



Crimping bullet connectors and faston terminals

Whether you are doing maintenance on the electrical system on a classic car like an MGB or installing new wiring for additional equipment, getting a good crimped bullet connector or faston is essential.

Bullets come in two types, one for crimping and the other for soldering. Crimping bullets are the same size to fit the connector tubes but they are specific to the wire type – for example heavy wire for headlights, medium for relays and light wire for instruments. If the wire goes into a bullet then it's the right size. The bullets and connector tubes are available in packs from Maplin or auto-electrics parts suppliers like Holden Vintage & Classics and Halfords.

A **professional crimping tool** puts a nice hexagonal crimp all the way round the bullet and an alternative, lower cost tool, simply puts a flat on each side of the bullet. **Bullet connector tubes** come in single, double or five-in-five-out types.

Faston or Lucar connectors were seen on cars from around the 70s and they are a simple spade connector. The crimp pliers have one half of the tool with a "U" shape and one with a "W" shape to point the ends of the tails into the crimp and also a wire stripping section for various thicknesses of wire. It gives a neat crimp and then the tail flaps have to be wrapped round the wire. A heat shrink plastic sleeving provides a really professional finish to a crimped Faston.

Soldering as well as crimping a connector is felt by some engineers to be unwise if the crimp is done well. The bullet and crimp

wire in the area where the wire exits the connector without strain relief, so any vibration might lead to an early failure. The relaxation of the spring force on Faston terminals when soldered is also a concern, so soldering in addition to good quality crimping is best avoided.

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Faston or Lucar crimping tool

terminal manufactures have spent time and money developing a system that would work under the conditions experienced in a car that is fast and cost effective to install and would last a long time. Soldering the connector should be approached with great care, since a poor job can make the crimp unreliable. Something often overlooked when soldering stranded wires is that if the soldering is done properly and the wire was at the right temperature, the solder will flow by capillary action between the strands for as much as 5 to 10 mm away from the joint. What this does is reduce the flexibility of the

