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WHAT'S IN YOUR BOOT?

The objective is to design a kit of those bits and pieces that, in 90% of breakdowns, will get you back on your way without need of recourse to the fourth emergency service. Obviously, neither you nor I can cater for the terminal or near-terminal mishap. I know chaps who keep such things as hub pullers and spare half-shafts in their boot, not to mention a hefty trolley jack. Well, if yours is a Roadster with the removable hood and irons, where's the partner going to put her pretty clothes for the evening, her make-up kit, rollers and all that stuff? Where indeed! This is about what you need to keep you rolling.

So here goes. I'm assuming you have the basics the car came with, like a wire wheel hammer, if appropriate. I've divided my list into six sections:

- **Spares** (*these are largely electrical. Did you know that the great majority of breakdowns are ignition-related or caused by electrical faults?*)
- **Tools**
- **Dry Consumables**
- **Liquid Consumables**
- **Literature**
- **Body Care** (*yours, not the car's*)

Spares

Fuel pump (*bench test it periodically using a spare battery*)

Cooling system hoses – full set, including a decent length of heater hose

Length of braided petrol pipe

Fan belt

Distributor cap

Contact set

Condenser

Rotor arm

Sparking plugs (*two will do – it's very rare they all break down at once*)

HT cable (*at least enough to replace the coil lead and the longest plug lead*)

Length of LT cable (*lots of it: I recommend lengths of two different resistances, so you can fix both high and low current carrying circuits*)

Electrical connectors – a small selection

Fuses (*the B's fuse box has spaces for a couple of these, so see these are in place and shove a couple more 35/17amp ones in your kit*)

Bulbs (*full set, with at least two flasher bulbs*)

Flasher unit

Wiper blade

Head gasket set (*keep it under the seat*)

Tools

Tool roll. I know you have one, but make sure it's really comprehensive, and don't forget to include a hammer and a hacksaw for emergencies

Socket set (*really top quality, and possibly a dual one, because you're bound to come across a rounded nut or bolt head that you can get a metric socket onto where the proper imperial size won't touch it*)

Jack (bottle type – works well anywhere and take up less space. Include a short length of hardwood to spread the load where necessary)

Multimeter

Circuit tester (*one of those with an alligator clip at one end and a sharp point at the other, with an integral bulb*)

Battery booster cables (*think about leaving these out, as other cars likely to provide the assist have their battery in the wrong place and the cables won't reach!*)

Length of wood – say 12" x 1" square that you can use for (a) listening for the source of funny engine noises and (b) placing on top of something that needs smacking with a hammer that it would be unwise to wallop directly with any sort of blunt instrument

Consumables (dry)

Jubilee clip selection

Fixings (a good selection of screws, bolts, nuts and washers. I always keep each bolt ready for use with a plain and spring washer and nut threaded on)

Split pins

S U carburettor seal and washer selection

Roll of strong wire (*for holding things together that can't be mended at the roadside*)

Insulating tape

Duct tape

Emery paper

Consumables (liquid)

A litre of your favourite engine oil

Penetrating oil (*e.g. WD40 or similar*)

Brake fluid

Araldite (*I once stuck most of another bloke's TD together with this stuff*)

Tube of silicone RTV

Literature (*this goes under the other seat!*)

Workshop manual

Parts book

Body Care

Barrier cream – small tub. Or latex gloves

Hand cleanser – small tub.

Loo paper (*you never know*)

And don't forget to stuff some old rags in odd corners. Apart from the obvious use, they stop things rattling.

Look, I know what you're saying. Where's the partner going to put.....?
But I promise you the above bits will fit into a couple of biscuit tins plus two
or three of those nice tins that presentation whisky bottles come in, and
there'll still be room for the flat things, tool kit, socket set and the jack.

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