



Technical Service Bulletin: Stiff Steering

Troubleshooting stiff or binding steering can be challenging, but here are some steps you can take to diagnose and potentially resolve the issue:

Check for Contamination: Inspect the steering system for any obstructions or debris that may be interfering with the movement of components. Remove any obstructions and flush the steering system as needed.

Pro Tip- A coffee filter can be used to spot contaminants when draining the fluid

Pro Tip- A turkey baster or wet dry shop vac can be used to clean out debris from reservoir

Complete Post Installation Bleed Procedure: Noisy pump operation, lack of power assist, or stiff steering can be caused by air trapped in the PS system. Removing this air is vital for a healthy PS system and must be completed after changing any parts of the system. Refer to MAVAL's system bleed procedure for a step-by-step guide.

Check the Fluid Level: Low hydraulic fluid can cause stiff steering. Locate the power steering fluid reservoir and check the fluid level. If it's low, add the appropriate type of fluid recommended in your vehicle's manual. MAVAL recommends using the OE suggested fluid. Inferior fluid can cause premature failure of your PS system.

Inspect for Leaks: Look for any signs of leaks around the power steering system, such as wet spots or dripping fluid. Leaks can lead to a loss of hydraulic pressure, resulting in stiff steering.

Pro Tip- A drop of dish soap in a squirt bottle can be sprayed on pressurized fittings and lines to help spot a leak that may not be easily detected.

Check the Power Steering Belt: A loose or worn power steering belt can cause stiff steering. Inspect the belt for signs of wear, cracks, or looseness. If necessary, tighten or replace the belt according to your vehicle's manual.

Check the Power Steering Pump: The power steering pump generates hydraulic pressure to assist with steering. If the pump is failing or malfunctioning, it can cause stiff steering. Listen for any unusual noises coming from the power steering pump while turning the steering wheel.

Inspect the Power Steering Hoses: Cracked or damaged power steering hoses can result in fluid leaks and stiff steering. Inspect the hoses for signs of wear, cracks, or leaks. Defective PS hoses can also allow air into the system causing foaming and noise. MAVAL recommends replacing hoses older than 5 years.

Check the Rack / Gear: If the steering gear is worn or damaged, it can cause stiff steering. Inspect the steering gear for any signs of wear, looseness, or damage.