16 Driveshaft universal joints - check and replacement

Note:
Some models have a rubber coupling between the driveshaft and transmission instead of a universal joint (see Section 14) .

Check

1 Wear in the universal joints is characterized by vibration in the transmission, noise during acceleration, and metallic squeaking and grating sounds as the bearings disintegrate. The joints can be checked with the driveshaft in place, but it will be necessary to remove the exhaust system and heat shields (see Chapter 4) to gain access.

2 If the driveshaft is in position on the vehicle, try to turn the driveshaft while holding the transmission/differential flange. Free play between the driveshaft and the front or rear flanges indicates excessive wear.

3 If the driveshaft is already removed, you can check the universal joints by holding the shaft in one hand and turning the yoke or flange with the other. If the axial movement is excessive, replace the driveshaft.

Replacement

4 At the time of writing, no spare parts were available to enable replacement of the universal joints to be carried out. Therefore, if any joint shows signs of damage or wear the complete driveshaft assembly must be replaced. Consult your BMW dealer for the latest information on parts availability.

5 If replacement of the driveshaft is necessary, it may be worthwhile seeking the advice of an automotive machine shop. They may be able to repair the original shaft assembly or supply a reconditioned shaft on an exchange basis.