

J Gate Shifter Repair - Rob Reilly June 30, 2012

Since 2009 when I got my car, the shift into D has had a delay of 2 to 5 seconds. In the last 4 months sometimes it would not start in P, no cranking at all unless I moved the shift lever around a bit. I tried the easy things first, checking the battery connections for looseness, changing the starter relay in the engine compartment fuse box, then tried a new rotary switch located on the left hand side of the trans. I adjusted the shifter cable, so it would start in P, but won't go in D, or if I adjusted the cable the other way it would go in D and the delay was gone but it would not start in P. Sometimes I couldn't get the key out of the lock. The shifter lever seemed loose.

I searched the web. The basic problem is a plastic part in the shifter that slides on a shaft and pulls the end of the cable. If you have the habit of putting it in Park but not using the handbrake, especially on a hill, when you pull it out of Park the lever puts a strain on the plastic part and eventually it is worn oversize or may even break. Ford apparently did not offer this part separately, so someone had gone through two new shifters and then come up with an aftermarket fix, the same part but made out of aluminum. I found three vendors that offered similar variations. Welsh Enterprises had what looked to me like the best part, and also the best price. It arrived in 3 days.

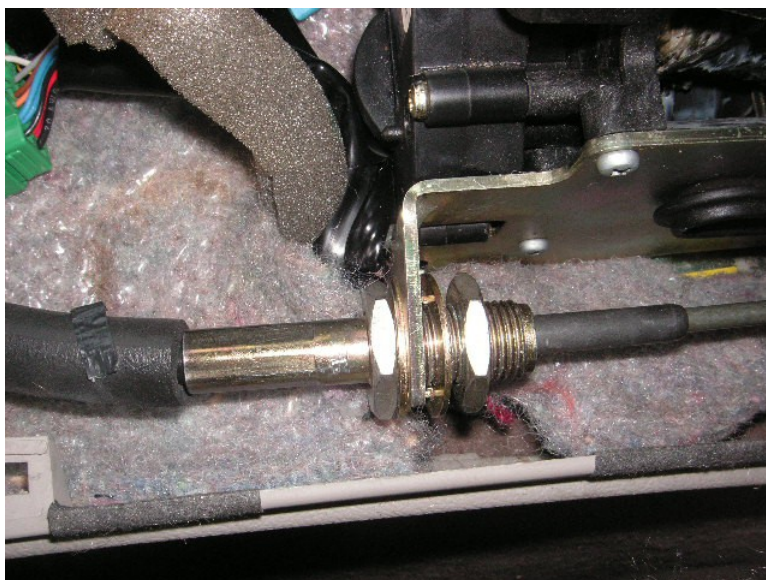
To adjust:

First get underneath and check that the mark on the rotary switch on the left side of the trans lines up with neutral when the shifter is in Neutral. You need a mirror and a light to see it.

To remove the console, lift the arm rest, move the shifter to Reverse, pull upwards on the top half of the console all around.

Unplug brown cig lighter and blue and green switch connectors by squeezing a small tab with a small screwdriver.

To simply adjust the shifter cable you need two 24mm wrenches. Moving the nuts forward moves the threaded shank backward and makes it easier to find Park. Moving the nuts rearward makes it easier to find Drive. You can also pop off the swivel end of the cable with a prybar and pull it all the way out, put the shifter in P, pop the swivel end back on, then snug up both nuts equally and it should be correct.



To install a new slider:

Ignore the JTIS instruction, there is no need to move the shifter cable from underneath at the trans end, you can do it from inside the car.

Pop off the large cable swivel end. Loosen the 2 big nuts with 24mm wrenches. Swing the cable out the side of the bracket. Push and pull the cable feeling through 6 clicks for all 7 positions.



The small cable running forward controls the key locking in the ignition switch, and must be pulled back to release the key. Notice the black plastic oblong lever on the right side. This must swing up all the way to pull the small cable out, otherwise you can't remove the key.

Pop off the small cable, push in the button on the right side, lift the cable out of the notch in the bracket.

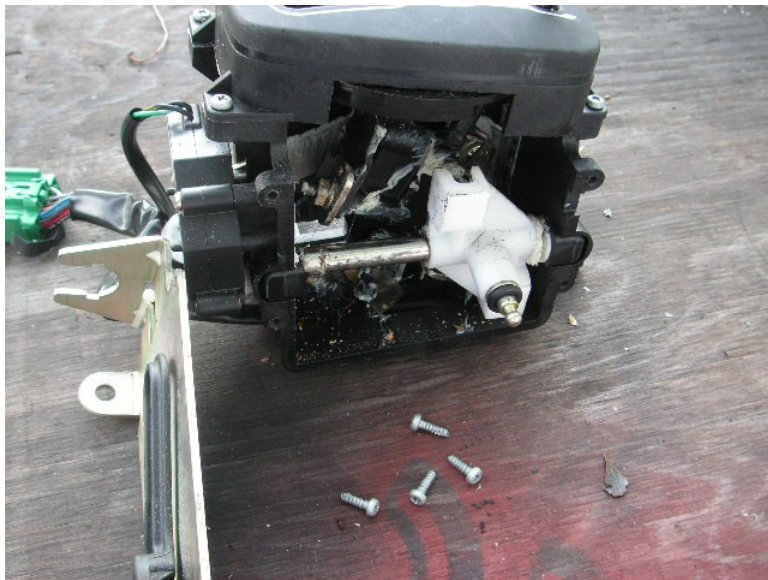
Key off, remove the key, disconnect the big green connector by pushing a small tab on top.

Remove 4 screws with #3 Phillips, they may be hidden by gray cloth padding or black plastic duct.

Lift out the J gate shifter. Shift into Park.



Remove 4 screws on the gold anodized side cover. White plastic slider and shaft with rubber ends lift straight out.



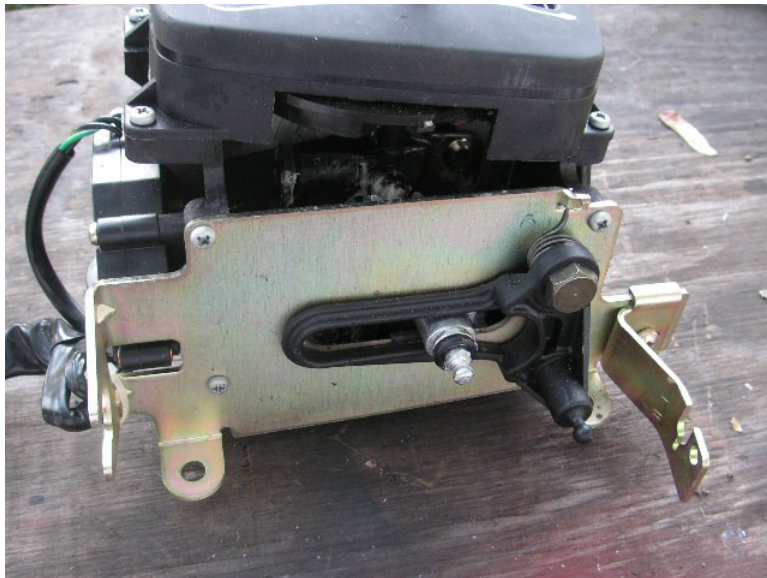


The Welsh aluminum metal slider goes on either way, but check the movement of the oblong lever. Mine was not quite right one way but good the other way. Put grease on the slider and ball ends.





Reattach side cover and replace J-gate using magnetic screwdriver or magnet on stick to start screws. Shifter set in R. Push in cable end one click for R and connect swivel end. Snug up 2 nuts, check movement through all positions. Connect small cable. Check movement. Tighten nuts.



The solenoid on the back of the shifter prevents movement without the brake pedal. The small microswitch on top tells the computer if the shifter is in J-gate mode or regular PRND mode.

Connect big green plug, test Park, key start, Reverse, Drive and all other positions.

Shift to R or N when putting the top console back on, connect cig lighter and 2 switches.