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VW Type A-4 Timing Belt Replacement Procedure

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Introduction

Finally the procedure we have all been waiting for: the "A4 Timing Belt Procedure", including the automatic and manual transmission differences. Some people have argued till they are blue in the face that "mark and pray" was the easiest way to change one of these belt, and it has been proven that this belt can be changed in under 2 hours using the full factory method as demonstrated here in this thread. The procedure utilizes all the factory tools and processes. The reason for going to the extreme of utilizing all the tools is the elimination of all possibilities of making a \$2500.00+ mistake and destroying the head. You do not need many tools to complete this job. What you do need is a thorough understanding of the procedure and what you are about to accomplish.

When changing a timing belt, you are doing more than just replacing an old belt. What you are doing, whether performing a 40K on the auto or 60K on a manual, is inspecting the entire engine area that has been covered up since the engine was new or since the last belt change. The second most important thing this procedure accomplishes is it totally resets ALL timing settings on the engine and restores them back to factory new settings.

While on the topic of timing, we need to understand that there are three types of timing involved here:

1. The first and most overlooked type of timing is the cam and crank timing. This keeps the cam spinning in perfect time allowing the engine to produce great low-end power as well as allowing the engine to rev to it's full redline of 5100 rpm.
2. The second type of timing is "basic" injection timing. I concocted the word "basic" timing because it is used to initially set and assure that the engine will start. This is accomplished by inserting the injection pump lock pin: positioning the pump shaft in relation to cam and crank timing in such a way that injection will occur within the ignition window.
3. Once the cam & crank timing have been set and the Injection pump is positioned, you will need to adjust the injection timing utilizing the Vag-Com[®]. (www.ross-tech.com) If you do not have this, then get it before attempting to perform this procedure.

This leads me to my next point: tools. Everybody wants to know where to get them and how much they cost. The simple fact is they are not cheap, but neither is your engine. I use the factory tools that I got from www.zelenda.com. They sell all the tools you need for the job and they are the same tools the factory used to assemble your beloved engine so again it's your engine and your money.

dribiwire



1.3

Notes







1.4

Notes

Stuff some paper towels into the intake to prevent "Murphy's Law" from kicking in. This prevents you from dropping that flying spring clamp into an intake duct!! (been there, done that, got the T-shirt)

2.1

Notes



Remove connector.



2.4

Notes



Cap off the end of the tube.

2.6

Notes



2.10

Notes



Note paper towels stuffed into the intake to prevent "Murphy's Law" from kicking in. This keeps you from dropping that flying spring clamp into an intake duct!!



2.11

Notes



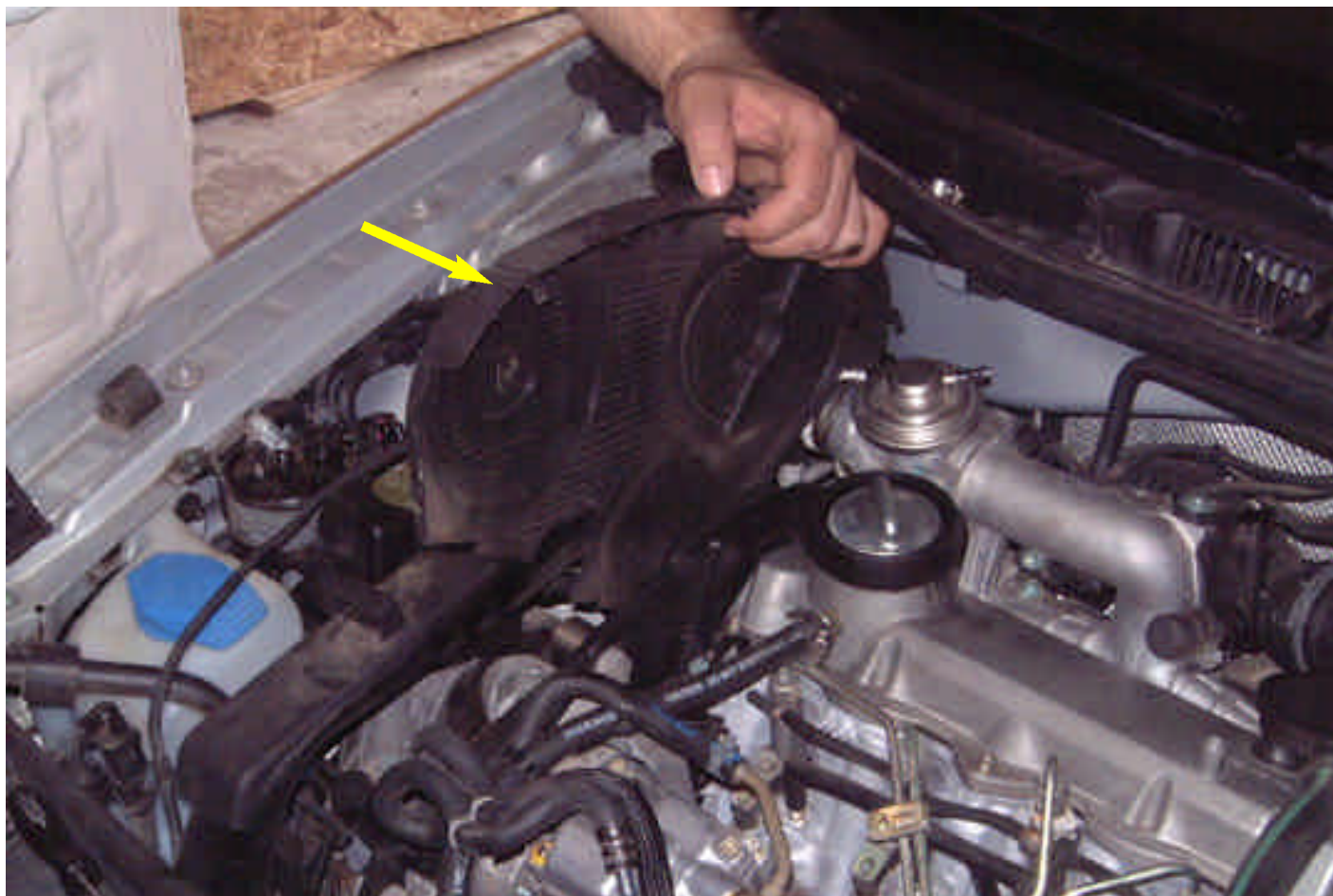
Raise up the power steering reservoir and pull the coolant reservoir hose under and to the front of the car.



Timing belt cover

3.1

Notes

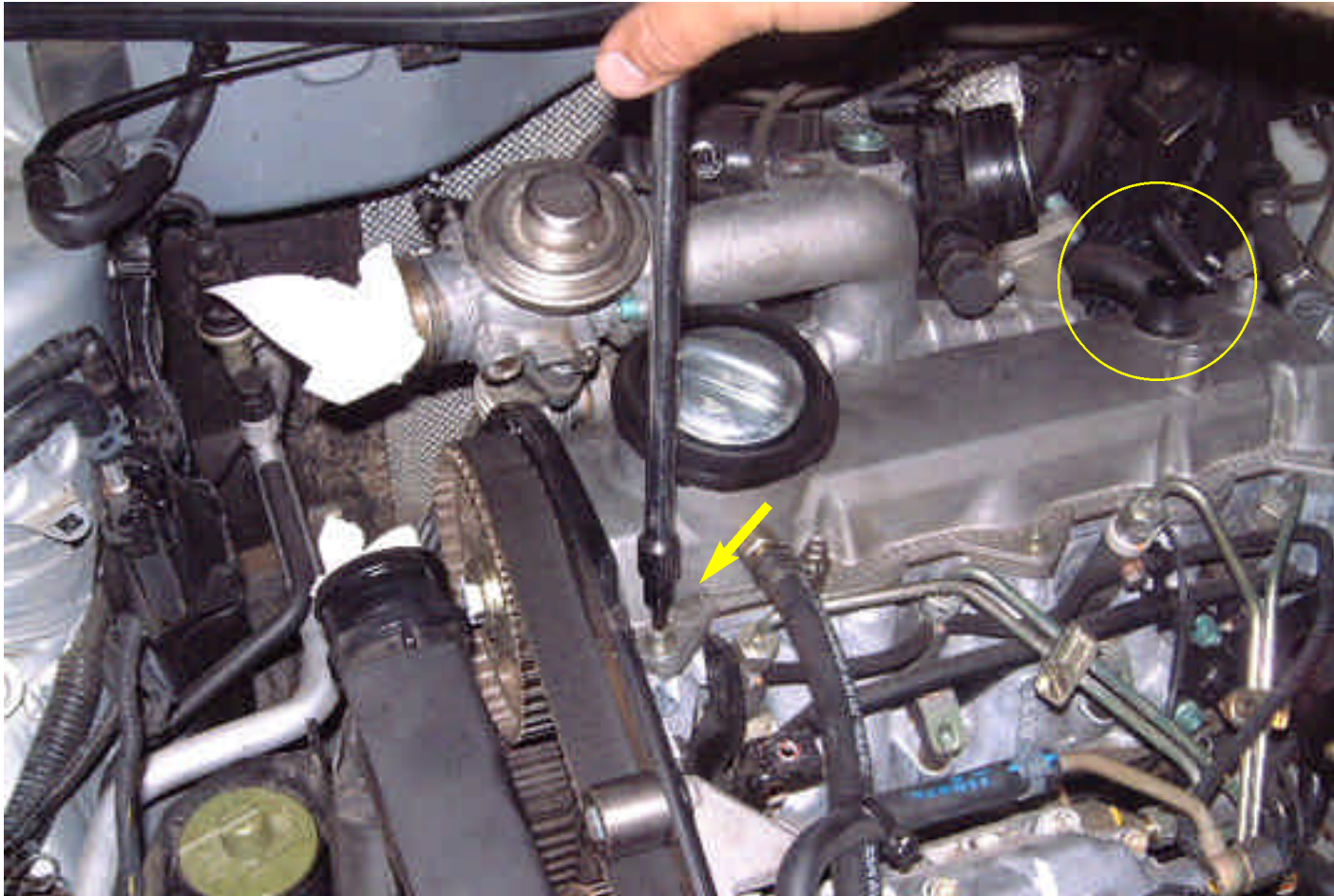


Remove the upper timing belt cover and the flex line coming from the air filter going to the engine.
I strongly suggest stuffing some paper towel in both holes to prevent you from dropping something into the turbo inlet.

Valve cover

3.2

Notes



Using a 5mm 3/8" drive allen socket, remove all the front and driver side rear allen bolts except for the two by the oil filler cap. For those use the special cut-off 1/4" drive socket that you made to remove them. Believe me when I say this, I have tried **EVERY** possible way to do this and I have stripped out a few heads in the process and this by far is the only true easy way to do it. Also disconnect hose to the valve cover, plug and and secure it.

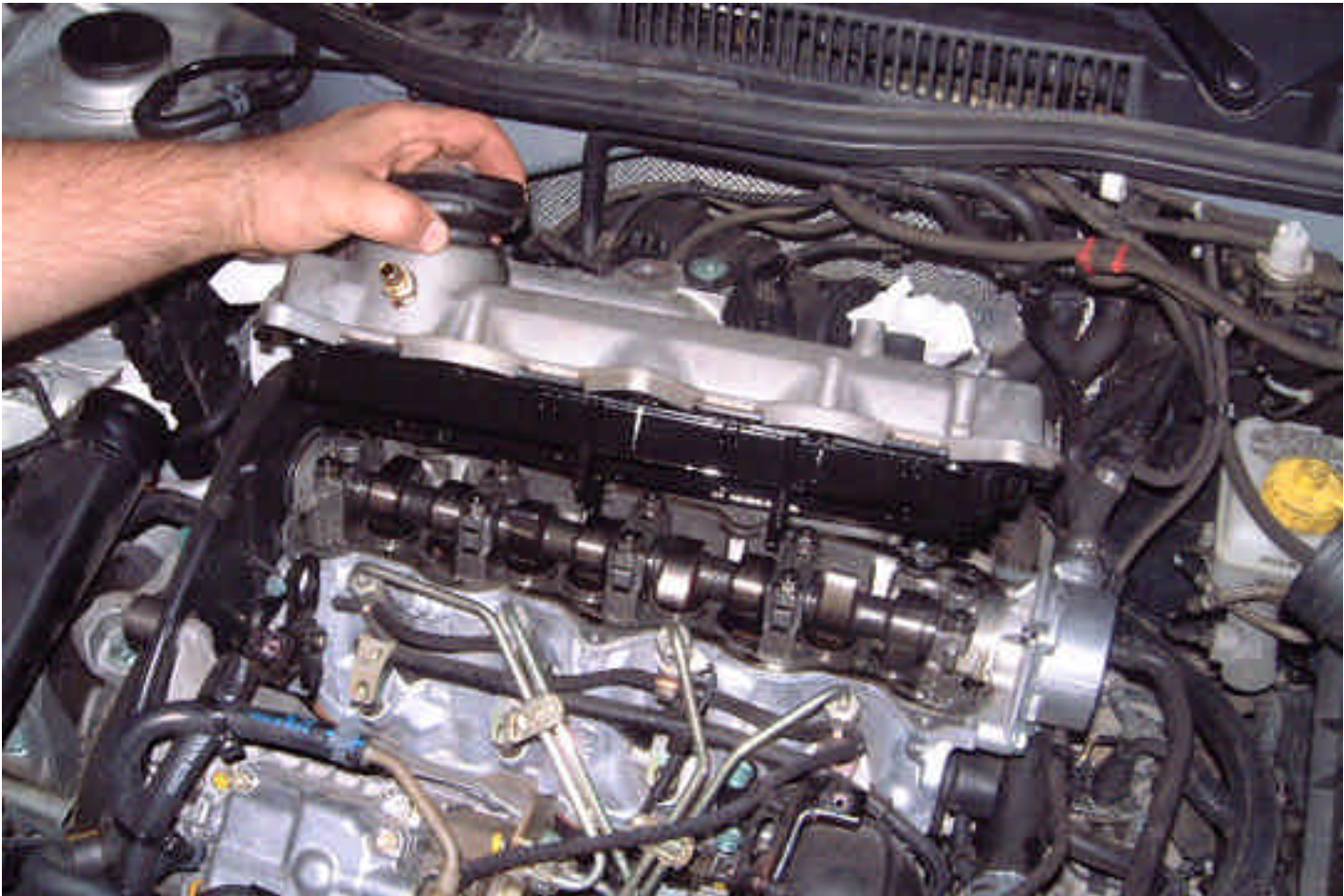


3.4

Notes



Lined area for taking notes, consisting of approximately 18 horizontal lines and a small square box at the bottom left of this section.



3.5

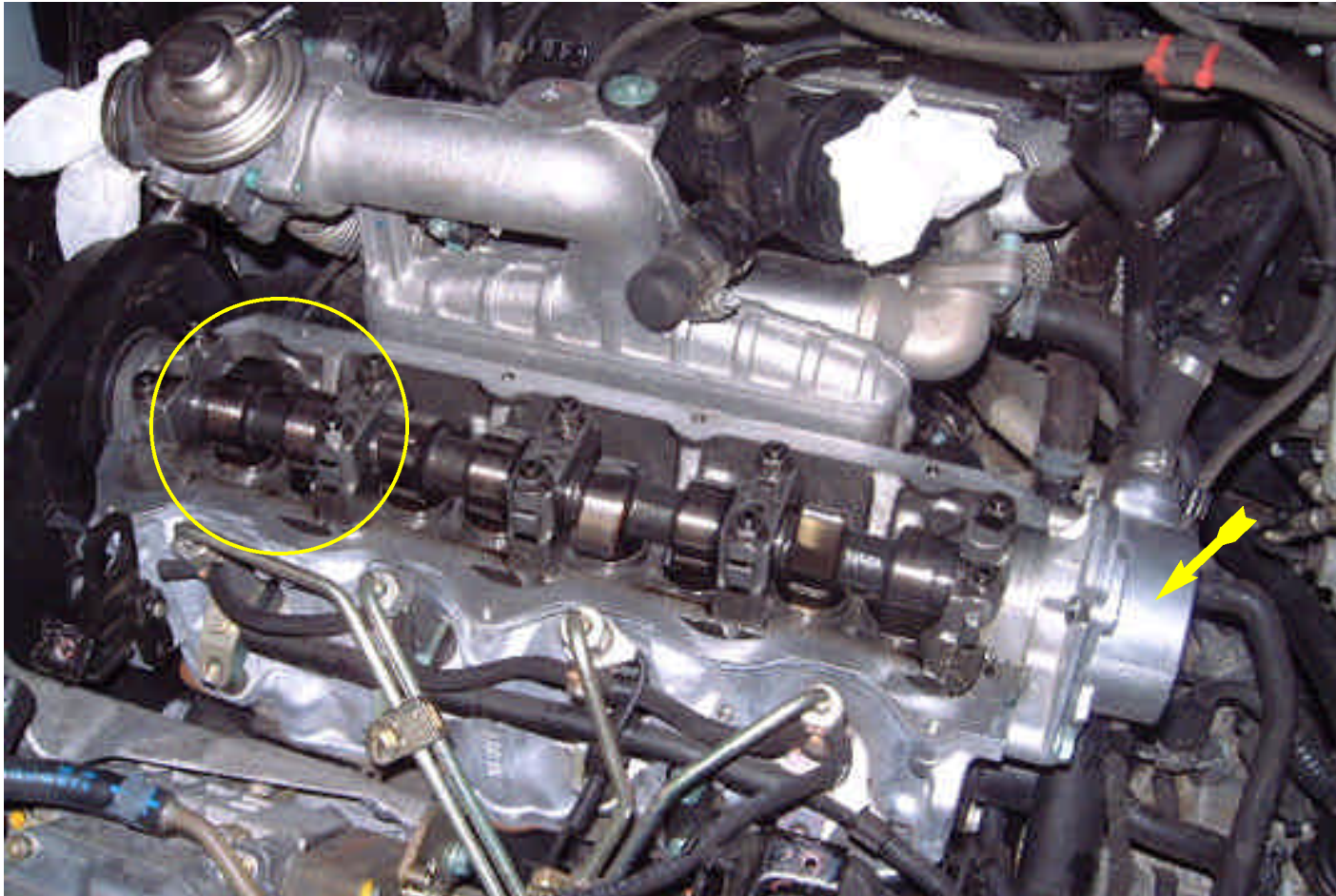
Notes



Valve cover

3.6

Notes



Lets look at the head and gauge what we are going to do. On the right side of the camshaft is the vacuum pump, there is a slight difference in removal procedure between the auto and manual (not a big deal by the way). Anyway, on the left side of the cam look at the first two lobes. These two lobes **MUST ALWAYS** be returned to the "both up" position, why you ask? If you don't its not a matter of if but you WILL set the cam timing 180 degrees out of time. Don't ask. I can only say from my experience and that of others that it can and does happen. By the way this is a great example of a SUPER clean engine using Delvac[®] 1 5w40 full synthetic, the best oil out there that meets the VW TSB oil viscosity specifications....had to throw that in there .



Vacuum pump

4.1

Notes



Remove the vacuum line running under the vacuum pump. MANUAL TRANSMISSION OWNERS, REMOVE THE CENTER GLOW PLUG WIRE AT THIS POINT AS WELL.

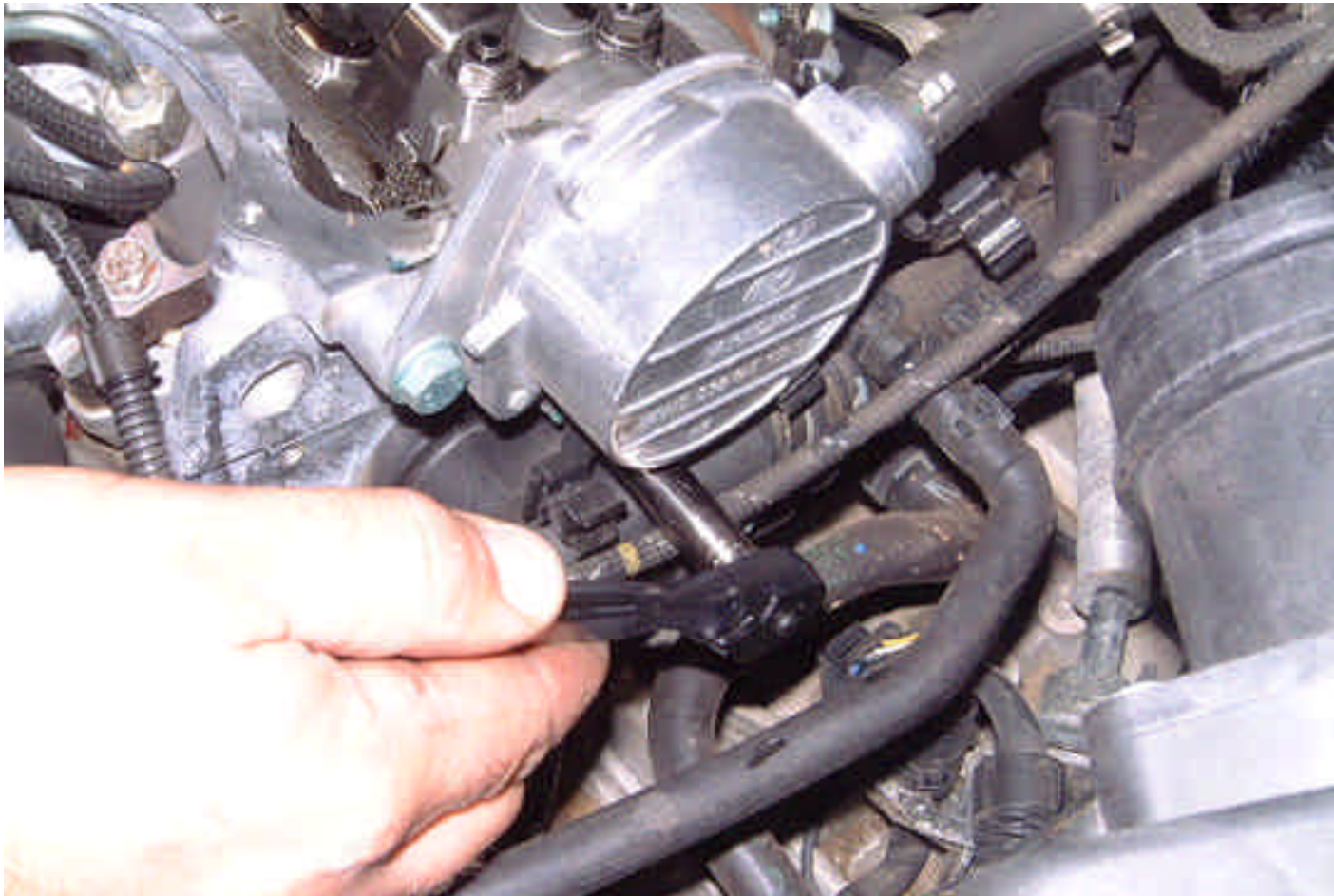
Using a 1/4" drive deep socket remove the lower 10mm nut. MANUAL TRANSMISSION OWNERS, USE THE 45 DEGREE OFFSET 10MM WRENCH AND REMOVE THIS NUT. THE NUT WILL BE BETWEEN THE COOLANT HEATER HOUSING AND THE VACUUM PUMP AND THIS WRENCH IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET IT OUT WITHOUT REMOVING THE COOLANT HEATER HOUSING.



Vacuum pump

4.2

Notes



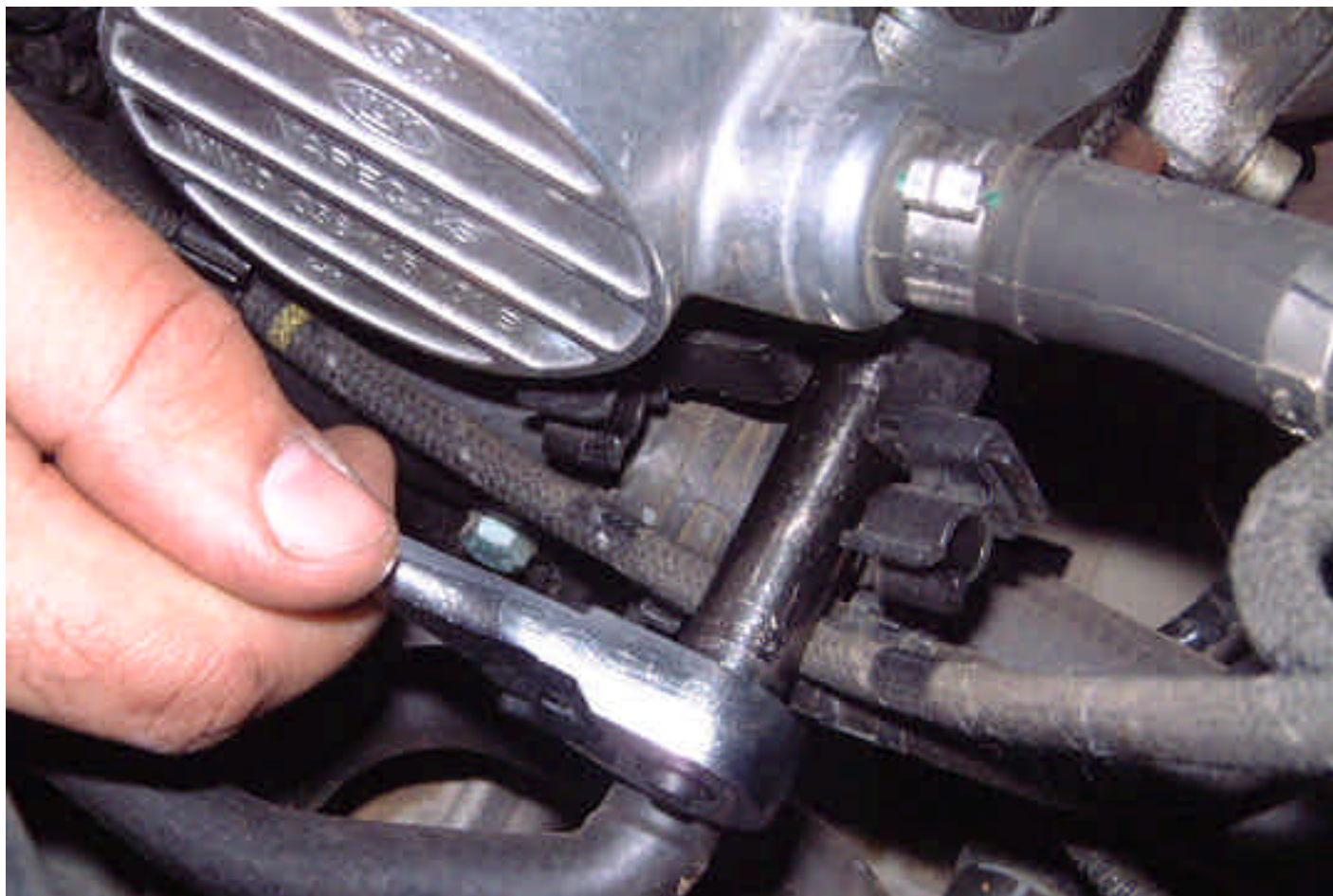
Using the 10mm deep, remove the aft 10mm nut, this is the same for the manual transmission as well.





4.3

Notes



Remove the vacuum line support bracket.



Vacuum pump

4.4

Notes

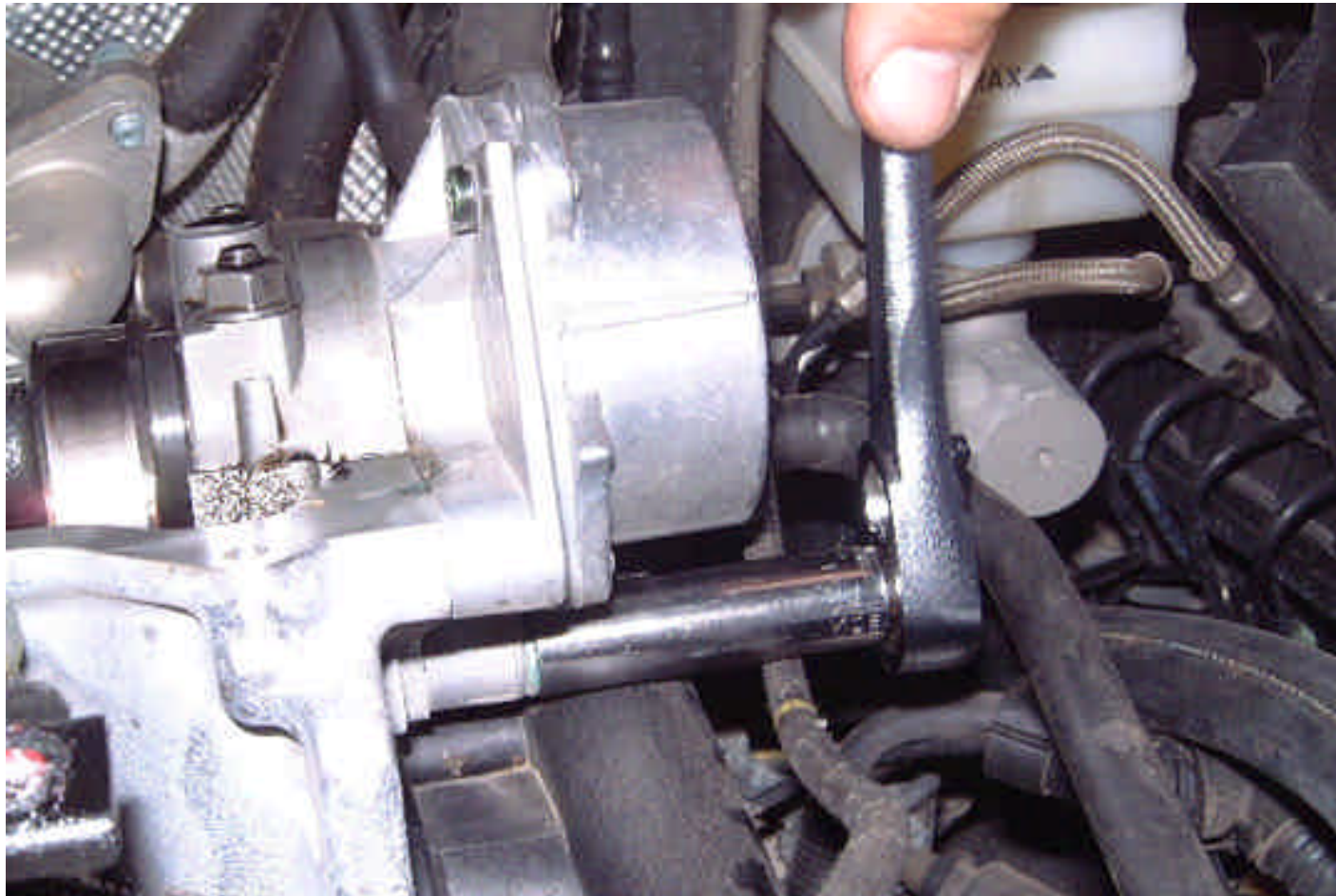


The support bracket.



4.7

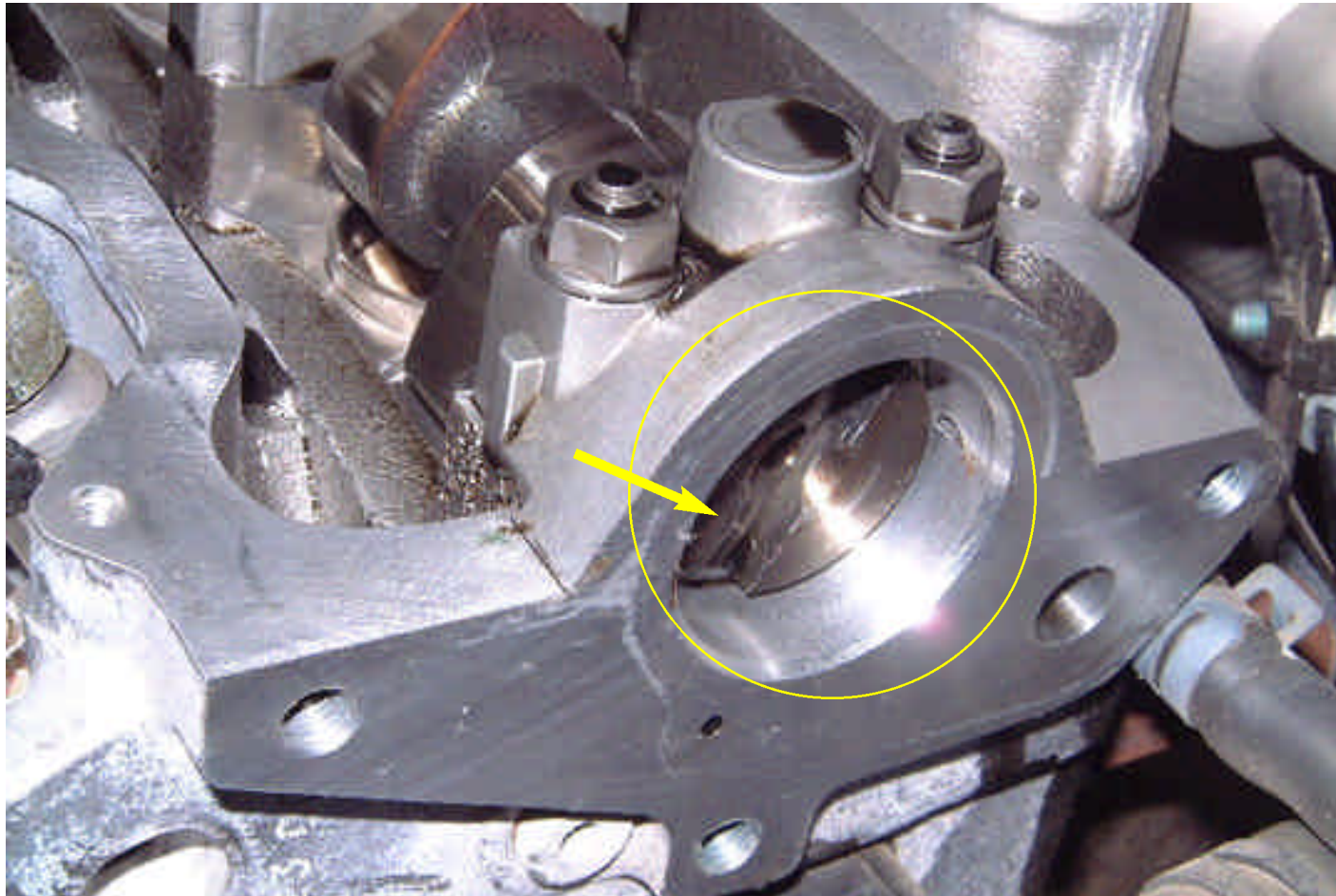
Notes



Remove the lower 13mm bolt. MANUAL TRANSMISSION OWNERS, USE A 13MM BOX WRENCH TO GET IN AND REMOVE THIS BOLT. THE COOLANT HEATER HOUSING WILL PREVENT YOU FROM USING THE DEEP SOCKET (BUT I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE NOTICED THAT...)

4.9

Notes



Here is a picture of the end of the camshaft. The groove in the end of the cam is where the 3418 cam setting bar is inserted. In a later step the groove as you would suspect will need to be rotated, the 3036 cam holding bar will be used to turn the engine into the correct position.



5.1

Notes

Using your two jack stands and a hydraulic jack, lift the car and support it at a height that is comfortable for you to get under the car. Now crawl under and remove the engine belly pan.

5.2

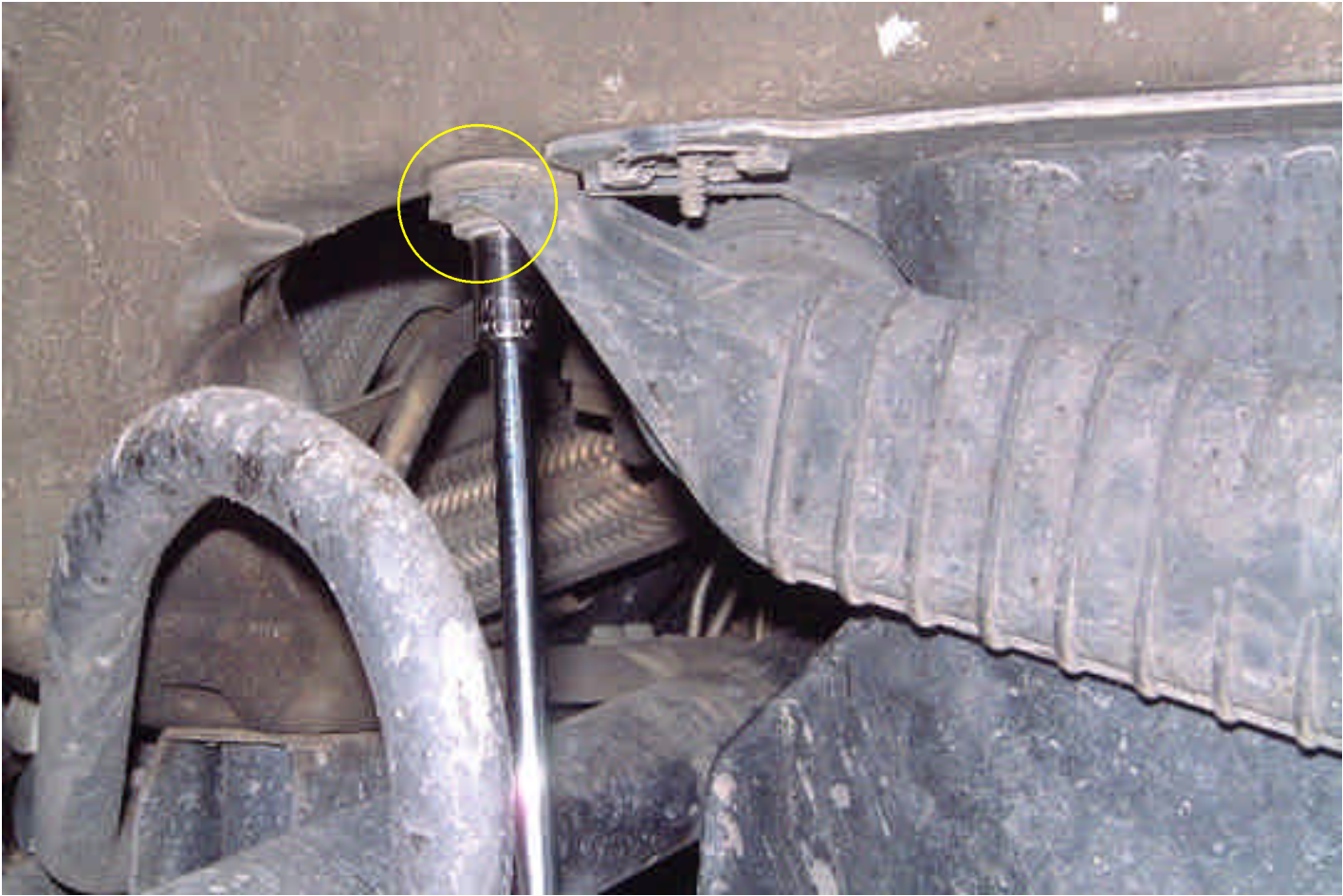
Notes



Crawl under the car and at the back of the engine above the passenger side drive shaft is the turbo compressor outlet pipe. Using your flat band clamp" pliers, remove the spring on turbo compressor outlet.

5.4

Notes



Use a 10mm socket and remove the nut on the turbo to intercooler pipe.,



Turbo compressor outlet pipe



5.6

Notes



Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Outlet pipe. Note that the outlet pipe does not have to be removed in every application and if it doesn't get in the way, just push it over to the side.

Lower engine side panel

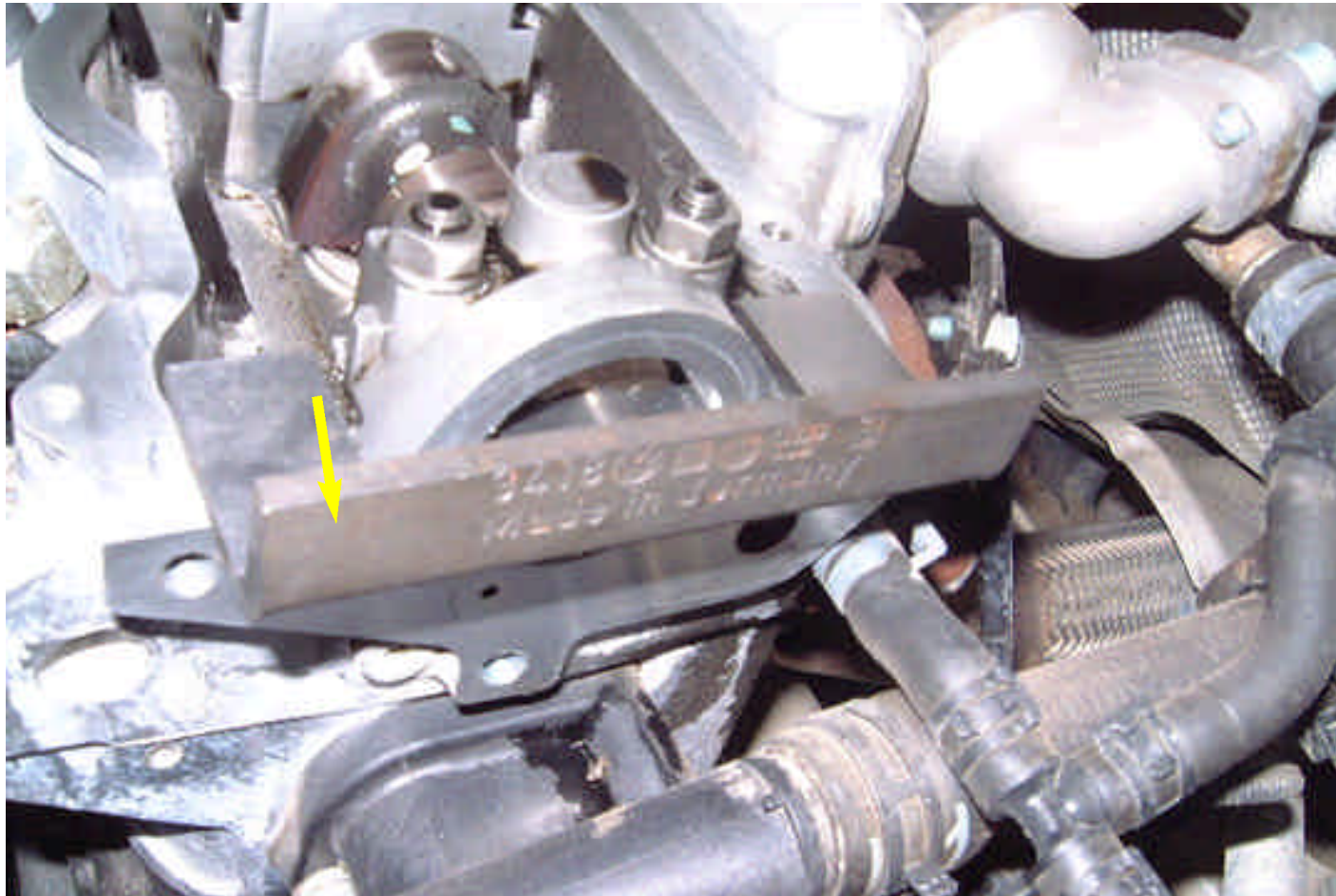
6.2

Notes



8.4

Notes



Install the 3418 cam setting tool into the groove, you may need to work the cam back and forth a bit with the 3036 tool. The 3418 has a nit of flex to it so it holds the bar nice and tight in the groove preventing the cam from moving. In the A3's you needed to use feeler gauges but in the design of this tool they built in tension that eliminates the need to use feeler gauges as depicted in the Bentley Manual. **THIS IS A "GOT-YA", MAKE SURE THE #1 LOBES ARE IN THE LOBES-UP POSITION BECAUSE OF THE FLEX IN THE 3418 TOOL IT IS POSSIBLE TO FORCE IT INTO THE GROOVE ON THE CAMSHAFT EVEN THOUGH ITS 180 DEGREES OUT, TRUST ME ON THIS ONE.**





9.1

Notes

On the flywheel you are looking for a stamped circle (A) with a "minus" sign on either side. The first line shows the timing mark when the cam setting bar was first installed. It should look like the second picture (9.2) with the circle and dashes at the very bottom of the window. At this point do not worry about the crank timing it is however **VERY** important for you to know what it looks like because of all the marks that can be construed as a "TDC" mark.



10.2

Notes



Lined area for notes with horizontal lines and a small square box at the bottom.

Remove the two lower bolts using a 1/2" drive and 16mm socket If you have to use an 18mm these are the **WRONG BOLTS!**

10.4

Notes







10.5

Notes

Horizontal lines for notes. Includes a small square box at the bottom left of the notes area.

10.6

Notes



Grab your hydraulic floor jack and the 6" 2x4 piece of wood, position the wood and the jack on the rear passenger side corner of the oil pan. NOTE: MAKE SURE THE WOOD IS ON THE EDGE THE REASON IS STRUCTURALLY THIS IS THE ABSOLUTE STRONGEST PART OF THE PAN AND WILL PREVENT YOU FROM CRUSHING IT IF ANYTHING WERE TO SHIFT OR DROP. Once the jack is positioned under the pan lift the engine until the engine weight is off of the mount and so that the engine mount is off the car frame by about an inch.



10.7

Notes

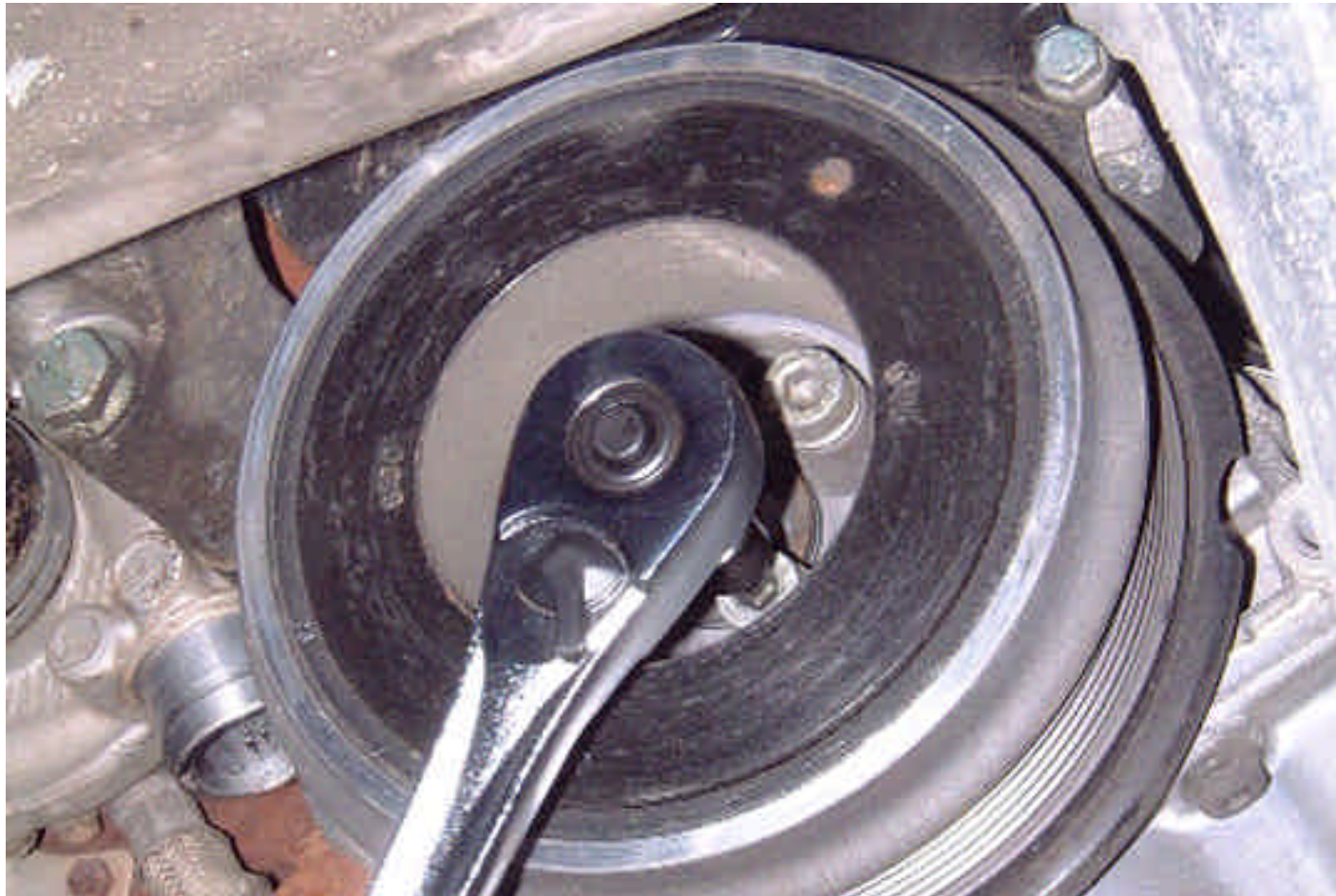


Or, as an option, you can use an engine hangersuch as the Herm-o-hanger pictured above, constructed by GeWilli. Plans to build this can be obtained at www.tdiclub.com.

If you prefer to buy an engine hanger, checkout www.harborfreight.com



Slide the engine mount out of its position and remove from the car.



12.1

Notes

Lower the engine on the jack so that you can have access to all four of the allen bolts on the harmonic damper. The balancer is suprisingly heavy and easy to drop when you take out the last bolt so don't let it fall on you. Use a 3/8 drive ratchet or breaker bar and a 3/8 drive 6mm allen socket break loose and remove the allen bolts.

NOTE: DO NOT USE AN EXTENSION OR ELSE YOU RISK STRIPPING THE BOLT HEADS.

FYI the cam setting bar will keep the engine from moving. On the manual you could put the engine in gear and keep it from moving by having somebody hold the brake pedal down, so this method works for both but at least the manual tranny folks know there is an option.

13.1

Notes



Use a 3/8 drive ratchet and 16mm socket to break loose the engine mount **but don't remove the bolt yet.**

14.1

Notes



Get a 1/4 drive and a 10mm deep socket and remove the (5) bolts that hold the timing belt cover plates on. Remove the last 16mm bolt holding on the engine mount and push the mount upward to remove the top timing belt cover plate
NOTE: THE TOP COVER CAN ONLY BE REMOVED ONCE THE LOWER ENGINE MOUNT BOLT IS REMOVED. WHEN RE ASSEMBLING THE ENGINE THE LOWER COVER MUST BE INSTALLED FIRST FOLLOWED BY THE TOP COVER THEN THE ENGINE MOUNT CAN BE INSTALLED IN THAT ORDER. Also notice the rotational direction of the timing belt. Look for oil leaks or anything that is out of order, now is when you want to find it.

14.2

Notes



Timing belt cover

14.5

Notes



This is **NOT** how many hours it takes to do this job...

Timing belt cover

14.6

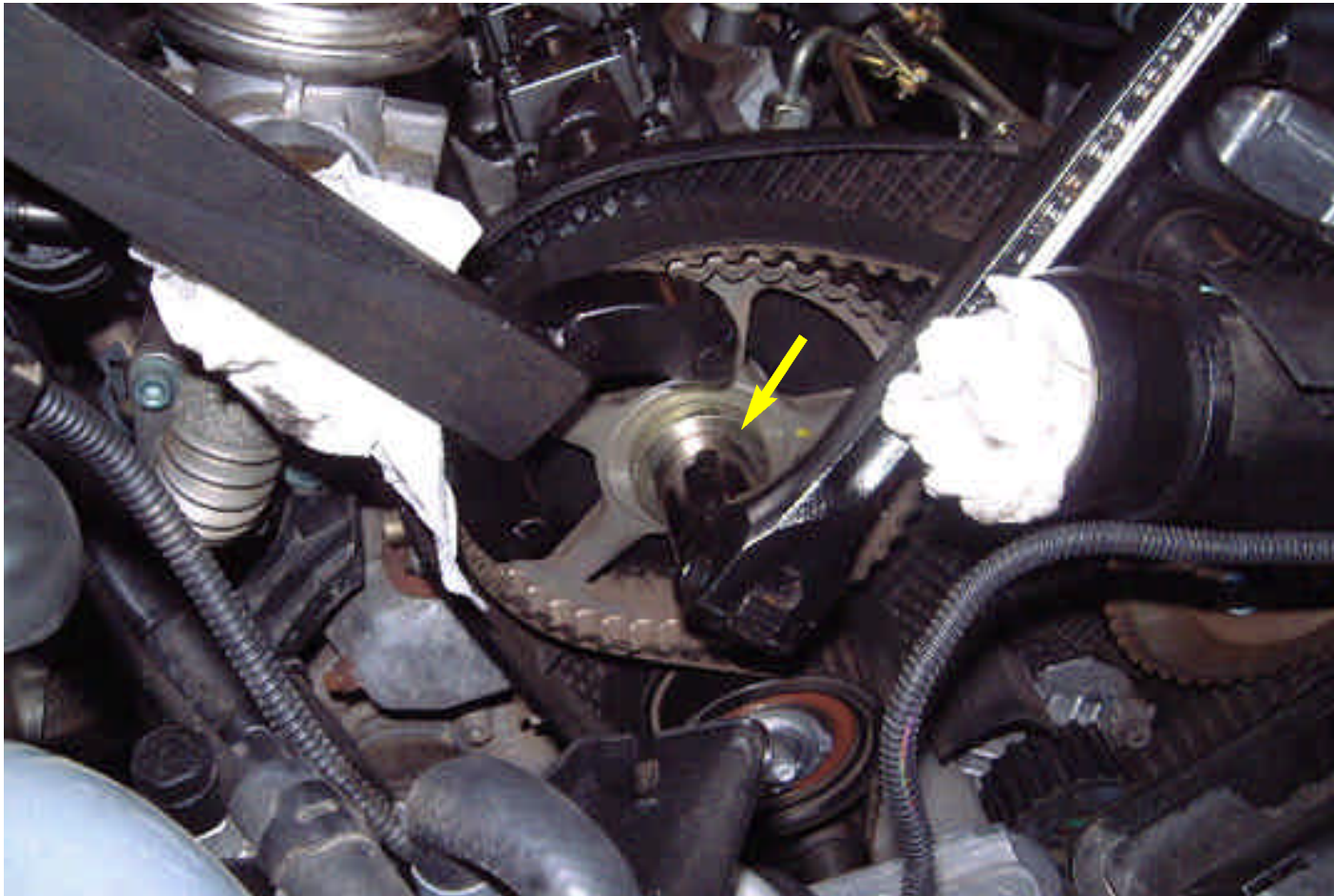
Notes



Lined area for taking notes, consisting of horizontal lines and a small square box at the bottom right.

16.1

Notes

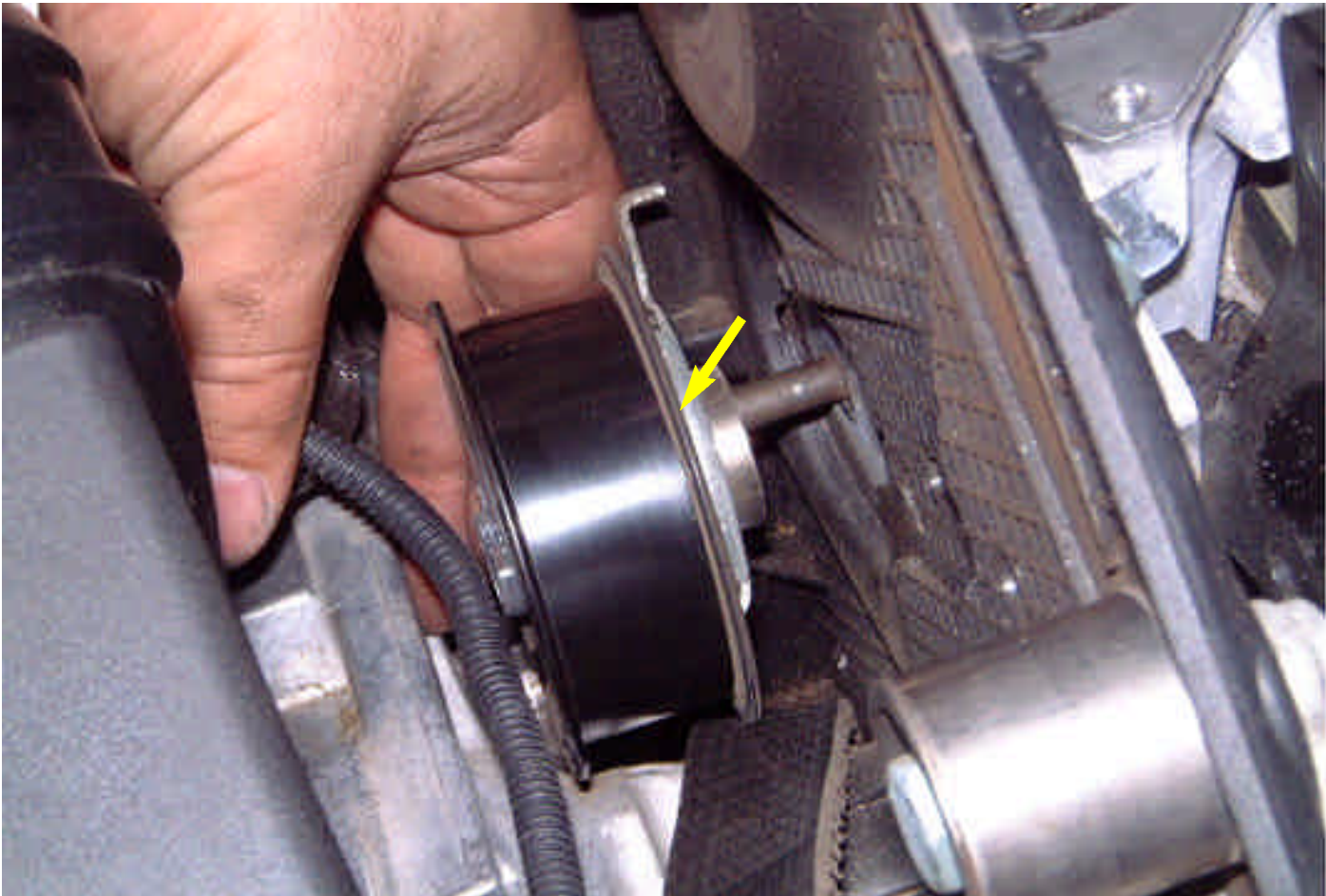


Using the factory cam holding bar and a 19mm 1/2" drive socket, loosen but **DO NOT REMOVE THE BOLT ON THE CAMSHAFT PULLEY.** The bolt at the factory was tighten to only 33 ft-lbs... so it should not require much force to loosen it.

NOTE: I HAVE RUN ACROSS A FEW BOLTS THAT WERE WAY OVER-TIGHTENED, SO USE EXTREME CARE IN REMOVING THESE BOLTS.!!!! IF THIS IS THE CASE, I STRONGLY SUGGEST REMOVING THE CAM SETTING BAR UNTIL THE BOLT HAS BEEN LOOSENED.

17.1

Notes

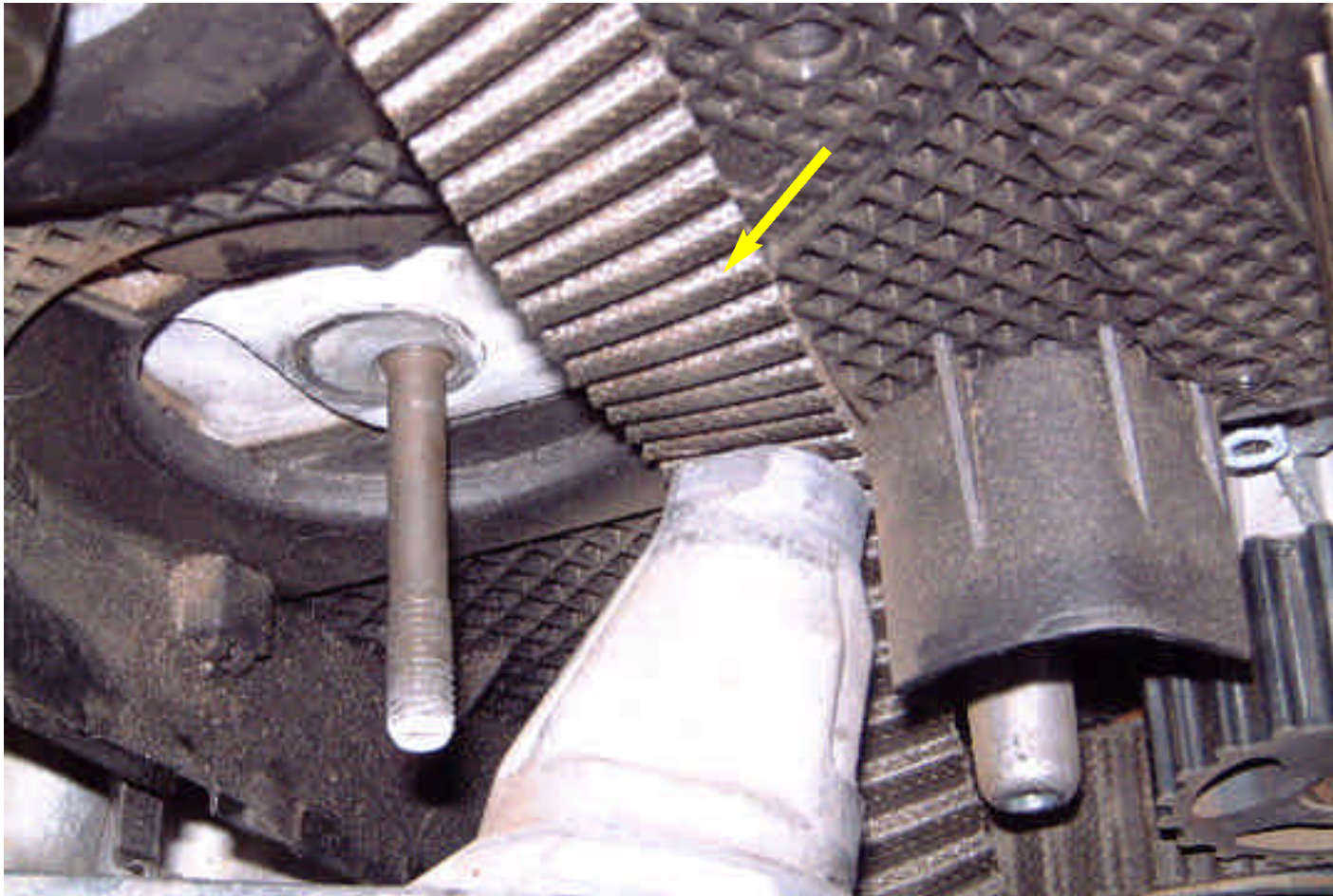


Remove the old tensioner.

Remove old timing belt

17.2

Notes

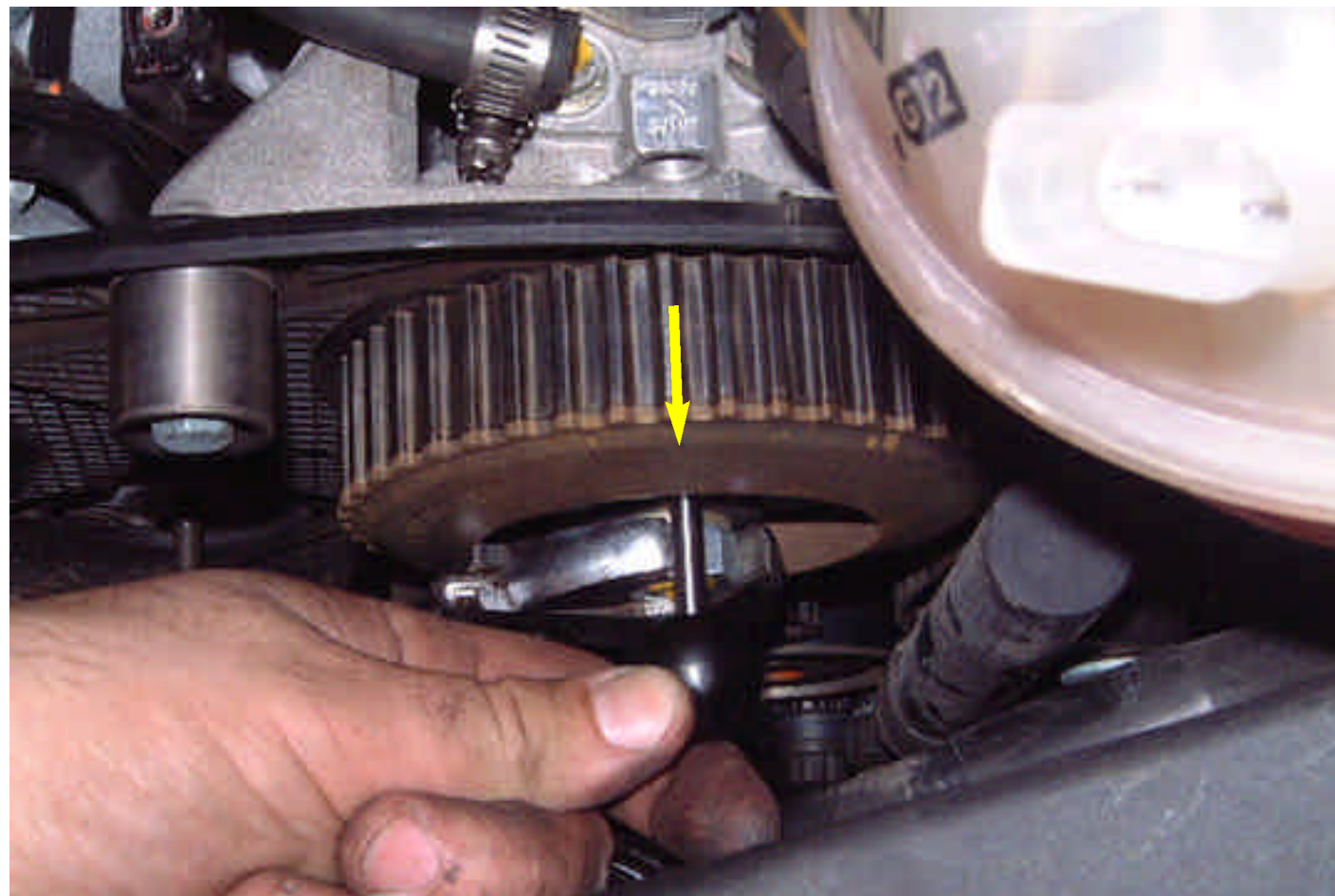


While holding the engine mount away from the engine, slide the old belt between the mount and the block, if you have not noticed yet the mount cannot be removed unless the engine is removed from the car... Remove the belt and inspect it for any cracking or rubbing damage. This is when you want to make sure the belt was wearing normally with only minor cracking or wear marks visible. If any abnormal wear marks are present you need to determine how and where they came from so that you do not install a good belt in a poorly aligned engine pulley system.



18.3

Notes



I'm using a crescent wrench to turn the center bolt to align the pin hole so that I can insert the lock pin. This also shows the orientation of the pin relative to the center of the pump.

NOTE: IT IS POSSIBLE TO INSTALL THE PIN TO THE RIGHT OF THE HOLE AND HAVE THE INJECTION TIMING OFF BY ABOUT 30 DEGREES, WHICH HAPPENS TO BE OUTSIDE THE IGNITION WINDOW, A NO START WILL RESULT.

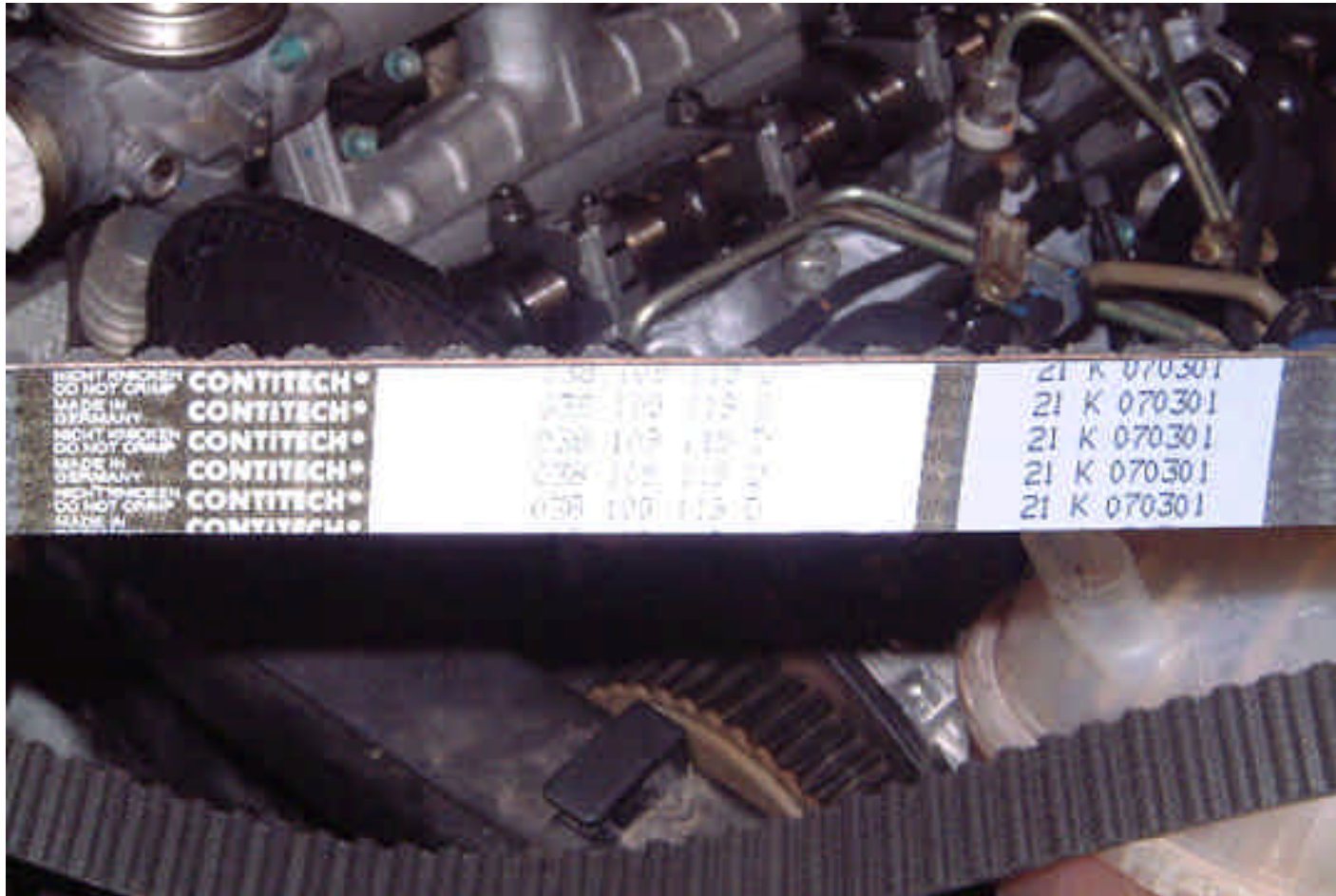
FYI DO NOT try and turn the whole motor over using the injection pump center bolt! Use the 3036 tool. Rotating only the pump such as I have demonstrated will not loosen or throw the pump shaft alignment off since I am only turning the pump's pulley without a timing belt installed.



New timing belt

21.1

Notes



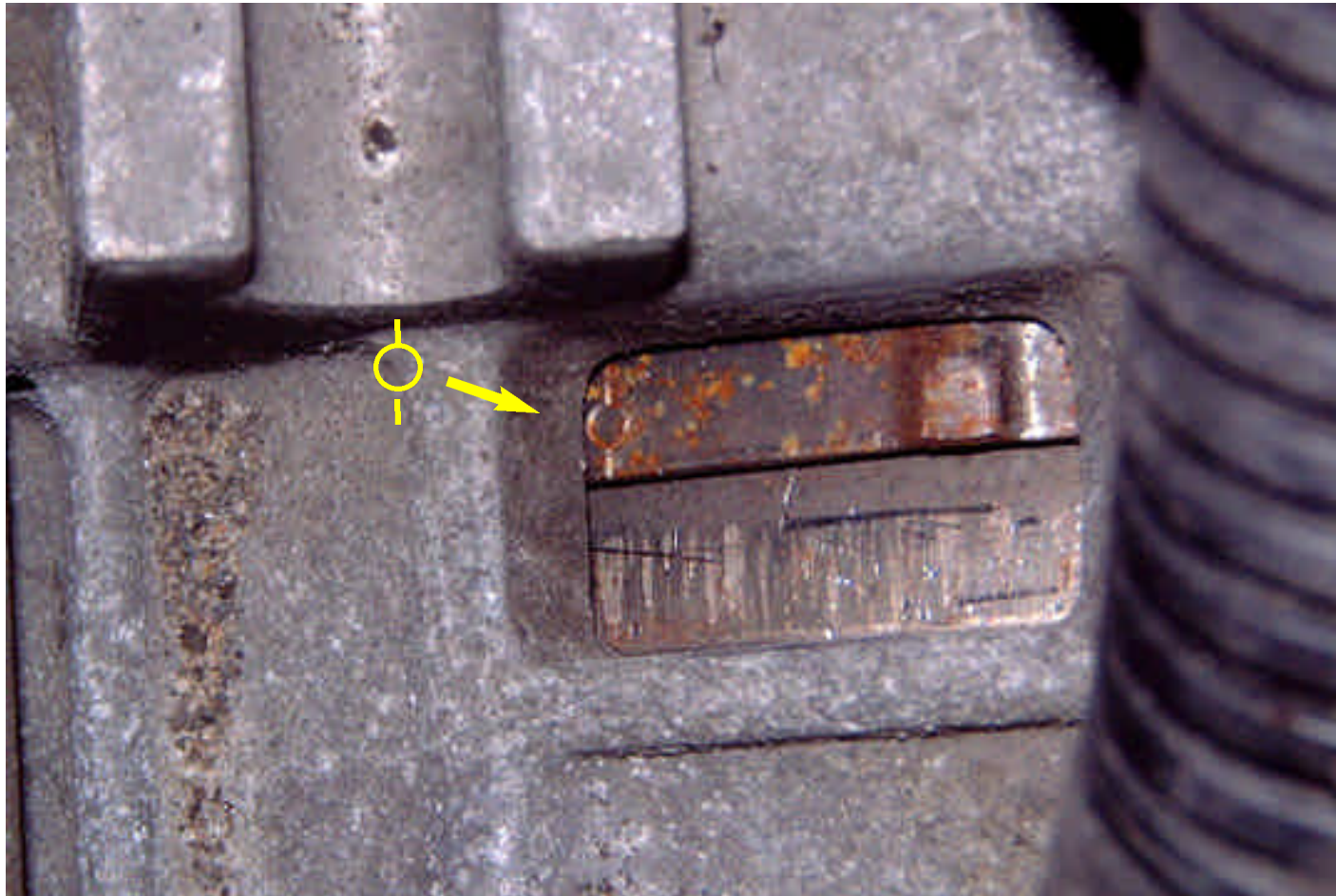
Here is a picture of the timing belt and its part number for the A4 TDI. I strongly suggest making it very clear to the part supplier what type of car you have. It has happened more than once a part counter guy has looked up and sold the wrong part leaving you with a car that is out of commission and the possibility of facing a back-order!. Take your time when researching the parts and double check you have the correct parts before beginning this job, at this stage in the game is the last time to realize the belt or tensioner DO NOT fit!



TDC mark (automatic)

26.1

Notes



Double check that the engine mark is still at **TDC**, the injection pump lock pin is inserted all the way into the pump, and that the cam locking bar is fully seated. Now using the 3036 cam holding bar torque the cam pulley bolt to 33ft-lbs... I usually add just a hair but under no circumstance should this bolt be over torqued. If it is, it can snap the end of the camshaft off, now you have problems. Torque down the three injection pump bolts where they are at. Double check that the flywheel is still at TDC. At this point you have the cam locked down, a small screwdriver wedged in the bell housing holding the flywheel at TDC, the injection pump lock pin installed in the pump and all the bolts on the pulleys tightened.

The bolts you want tight at this point are the 3 bolts in the pump, the cam pulley bolt (33 ft-lbs..) and the tensioner nut.





Closing up

When your closing every thing up, here are a few things to remember:

- Timing belt covers: install the lower cover first, then the top cover, then the engine mount.
- When installing the pendulum mount, install the steel alignment bracket first then install the big mounting bolts.
- Use blue locktite on the 4 harmonic dampener bolts.

Notes



