

Bulletin ServiceLink



SERVICE TIPS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL TECHNICIAN

Bulletin SL6-92

INSPECTION OF COMPRESSION LOADED BALL JOINTS

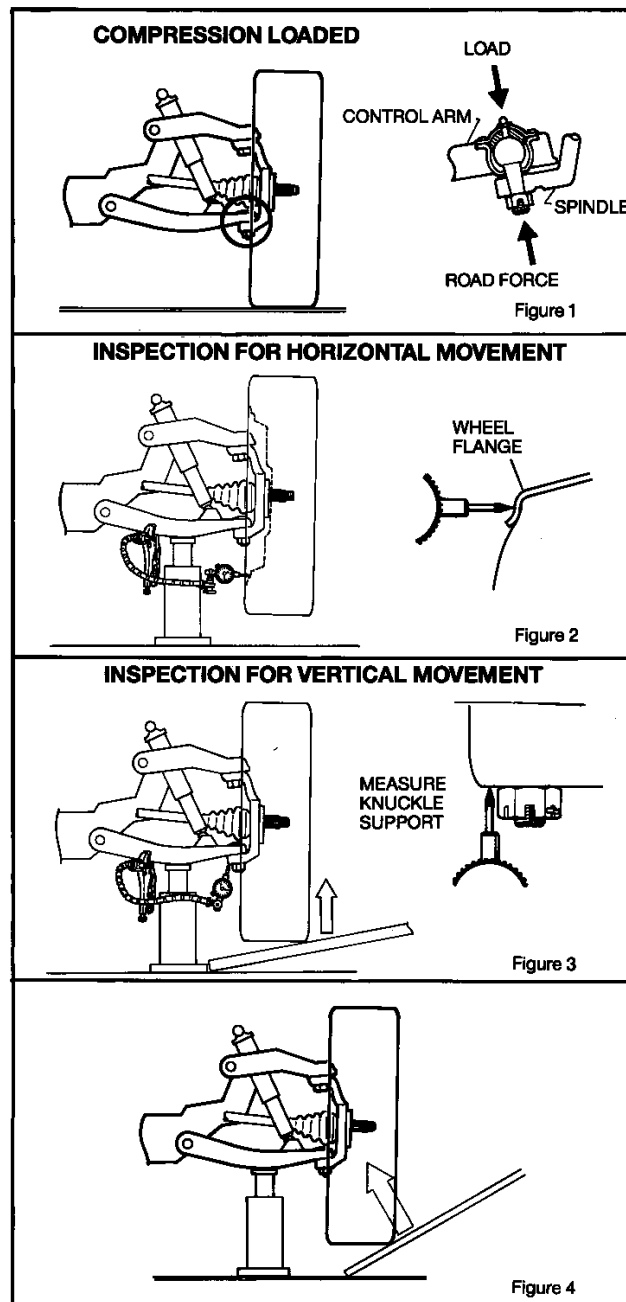
The accepted industry practice for checking compression loaded ball joints is to unload the system. This is to eliminate spring force from affecting the part being inspected.

Pry bar the joint as shown (Fig. 3) to get an indication of movement, if any. Measure the amount of movement with a *dial indicator tool* and compare to the specification.

NOTE: PRY BAR PRESSURE NEED NOT BE EXCESSIVE.

CAUTION: Pry bar pressure is often exerted in an "up and in" fashion (Fig. 4). A visual observation of movement may be misleading due to the angle of movement induced by the pry bar. Using one's hand to feel movement at the opposite end of the tire may also be misleading due to tire deflection, wheel bearings, upper balljoint and distance from the pivot being inspected. Always measure and compare readings to the specification. Compression ball joints are often assumed to have excessive looseness because of the inaccuracies associated with these methods.

(over)



Ball joint specifications are based on the original equipment manufacturer's determination of allowable movement or looseness.

Specifications for load carrying ball joints other than wear indicators are usually expressed in thousandths of an inch. Movement within the OEM specification is deemed acceptable unless there is a problem, like tire wear, clearly attributable to this movement.

