



VW AIR-COOLED HAND BRAKE ADJUSTMENT: PROCEDURE AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Note: The hand brake should be adjusted whenever the rear brake shoes have worn enough to allow you to raise the lever five clicks without noticeable braking action. It is essential that the cables be adjusted so that the “compensating” or “balance” bar (immediately below the adjusting nuts on the hand brake) is horizontal when the hand brake is applied. If the rear brake shoes are adjusted properly but the compensating lever isn’t horizontal after adjustment of the hand brake cables, one cable may be stretched and, if left in service, will eventually break. If only one of the cables is broken or damaged, you don’t have to replace the other one, but one cable will be more stretched than the other. It’s easier to adjust two cables of the same age, so we recommend replacing both cables when one fails.

1. Jack up the rear of the car and place it on jack stands.
2. Adjust the rear brakes if necessary.
3. Go to the front of the car and remove the rubber boot from the brake handle.
4. Use two 10mm wrenches (spanners) to loosen the top nut on the top of the cable. Hold the cable from turning with a screwdriver in the slot. Loosen both sides.
5. Pull the lever up three clicks.
6. Turn the bottom nuts down on the cables until you can just turn each rear wheel by hand. Braking effort must be equal on both sides.
7. When you are four notches on the handle, the wheels should be stopped, and you should be unable to turn the wheels by hand.
8. Release the brake again and make sure that the wheels turn freely and that they are “balanced” -- both stop at the same time. Readjust as necessary.
9. When the brakes are tight at four notches and the lever and free when the lever is released, you have them right.
10. When they are right, run the top nuts down on the bottom nuts. Hold the bottom one with one wrench while you tighten the top one--this locks the adjustment.
11. Reinstall the rubber boot.



1956-1979 Hand Brake Chrome Handle Lever Kit