

# Useful Kinks for the Car Owner

*A Prize of \$10 Is Awarded Each Month for the Best Idea or Suggestion of Practical Value to Motorists*

**C**ARRYING water in a hat, shoe, or even in the bowl of a headlight are possible methods whereby water can be put into the radiator in an emergency. But it is much more satisfactory to do the job by the ingenious method shown in Figure 1. The device consists of a three-foot piece of discarded inner tube. One end is folded back on itself and bound tightly by a rubber band cut from the remaining part of the tube to one end of a thirty-inch piece of broomstick. The other end of the tube is rolled back on itself, like a cup, and the turned end stretched over the free end of the stick.

The capacity of the bucket, if a five-inch tube is used, is approximately eight quarts. The use of a stick in this way makes the improvised bucket easier to carry, permits control while pouring, and holds the tube extended to simplify filling in either standing or running water.

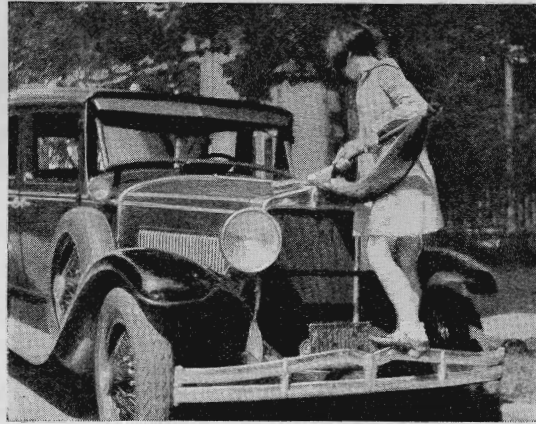


Fig. 1. A discarded inner tube fastened to a broomstick serves as an emergency bucket for filling the auto radiator.

is the idea of Carl Rutledge of Wauna, Ore., and wins this month's prize of \$10. First bore the hole as indicated, and then drive two nails through diagonally so that their points will approach within an eighth of an inch of each other. The nails are set at such an angle that the heads rest on the spark plug terminals.

The higher the engine's compression ratio, the greater should be the gap between the nails to test the spark plugs fairly. One eighth of an inch will do under average conditions. If the spark jumps between the nail points it is an indication that the spark plug is not short-circuited or carbonized.

## Water Level Indicator

**T**HE indicator illustrated in Figure 5 gives definite warning when the water level in the radiator gets too low. This diagram shows only the principle of the device for the contact must be arranged to suit different radiator caps. A cork float on the end of a rod should be used

## Drying Ignition Wires

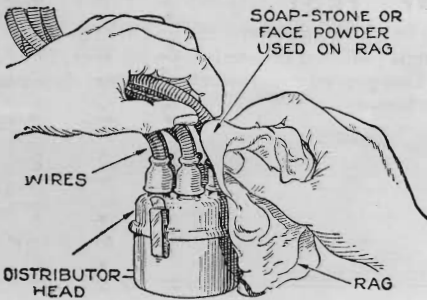


Fig. 2. Drying high tension wires with powder-coated rag avoids short circuits from moisture.

**A** SHORT in the high tension wires leading to the spark plugs, caused by moisture, usually occurs where the wires are clustered together.

When this happens, dry the wires, one at a time, as in Figure 2, with a cloth on which is placed a generous amount of either soapstone powder or face powder, preferably soapstone. In drying the wires entering the distributor cap be careful not to remove more than one wire at a time unless it is well understood how to replace them.

Keeping the wires and the outside of the distributor cap exceptionally clean and using soapstone in the manner described will result in keeping the rubber in-

sulation in good condition and no trouble will be experienced from rain. Of course, this suggestion applies only to ordinary rubber-covered high tension wire. Special high tension wire covered with varnished fabric should not be treated in this way. Such wire should be wiped with a clean dry cloth only.

## Hood Scratch Preventers

**T**HE enamel on the auto radiator and cowl frequently is scratched by raising and lowering the hood carelessly. Such scratches can be prevented by attaching small leather "fenders" to the corners of the hood, as shown in Figure 3. They are made from sheet leather about two inches square, folded over as indicated, and riveted to the corners of the hood. Besides preventing scratches when the hood is raised or lowered these fenders also decrease hood rattle when the hood clips are loose.

## The Prize Winner

**A** WOODEN block and two ordinary nails can be fashioned into the handy spark plug tester shown in Figure 4. It

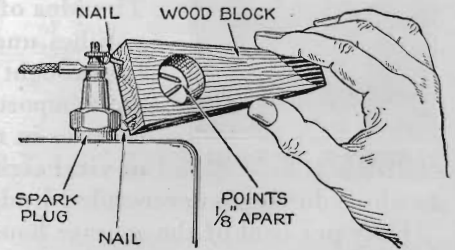


Fig. 4. Testing a spark plug with nails driven in block. The spark jumps between nail points.

and a short length of copper or brass tubing should be soldered in place against the hole in the radiator cap to act as a guide and keep the float rod in a vertical position.

A disk on the upper end of the rod makes contact with a wire and thereby grounds it when the water level goes too

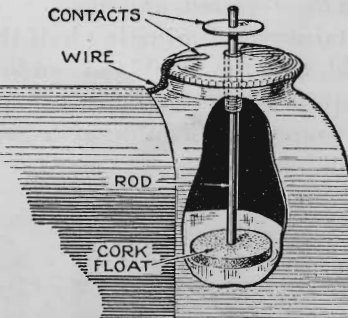
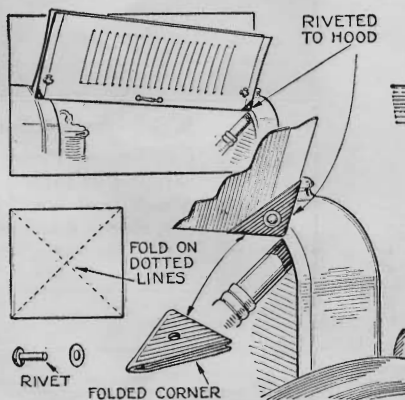


Fig 3 (left). How to make and attach leather hood "fenders" to prevent scratches. Fig. 5 (above). An indicator to warn when water in radiator is low.

low. One terminal of a double contact indicator bulb on the dash should be connected with the current supply and the other terminal with the wire that makes contact with the float disk. If the cap unscrews, arrange the contact wire so that it can be swung out of the way. If the cap turns back on a hinge the contact can be fastened to a piece of fiber or bakelite and connected by a piece of flexible wire.