

SECTION 12

SLACK ADJUSTERS

51.0 Adjusting slack adjusters.

If you have a coach and do any routine maintenance there will come a time when you have to adjust your brakes, or loosen the pads or shoes for the purpose of making repairs. There are self adjusting and manual adjusted types. **Note: to do any adjusting on an axle with parking (emergency spring) brakes you MUST release the parking brakes. Make certain the bus wheels are chocked and there will be no danger of rolling.**

51.1 Manual slack adjusters

If you have manual slack adjusters, the arm that is actuated by the brake chamber rod will have only one clevis and rod, as seen in the photo below.



In the photo above, the slack adjuster is for the tag axle, and the clevis and rod is from the brake chamber. The adjusting bolt is the 9/16" hex head shown just below the small grease fitting.

50.2 Adjusting manual slack adjusters.

The Hex head bolt which requires a 9/16" box or open end wrench is surrounded by a spring loaded sleeve. Push the wrench onto the hex head adjusting bolt by pushing inward toward the slack adjuster body. Turn clockwise to tighten the brakes and counterclockwise to loosen or open them.

Brakes are properly adjusted for use by tightening until you cannot turn the wrench, and then backing off (turning counterclockwise) $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ turn. When you remove the wrench the spring loaded sleeve should spring out, enclosing the hex head and locking it in place to prevent turning. It is critical that the sleeve locks the hex head adjuster. When you loosen or tighten the adjuster what you are doing is rotating the cam shown in the picture to relax or tighten the brake shoes. (The cam looks like the configuration weather men use to show the eye of a hurricane.)

The picture above is of a tag axle hub assembly without brake shoes, brake drum, or hub for clarity.

50.3 Self adjusting slack adjusters

The self adjusters will have a clevis attached to the rod from the brake chamber, and on the end of that clevis will be a small rod going to the self adjusting mechanism as shown in the photo below.



This photo is of a front axle self adjusting slack adjuster.

50.4 Adjusting self adjusting slack adjusters.

That title above sure makes it clear we'll be doing some adjusting. You can adjust your brakes if they are equipped with self adjusters just by depressing and releasing your brakes until they are properly adjusted. But this procedure only tightens your brakes and if you are about to do some service that requires the brakes to be released or loosened you will need to follow the procedure below.

The adjusting bolt on self adjusters is a 5/16 square at the bottom of the slack adjuster. It is locked, unless you lift the spring loaded pin.



In this photo it shows a small scraper inserted under the spring loaded pin and twisted slightly to raise the pin, allowing the adjusting bolt to turn.



In this photo the pin is released and a wrench has been slid onto the adjusting bolt. Clockwise tightens, and counterclockwise loosens the brakes.



When adjusting to a roadworthy condition, like the manual adjusters I tighten fully, and then back counterclockwise $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ turn.

Before driving I apply and release the brakes about five or ten times just to insure they have been tightened or adjusted properly.

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