

Installing a Flyin' Miata Flywheel

by Chris J. Poglitsch

This review brought to you by Coleman space heaters, Eddie Bauer thermal underwear, and great friends like Melissa Forbes and Chuck Wills, for without these things, I'd still be freezin' my frazzle off with no one to co-misserate with! Happy Motoring!

I recently put in a new OEM clutch and Flyin' Miata Fidanza 9lb flywheel in my Miata. There are plenty of articles on miata.net on how to do this. Here are some important notes that the articles didn't talk about:

- 1. MOST IMPORTANT. No one on the net told me the 4 wires on top of the transmission, even when unplugged, might get caught up. As I was bench-pressing the transmission off the engine and onto the ground, I broke two of these, and it slowed me down making an extension harness for it. *Que Peligro mis Amigos!***
- 2. Off the ground.** If you're doing this in your garage, sans lift and power tools, put the car far enough off the ground so that you can roll around underneath. For me this was about 25".
- 3. 2 Liter bottles.** Get an empty, put the cap back on, it's now a headrest for when you're on your back, looking at a bell housing and wondering what possessed you to do this in the first place. This trick will save neck muscle strain.
- 4. Rust Eater.** Ask for it by name. I took my entire exhaust system off. I understand one need not remove the header, but I did so anyway, If these bolts are rusted to beat the band, buy a can of Rust Eater; it'll make your world a much happier place.
- 5. Liquid Wrench.** See above.
- 6. Light.** I own one halogen 500 watt, and borrowed another from Chuck. This is an absolute necessity, don't work in the dark.
- 7. Heat.** Don't be miserable, the job is tough enough by hand. Borrow/rent/buy portable heaters if your space isn't heated. It's easier to attract help if you tell them it's a heated garage.
- 8. Latex exam gloves,** They're worth the price. No one wants to shake or kiss hands that have grease and oil on them. Keeps your finger nails clean. No one wants to get handed an open can of beer when you just popped the top with a grimy fingernail.
- 9. Cursing** Fortunately Melissa didn't mind it, and was actually amused by the manner in which I used it. A good example of us in my 10' X 20' garage would be "This !@#% Bolt, Son of a !@#^\$ the !@#%^\$ thing won't come off. *Uh, pardon me my dear, would you be so kind as to pass me the driver and 17mm socket? Thank you.* Now you, you son of a bastages Mother, I'll get you, you !@#%^\$". Point is, if you have it in you to cuss, don't invite your pastor to help you with this job.

I work on my car because I dig it. I'm a DIY tinkerer kind of guy, who takes serious pride and joy in knowing that if the car breaks, I broke it. It makes me feel capable and I get the bragging rights. Sometimes, when I work on my car, it is by the Grace of God and some luck that I don't foul things up pretty good. On this particular job, I worked on it at my leisure; I did it after work when I felt like it, and on the weekends, when I felt like it. It took me 5 weeks to finish this job.

On the other hand, AIM, nestled in gasoline alley, has a lift. They have 2 lifts. Your car will be done in I'm guessing three days **at the max**. I have a second car, if you don't have a second car, it's worth it to pay someone to do this for you.

How does it feel? The engine feels freer, the car accelerates much quicker, and with the blower on it, it's gonna go like a scolded dog out the back door. For me there have been no downsides. The car idles as if the flywheel were stock, I have not stalled it even once, and heel-toe downshifting has been even easier than it was before. I highly recommend this mod. Pricey, but well worth it.

Dear Mr. Gates!

Steve and Cathy Asay read of Chuck's struggles with his computer (February Open Road) and sent this photo and message:

Sir,
This is a M-I-A-T-A.
Eat your heart out!

The picture was taken in the Smokeys on a three day weekend. They took off with the sun shining and top down. Three days and 1,350 miles later they returned home with the top still down. ZOOM-ZOOM!!

