BALL JOINT CHECKING

FACTORY RECOMMENDED METHOD

CHRYSLER CORP.

Lower Ball Joint – Ball joints are preloaded (zero axial end play). If any axial end play (up and down movement) in excess of .020" is observed, ball joint requires replacement.

FORD MOTOR CO.

F100/350 With Stamped I-Beam Front Axle – 1) Raise vehicle and place safety stand under axle as shown in *Fig. 2*.

2) To check lower ball joints, grasp lower edge of tire and move wheel in and out observing lower spindle arm and lower part of axle jaw.

3) If movement between lower part of axle jaw and lower spindle arm is in excess of 1/32", lower ball joint must be replaced.

4) To check upper ball joints, grasp upper edge of tire and move wheel in and out.

5) If movement between upper spindle arm and upper part of axle jaw is in excess of 1/32", upper ball joint must be replaced.

All Other Models – *Manufacturer gives no method for checking ball joints. See Alternate Method.*

GENERAL MOTORS

"K" Models – Raise vehicle on hoist and place jack stands just inside front springs. Disconnect connecting rod and tie rod to allow independent movement of each steering knuckle. Apply fish scale to tie rod mounting hole of steering knuckle arm. With knuckle assembly in straight ahead position, determine right angle pull required to keep knuckle assembly turning after initial breakaway. Effort must not exceed 25 lbs. in either direction.

All Other Models Upper Ball Joint – The upper ball stud is spring loaded in its socket. This minimizes looseness at this point and compensates for normal wear. If the ball stud has any noticeable lateral shake, or if it can be twisted in its socket with finger pressure, it must be replaced.

All Other Models Lower Ball Joint – Lower ball joints are a loose fit when not connected to the steering knuckle. Wear may be checked without disassembling the ball stud as follows: Raise vehicle and support weight of control arms at wheel hub and drum. Accurately measure the distance between the tip of the ball stud and the tip of the grease fitting below ball joint. Move support so that control arm is supported and wheel and hub are free. Again measure distance between ball stud and grease fitting. If difference between two measurements exceeds 3/32", replace ball joint assembly.

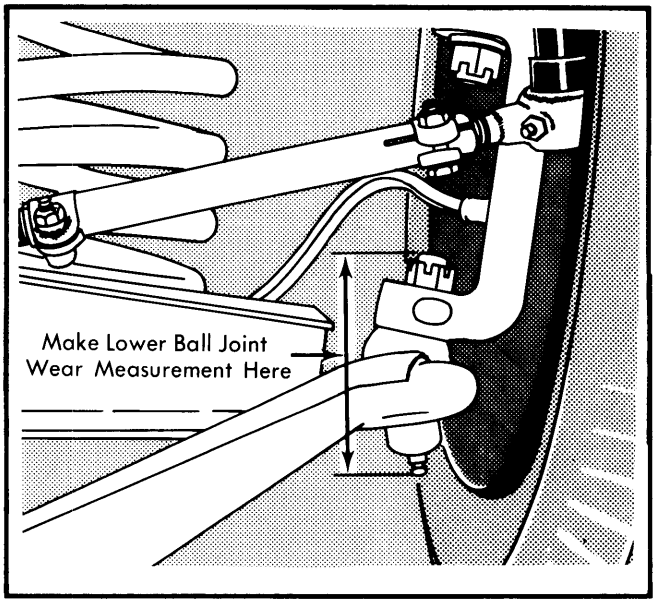

Fig. 1 Checking General Motors Lower Ball Joint

JEEP

All Models – Manufacturer gives no method for checking ball joints. *See Alternate Method.*

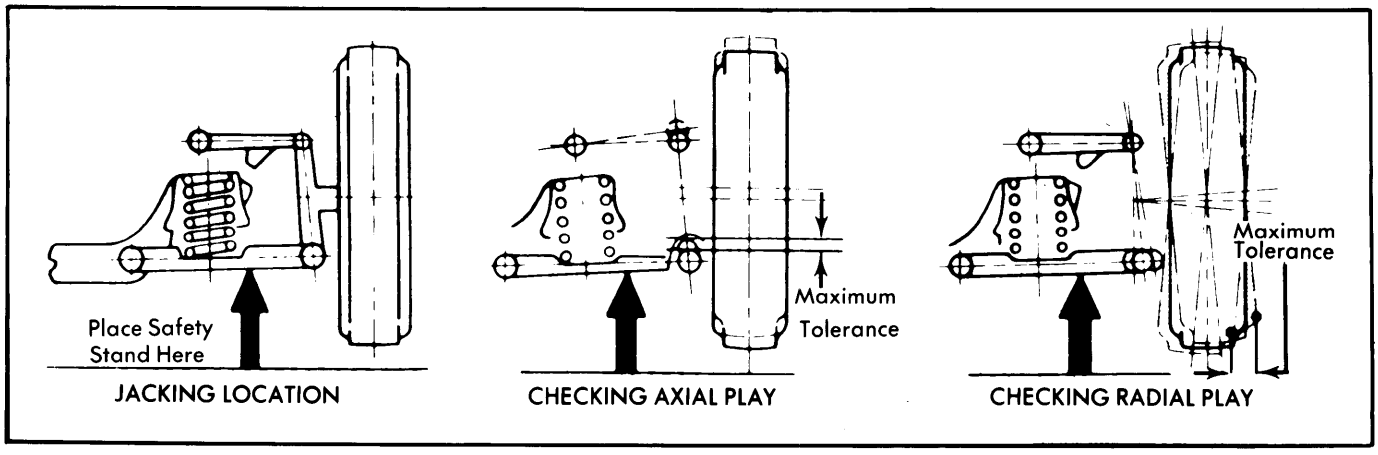

Fig. 2 Spring On Lower Control Arm