

Ford Focus steaming once in awhile



Removing the front makes this job easier

The owner of this Ford Focus 1.6 SCTi, had occasionally spotted a little trace of what looked to be smoke or steam coming from the front of the Focus.

Checking the under-bonnet levels just to see if everything was OK, he noticed that the coolant header tank was low. He contacted me before doing anything else, to ask if I could have a look.

When the Focus came in, I put it up on the ramp and used a coolant pressure tester on the cooling system. Once the system was under pressure, I could see coolant running steadily from the base of the radiator. Closer inspection confirmed that it was the radiator at fault, and this would need replacing.

Sitting tightly at the front of the car the job time on this one is 1.7 hours, and while that is an achievable time, it doesn't really take account of the labour to then refill the system and bleed it out.

The manual gives the instructions that the radiator should drop down from underneath once the supporting bracket has been removed, but due to sticking hoses and corroded fixings, it can often be easier and quicker to remove the front of the vehicle to give clear access to the radiator pipes and fixings.

With the front removed, the radiator could be replaced and it is much easier to locate the top fixings when they can be seen.