

Elementary, my dear Watson

Rob Crawford, Mike Porter and Gerhard Groenewald share some tried-and-tested techniques to carry out a few very basic bush repairs on your 4x4. Granted, it probably won't get you home, but at least you'll make it to the next town.



Laugh all you want. If your vehicle's wheel has fallen off, a bush repair job won't take you very far. Then it's time for panicking (or a special Plan B).



1. Broken windscreen wipers

"This is an easy one. Cut a potato in half and rub the flat side over the outside of the windscreen.

"The residue the potato leaves on the glass will help repel rainwater.

"It is not as effective as wind-

screen wipers, but it's still better than leaning out the window and using your hands!" – **Rob**

Plan B: Don't eat potatoes? Try Rain-X, a special water-repelling spray that can be applied to the windscreen.

The boffins



ROB CRAWFORD
4x4 instructor and regular contributor to *Drive Out*



MIKE PORTER
Land Rover enthusiast and owner of LR Service Centre

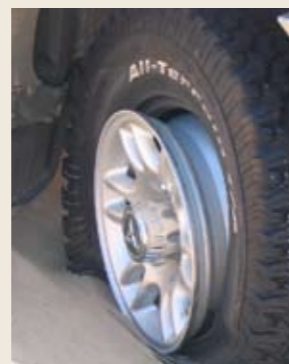


GERHARD GROENEWALD
4x4 Eco Challenge founder

2. A wheel has popped off the rim

"This happens frequently when driving at low tyre pressure in sand. The easiest way to get the tyre back on the rim is to sprinkle some petrol on the inside of the tyre (not too much – just a few drops, like when you shake your hands dry after washing them), give it a few seconds to vapourise and then light it.

"The fumes ignite with a bang and the force of the blast and the wave of kinetic energy that is released, provide enough force to pop the tyre back on, and seat the tyre on the rim. The hot air from the explosion partially inflates the tyre, but you still have to use your compressor to inflate it properly." – **Gerhard**



3. A hole in the radiator

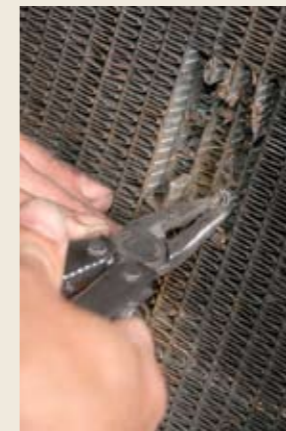
"If you are able to access the radiator, use your Leatherman to crimp the ends of each broken pipe closed. Each tube operates independently, so this won't disrupt the system.

"If you can't reach the radiator, the easiest solution is to pour in a few teaspoons of turmeric or curry powder (a few teaspoons will do).

"A while back when we damaged the radiator in the Kalahari I tried out this

technique and it sealed it up perfectly. In fact, I went on driving with it for over a year afterwards without any hassles!" – **Mike**

Plan B: If you don't want to pour turmeric into your radiator, buy a container of Perm-o-Seal (a permanent sealant for radiators, water jackets and cylinder heads) from your local automotive supplier before you leave home.



4. Leaking brake pipes

• "This can happen because you've had the suspension raised and the fitment centre forgot to adjust the brake pipes for the increased wheel travel.

"If a pipe does break, it's important to seal it off as soon as possible to prevent all your brake fluid leaking out. Use a Leatherman to bend and crimp

the ends. Sure, this wheel will no longer be braked, but at least you'll still be able to stop your 4x4." – **Gerhard**

• And if too much brake fluid has leaked out? "Replace it with dishwashing liquid. Your brakes might feel weak and mushy, but they'll still do the job." – **Mike**



PHOTOGRAPHS SCARLETT STEER*

5. A cracked water pipe

"Ideally you should carry spares, but if you are caught without any, you can attempt a basic repair.

"Always start by removing the radiator cap to release the pressure in the system. Then hold the pipe and bend it so the crack gets bigger. Squeeze silicone sealant into the hole.

"Once this has dried, wrap whatever you can get your

hands on (duct tape, bandages) liberally around the pipe, and secure it tightly using some wire." – **Rob**

Plan B: Come prepared: the best thing for in-the-field water pipe repairs is self-vulcanising tape, which fuses into a permanent seal around the hole. Get it from your local car specialist.



* Photographs courtesy of LR Service Centre