

Common new turbo install problems

- **James Bond Smoke:**

You were doing some grinding or porting near the motor with the turbo removed. You blocked off the turbo oil drain pipe with a piece of tape. You forget to take the piece of tape and install the turbo. Start it up and instant James Bond smoke. The oil flow into the turbo has nowhere to go and gets pumped out the bearing seals. If your turbo does this, check the oil drain for blockage, remove it and start it up again. The turbo will be fine, it will take a few minutes of driving to burn out all the oil from the exhaust system. Also a plugged up crank case vent will cause excessive pressure to build up in the crankcase. This prevents the oil from draining out of the turbo and blows the excess oil out through the turbo seals.

- **The Shaft is Wobbly**

There is a gap between the shaft and sleeve and a gap between the sleeve and housing. These two gaps combined allow the compressor wheel tip to move side to side in what may look like an alarming amount. This is normal. As long as the wheel is not touching the housing, you are fine. There should be no play axially (in and out) with the compressor wheel and shaft.

- **Waste Gate Actuator Damage:**

The wastegate actuator can become damaged. We do our best to carefully package the turbo assemblies but sometimes a fedex guy can decide to go bowling with your package. The actuator can get slightly bent or crushed. Check that the bottom surfaces of it are not crushed in at all. If it does get smooshed, it can be easily bent back before installing the turbo. Just pry it back until all surfaces are at a 90 degree angle. There should be a slight pull on the waste gate arm when the actuator is connected to the arm. Be sure the small cotter pin is in place.

- **Fresh Head Job?**

If you keep going through turbos after a recent valve job or other head work, your problem is probably related to lots of left over crap in the oil supply galleys in the head. If your machine shop uses abrasives when cleaning the head, they had better take out the oil galley plugs and clean the head for days. The stock 1G cars get their oil supply from these oil galleys and when the junk flows into the turbo, it kills the bearings instantly.

- **Plugged-up Internal Oil Passages**

Over use of thread sealer or silicone thread sealants can get inside the turbo cartridge and block small oil passages. This kills the turbo bearings from lack of oil.

- **Compressor Wheel Damage**

When re-installing the turbo, be sure that you take out any rags anything else you used to block off any inlets or intercooler hoses.

- **Your old turbo's demise**

Think about what could have caused your old turbo to die. If things were fine and you are just upgrading, no worries. If it was death by old age (100K miles +) or you were over boosting a T-25 then no worries either. But if you killed a fairly new turbo for no apparent reason, think about what could have been the cause of the turbo's failure. If you simply bolt on a new turbo without fixing the problem, don't expect your new turbo to live long either.

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