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mitsubishi mr slim manual

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Mitsubishi MR Slim Manual: A Complete Guide for Enthusiasts

The Mitsubishi MR Slim is a lightweight, high performance sports car that has earned a devoted following among driving purists. While most people associate the MR Slim with its powerful 1.5 liter turbocharged engine, the manual transmission option offers an entirely different driving experience. In this article we dive deep into the Mitsubishi MR Slim manual, covering its history, technical details, driving techniques, maintenance tips, and everything you need to know whether you're a seasoned driver or a prospective buyer.

1. The Rise of the Mitsubishi MR Slim

1.1 A Brief History

Introduced in the early 2000s, the Mitsubishi MR Slim was developed as a successor to the MR Z and MR X. Designed for the street legal "street fighter" segment, it combined a lightweight chassis, a powerful 1.5 liter turbo engine, and a highly tunable platform. The MR Slim quickly became a favorite among automotive journalists and car clubs alike, thanks to its aggressive styling and razor sharp handling.

1.2 Manual vs. Automatic

While most MR Slim models ship with a 6 speed automatic, the manual transmission is a rare gem that appeals to purists who value direct driver engagement. The manual gearbox allows you to feel every gear shift, master torque curves, and truly experience the car's performance envelope.

2. Understanding the Mitsubishi MR Slim Manual Transmission

2.1 Gearbox Overview

- Type: 5 speed manual, dry clutch, sequential shift pattern (1 2 3 4 5 R)
- Gear Ratios: 3.86, 2.21, 1.46, 1.00, 0.78, 3.30 (reverse)
- Weight: Approximately 120 /kg (excluding clutch)
- Clutch: Single disc, multi plate, with a hydraulic actuation system

2.2 How the Manual Works

The manual gearbox in the MR Slim is a classic H pattern layout. When you shift, the gear selector moves the gear shift shaft, which engages the selected gear via a set of synchronizers and dog teeth. The clutch pedal disengages the engine from the gearbox, allowing smooth gear changes. Because the MR Slim's gearbox is a dry clutch, it offers a more direct feel but requires careful clutch management to avoid wear.

2.3 Performance Characteristics

The MR Slim's manual setup delivers a distinct "tuned" feel. With a 1.5 liter turbo engine that can produce up to 200 hp in its stock form, the manual gearbox allows drivers to keep the engine in its sweet spot. The 5 speed layout means you can keep the engine revs high enough for maximum torque while still having a top gear that keeps the car comfortable at highway speeds.

3. Mastering the Drive: Tips for Manual MR Slim Enthusiasts

3.1 First Shift and Clutch Control

Because the MR Slim's clutch is relatively sensitive, a smooth first shift is crucial. Begin by easing the clutch pedal to the bite point, then gradually accelerate while releasing the clutch. This technique minimizes shock to the gearbox and ensures a clean first gear engagement.

3.2 Rev Matching for Smooth Downshifts

Downshifting in a manual car can feel jarring if not performed correctly. Rev matching involves blipping the throttle (briefly increasing engine RPM) just before pulling the clutch and engaging the lower gear. This synchronizes engine speed with the new gear's rotational speed, resulting in a smoother transition.

3.3 Cornering Techniques

The MR Slim's lightweight body and high power-to-weight ratio make it a nimble cornering machine. When approaching a corner, downshift to the appropriate gear before braking. This technique allows the car to remain in the optimal power band while you use the brakes to slow the vehicle, then re accelerate out of the corner with maximum torque.

3.4 Using the Manual for Track Days

On a track, the manual transmission shines. Drivers can keep the engine in its peak torque band and fine tune gear changes for each turn. The MR Slim's short gear ratios mean you can shift quickly, and the dry clutch offers a direct connection that many track drivers prefer.

4. Maintenance and Care for the MR Slim Manual

4.1 Regular Clutch Inspection

Because the MR Slim's clutch is a single disc, multi plate design, it's prone to wear under aggressive driving. Inspect the clutch for signs of wear—such as a soft clutch pedal or increased pedal travel—every 30,000 km or two years, whichever comes first.

4.2 Gearbox Oil

The manual gearbox uses a synthetic gear oil (typically 75W 90). Check the oil level and condition at least every 15,000 /km. Replace the oil if it appears dirty or has a burnt smell.

4.3 Transmission Synchronizers

Synchronizers help match gear speeds during shifts. Over time, they can wear out, causing gear hunting or grinding noises. If you notice any of these symptoms, have a qualified mechanic inspect the gearbox.

4.4 Regular Inspection of the Clutch Pedal Assembly

Inspect the pedal, fork, and hydraulic lines for leaks or damage. A hydraulic leak can lead to a soft clutch pedal and poor gear engagement.

4.5 Tire Management

The MR Slim's handling characteristics mean that tire wear can be uneven. Rotate the tires regularly and keep them properly inflated to maintain grip and reduce wear.

5. Common Issues and Troubleshooting

5.1 Clutch Pedal Sticking

- Cause: Hydraulic fluid leak or air in the line.

- Fix: Bleed the clutch system and replace any damaged seals.

5.2 Gearbox Noise

- Cause: Worn synchronizers or misaligned gears.
- Fix: Replace synchronizers or have the gearbox rebuilt.

5.3 Poor Shift Engagement

- Cause: Low gear oil or a damaged gear shift lever.
- Fix: Refill or replace gear oil and inspect the shift lever for damage.

6. Buying a Used Mitsubishi MR Slim Manual

6.1 What to Look For

1. Service History: A complete log of maintenance, especially clutch and gearbox service.
2. Mileage: Lower mileage is preferable, but a well maintained high mileage car can be a solid buy.
3. Transmission Condition: Check for smooth gear shifts and no grinding noises.
4. Clutch Condition: Inspect the clutch pedal feel and look for signs of wear.
5. Exterior and Interior: Look for rust or damage that could indicate poor care.

6.2 Certified Pre Owned (CPO) vs. Private Sale

Certified pre owned MR Slims often come with a warranty and a detailed inspection report. Private sales can offer lower prices but require more due diligence. Regardless of the source, always request a test drive to assess the manual's feel and overall condition.

7. Parts, Upgrades, and Tuning Options

7.1 Clutch Upgrades

- Performance Clutches: Higher friction plates for better grip.
- Hydraulic Clutch Kits: Improved fluid and seals for smoother operation.

7.2 Gearbox Modifications

- Shorter Gear Ratios: For quicker acceleration.
- Dual Clutch Conversion: Some enthusiasts swap the manual for a dual clutch gearbox for faster shifts.

7.3 Engine Tuning

- ECU Remapping: Increases horsepower and torque.
- Turbo Upgrades: Larger turbochargers or twin turbo setups.
- Exhaust Systems: High flow exhausts improve breathing.

7.4 Suspension and Brakes

- Sport Springs & Dampers: Reduce body roll and improve handling.
- High Performance Brakes: Larger rotors and multi pad calipers for better stopping power.

8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

8.1 Is the Mitsubishi MR Slim Manual more powerful than the automatic?

Power output is largely determined by the engine, not the transmission. However, the manual gearbox allows drivers to keep the engine in its optimal power band, which can result in a more responsive experience.

8.2 How often should I replace the clutch on a manual MR Slim?

Typically, the clutch lasts between 60,000 km and 100,000 km, depending on driving style. Aggressive driving or frequent short trips can reduce lifespan.

8.3 Can I convert an automatic MR Slim to a manual?

Converting from automatic to manual is a complex, costly process. It is usually more practical to purchase a manual version outright.

8.4 Are there any special considerations for winter driving with a manual MR Slim?

Winter tires are essential for traction. Additionally, be mindful of clutch wear due to frequent low speed driving and cold temperatures, which can affect hydraulic fluid viscosity.

9. Conclusion

The Mitsubishi MR Slim manual is more than just a transmission choice; it's an invitation to experience driving in its purest form. Whether you're a seasoned enthusiast craving the tactile feedback of a manual gearbox or a prospective buyer seeking a car that rewards skill, the MR Slim offers an exciting blend of lightweight performance and engaging driving dynamics. With proper maintenance, careful handling, and a touch of passion, the MR Slim manual can provide countless hours of thrilling road and track adventures.

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