boasts an impressive torque capacity without the usual performance clutch trade-offs in terms of drivability."

For more information, visit: [www.uniclutch.com](http://www.uniclutch.com)

## Demand

Remanufactured components are growing in popularity in this area, as Ivor Searle Commercial Director David Eszenyi observed: "Demand for remanufactured gearboxes has been consistently strong throughout 2023. Factors such as the impact of inflation on consumers and businesses and the lack of incentives for private buyers to switch to EVs has resulted in manual cars and light vans being kept on the road for longer, increasing the chances of component failure as these vehicles continue to age."

David continued: "Ivor Searle quality remanufactured gearboxes cost around 40% less than a brand-new OEM transmission. This helps to reduce the replacement cost for customers and provides garages with a competitive edge. Although it is more economical to source a remanufactured transmission, quality needs to be considered when choosing a supplier. Remanufactured gearboxes also offer a more sustainable solution compared to purchasing a brand new OEM unit, as significantly less energy and materials are used in the remanufacturing process."

He added: "Ivor Searle's range of remanufactured manual gearboxes for cars and LCVs covers over 90% of the UK's vehicle parc. All Ivor Searle gearboxes are covered by 12-months unlimited mileage parts and labour warranty and are supplied with pre-installation guidelines. Comprehensive stocks are held to minimise vehicle downtime and provide free next day UK mainland delivery on stock items ordered before 3.30pm."

For more information, visit: [www.ivorsearle.co.uk](http://www.ivorsearle.co.uk)

## Development

The increasing complexity of the car parc, with vehicles released in multiple configurations means it is more important than ever to have access to the right parts. Dayco National Sales Manager Steve Carolan observed: "The auxiliary drive systems used in both heavy duty and automotive applications have changed considerably over the last 25 years, so whereas previously engines might have used more than one belt that only had three or four pulleys or components to drive, the belts used in current systems can drive as many as 10.

"This has been made easier with the development of ethylene-propylene-diene-monomers, or EPDM belts, which are far more flexible and durable than the previous generation neoprene rubber-based belt. The EPDM formulated belt also wears very differently, so during use, where these earlier belts would gradually perish by cracking or chunking - when a section of belt actually comes off - the current EPDM belt generally wears gradually."

As Steve explained, there is no difference between the Poly-V auxiliary belts Dayco supplies for OE fitment, and

those it produces for the aftermarket: "When it comes to the construction, the quality is not limited only to the internal structure, but also the external properties, for example the fabric on the back surface of the Poly-V belt for the PRINCE BMW PSA engine used in models such as Mini, BMW's 1-3 series, Citroën's C3 and C4 and Peugeot's 208-3008, against which the friction wheel runs.

"Dayco's Poly-V range consists of seven types, including 1,500 individual belts, and all are vehicle specific and manufactured in accordance with the specifications of the OE belt, which means technicians can be sure they are fitting the right belt for each and every application. By applying this strategy, the independent repair sector can have complete confidence in the replacement belt it fits, which affords motorists complete peace of mind when it comes to the auxiliary drive performance of their vehicle."

For more information, visit:

[www.daycoaftermarket.com](http://www.daycoaftermarket.com)

## Solutions

Looking to the future, with the electrification ongoing in the car parc, transmission systems are set to change dramatically. With range anxiety a big issue for drivers, one of the goals is to reduce parasitic power drain that can reduce range, and help drivers. Schaeffler taking a hard look at what can be done here, as CEO Automotive Technologies Matthias Zink observed: "Schaeffler is developing solutions to combat range anxiety. Our smart technical solutions and wide range of components and systems for fully electrified powertrains improve the day-to-day practicality of electric vehicles by reducing power consumption and increasing range."

He continued: "A key way of boosting electric vehicle range is to reduce frictional losses. A set of highly efficient transmission bearings from Schaeffler can significantly reduce friction, saving about 50 watts of energy compared to conventional solutions- which translates directly into extra range. Just as importantly, Schaeffler's EV transmission bearings are specially adapted for the high rotational speeds of electric-drive transmission input shafts and are designed to accommodate the optimal load."

Mattias added: "Schaeffler is developing a portfolio of high-tech solutions, ranging from versatile, multi-application components to highly integrated thermal management systems, and 4-in-1 E-Axles that combine the motor, transmission, power electronics and thermal management in a single, optimised unit."

## Remanufactured gearboxes from Ivor Searle

Ivor Searle says its range of remanufactured manual gearboxes for cars and LCVs covers over 90% of the UK's vehicle parc. All Ivor Searle gearboxes are covered by 12-months unlimited mileage parts and labour warranty and are supplied with pre-installation guidelines, as well as model-specific instructions if required. Ivor Searle holds comprehensive stocks, with free next-day UK mainland delivery is also provided for stock items ordered before 3.30pm.

[www.ivorsearle.co.uk](http://www.ivorsearle.co.uk)

