

Clutch - Methods to Free a Sticking One- by Lee Vermeiren & John Bower (tOTG)

The clutch on my 8N was sticking and failing to release when the pedal was depressed. I got advice saying what I expected, that the fix was to replace the clutch and that oil fouling was the culprit.

I got one reply from a post over on YT with a cheap and easy fix that I decided to try. As suggested I removed the starter, took a can of choke/carb cleaner and modified the tip of the spray tube to almost a 90 degree angle with a lighter so it'd spray where I wanted. I used a C-clamp to block down the clutch and hopefully allow the carb cleaner to hit all the surfaces. I used the carb cleaner to spray the clutch, pressure plate and flywheel surfaces, turning the flywheel with a screwdriver after thoroughly soaking things and repeated this process a number of times. The excess, dirty carb cleaner just ran out the weep hole. The clutch works like a new one. It releases like it should and engages nice and smooth. I can't say how long it'll last but the poster said he hadn't had to repeat the process in over 2 years. I hope this saves somebody some time and money. I just love cheap and easy fixes.

Note: It's been over a year now since I freed my clutch using the carb cleaner and have had no problems what so ever.

Lee Vermeiren

Seems like there are always threads about N's with the clutch disengaging erratically, if at all. Several things cause this; lack of regular use, gummy oil on the clutch plate from a leaking seal in transmission, moisture leading to rust. The correct solution is to split the tractor and repair/replace the issues. Participants on this site often look for shortcuts to avoid the work and expense involved in the full repair...block the pedal down, drag the brakes, drive tractor into a tree, etc. I've found a shortcut fix that works better than all others.

Brake cleaner sprayed on the clutch plate and flywheel will cause the clutch to function properly without sticking. First, the clutch must be disengaged. Heat is the best aid I've found. In lieu of a hot summer day, I direct the heat from my salamander jobsite heater at the bell housing with the clutch pedal blocked down. If the clutch doesn't spontaneously release I may need to start the tractor in gear and drag the brakes.

I drill a 7/32" hole into the bell housing on the right side about 2" back from the parting line at about the 2:00 O'clock position. Using the little tube supplied with the brake cleaner can I spray fluid into the compartment in the direction of the back of the flywheel. With the brakes locked on I do this with the engine running and the clutch pedal depressed, then ride the clutch for a couple of seconds. This creates heat and friction on the clutch disk and aids the clutch cleaner to work the gunk out of the clutch disk. Be sure the drip hole in the bottom of the housing is open because a lot of nasty stuff runs out. I repeat this time and again until I've used the entire can of cleaner. When finished I tap my 7/32 hole to 1/4"x20 and close the hole with a stubby machine screw.

This method has worked every time I've used it.

Best regards,
tOTG (the Old Tractor Guy)

Here are a couple of other techniques to break the clutch free and save splitting the tractor:

If the clutch has not been stuck for long you can probably get it unstuck by jacking up one wheel and with the tractor out in the open or with the bumper against a big tree with no slack between the two. Start the tractor and with it in high gear (4th) with the clutch pedal tied down and the engine RPM all the way open, drop the jack so that the wheel hits the ground suddenly and if it doesn't come loose the first time try it a couple more. Most of the time it will come loose if in fact it is stuck and not damaged in some way.

Anonymous



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