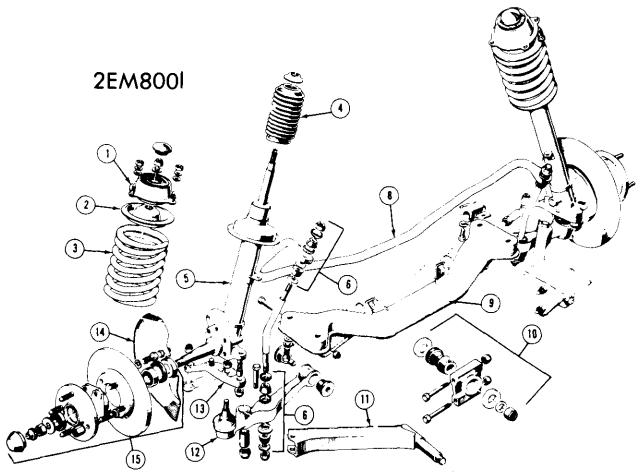
1971-72 PLYMOUTH CRICKET

Cricket (1971-72)

DESCRIPTION

Strut type suspension consisting of a vertically mounted strut assembly, secured at top by a rubber thrust bearing mounted to fender panel. Bottom end of strut assembly is secured to a swivel joint integral with lower control arm. Strut assembly consists of a direct acting shock absorber inside outer tube, outer tube is also a reservoir for operating fluid. A coil spring is mounted externally on strut. A spindle is integrally forged with lower strut end. A stabilizer bar is connected to body members, directly behind front crossmember and is attached to lower control arm by a vertical drop link. A drag strut is mounted at rear to body member and is connected at front to lower control arm.



①Bearing ②Plate ③Spring ④Boot ⑤Strut ⑥End Fittings ⑦Link ⑧Stabilizer Bar ⑨Crossmember ⑩Drag Strut Mount ⑪Drag Strut ⑫Control Arm ⑬Steering Arm ⑭Shield ⑮Hub Assembly

CRICKET FRONT SUSPENSION

ADJUSTMENT

WHEEL ALIGNMENT SPECIFICATIONS & PROCEDURES

See Wheel Alignment Specifications & Procedures in WHEEL ALIGNMENT Section.

WHEEL BEARING ADJUSTMENT

See Wheel Bearing Adjustment in WHEEL ALIGNMENT Section.

REMOVAL & INSTALLATION

STABILIZER BAR

Removal – Raise car and block up under front wheels to allow full weight of vehicle to rest on front wheels. Remove nuts, washers and rubber bushings securing vertical drop links to lower control arms. Remove brackets holding stabilizer bar to front body members and remove bar from vehicle.

Installation – Inspect any rubber bushings for wear or damage and replace if necessary. Install bar in proper position against body members, making sure ends of bar angle downwards. Tighten bolts to specifications. Install vertical drop links with short leg of bend at bottom. Install rubber bushings, washers and nuts in position and tighten nut until there is a distance of 9/16" to 5/8" between face of washer (at end of link) and end of link. This distance applies to both ends of vertical drop link.

DRAG STRUTS

Removal – Raise car and block up under front wheels to allow full weight of vehicle to rest on front wheels. Remove two bolts and nuts securing drag strut mounting bracket from body underframe. Remove bolt and nut securing drag strut to lower control arm. A load on front end may be needed to remove bolt. Pry mounting bracket down and forward to remove drag strut. Remove nut and slide drag strut stud from rubber bushing in bracket.

Installation – Installation is reversal of removal procedure. Tighten all bolts to specifications.

LOWER CONTROL ARM

Removal – Raise car and place safety stands under body frame. *NOTE – When jacking up front of vehicle, make sure jack is in center of crossmember.* Remove tie rod nut and remove tie rod from steering arm. Remove nuts holding steering arm to strut assembly. Disconnect bottom end of stabilizer bar link and remove drag strut as previously outlined. Remove lower control arm pivot bolt from crossmember. *NOTE – To remove left side pivot bolt, turn steering to left stop, to remove right side bolt, turn steering to right stop.* Pry lower control arm away from crossmember. Remove nut connecting steering arm to ball joint and disconnect steering arm from ball joint. Remove lower control arm from vehicle.

Installation – Place steering arm on ball joint, using a new nut, tighten to specification. Install control arm in crossmember and slide in bolt with head of bolt to rear. Tighten pivot bolt and nut to specification. Place steering arm squarely against bottom of strut assembly making sure dowels are lined up properly and tighten bolts to specification. Install drag strut and stabilizer link as previously outlined. Remove safety stands and lower vehicle.

STRUT ASSEMBLY

Removal – Remove dust cover and using a suitable tool (RG.549), loosen top bearing nut one turn. Raise vehicle and place safety stands under body side members. Remove wheel and tire. Disconnect hydraulic line from strut and plug line. Remove bolts holding steering arm to bottom of strut and disconnect bottom end of stabilizer bar link from lower control arm. Support strut and remove three nuts and washers which secure strut assembly to fender panel. Remove strut assembly from vehicle.

Installation – Place strut assembly in position in fender panel and tighten nuts to specifications. *NOTE – When installing strut assembly, replace all self locking nuts.* Install stabilizer bar link and steering arm as previously outlined. Connect hydraulic line to strut. Tighten top bearing nut and replace dust cover. Install wheel and tire, remove safety stands and lower vehicle. Check wheel alignment after completing this procedure.

THRUST BEARING, COIL SPRING & SHOCK ABSORBER

Removal – Remove strut assembly as previously outlined and mount strut assembly on a wheel and tighten. Place a wood wedge between strut and wall of tire. Using a suitable spring compressing tool (P.5054), compress spring enough to relieve

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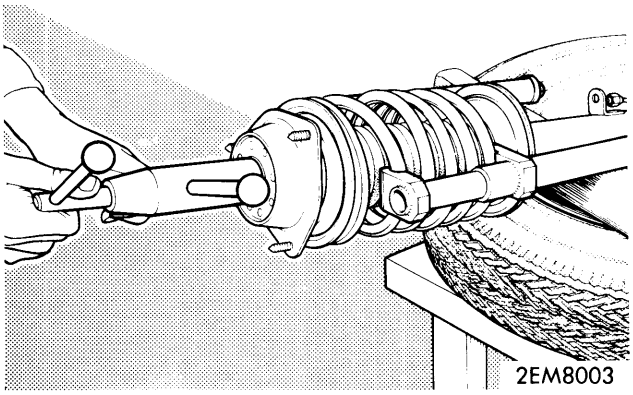
tension from thrust bearing unit. Using a suitable tool (RG.549), remove thrust bearing nut and remove locating washer and bearing. Remove coil spring from strut assembly and release compressing tool. Remove rubber boot from shock

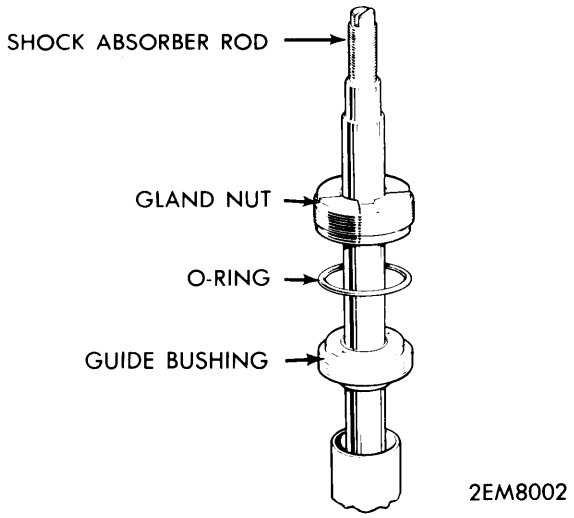


THRUST BEARING NUT REMOVAL

absorber and depress shock absorber rod into strut until it bottoms. Using a suitable tool (P.5044), remove gland nut from top of strut. Place a suitable container under top end of strut to catch shock oil and gently guide shock absorber, together with O-ring and shock absorber rod guide bushing, out of strut tube.

► *INSTALLATION CAUTION* — Front coil springs are of unequal length. Right side coil spring is longer than left. Spring pockets on struts are different to accomodate unequal springs, make sure springs are installed on appropriate strut assemblies.

Installation — *NOTE — Before assembling shock absorber all parts must be thoroughly cleaned in a suitable cleaning solvent.* Insert shock absorber unit into strut and add clean fresh oil, distributing equal quanities into strut and shock absorber. Tighten gland nut using suitable tool and using torque wrench adapter (P.5017A-1) tighten nut to specification. Move shock absorber in and out with long strokes to prime shock absorber. Stake edge of strut into slot in gland nut. Install new rubber boot. Compress coil spring as previously outlined and install over strut. Inspect thrust bearing for smooth rotation. Place thrust bearing, locating washer and nut on strut and tighten nut to specification. *CAUTION — Do not over tighten nut as it will cause stiff steering and damage thrust bearing.* Remove tire and wheel and install strut assembly as previously outlined.



SHOCK ABSORBER COMPONENT ARRANGEMENT

TIGHTENING SPECIFICATIONS

Application	Ft. Lbs.
Strut Assembly to Fender Panel	15
Thrust Bearing to Strut Assembly	31
Steering Arm to Strut Assembly	58
Steering Arm to Ball Joint	44
Lower Control Arm Pivot Bolt	28
Drag Strut Bracket to Frame Member	28
Drag Strut to Bracket	40
Drag Strut to Lower Control Arm	36
Stabilizer Bar Bracket to Body Members	36
Strut Assembly Nut	48