



What's all the fuss about RR363 Brake Fluid?

In the Rolls-Royce fraternity, nothing seems to cause more controversy than Castrol RR363 hydraulic fluid. Any mention on a forum or chat room seems to generate acres of comment, with any number of views (some very vociferous). After all, RR363 is just a glycol-based oil, very similar to DOT3 and DOT4 synthetic oils. So why all the fuss?

Deep breath...

When the Silver Shadow series was introduced, Rolls-Royce originally recommended DOT3 brake fluid, and it's true – you can use it without causing irrevocable damage to the complex hydraulic system of your Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow, Bentley T-Type or Corniche (**take note, though, from chassis 50001 (1980) Corniche onward you *must* use green mineral fluid**). Pretty soon after the Silver Shadow (etc.) was introduced, owners started to complain about funny knocks and squeaks, emanating particularly from the hydraulic rear height control rams. To cure this, Rolls-Royce Motorcars Limited developed RR363 with Castrol Oils. RR363 cured the squeaks, and everyone lived happily ever after.

Except they didn't.

Most people know that Castrol added a certain amount of castor oil to the glycol base. Well, DOT3/4 oil is cheap, and castor oil is cheap, why not mix a bit up at home? Job done.

Not quite. There are two issues. Firstly, the viscosity of DOT3/4 and castor oil is different. If you leave it in a jar (or in the reservoir of your braking system) it will separate, and one oil will float on top of the other. If they're separate, you won't get the benefit of both parts. Castrol solved this by adding a chemical dispersant to the oil, which keeps the castor oil evenly dispersed through the base oil. Secondly, the castor oil in RR363 is *not* common or garden castor oil that you can buy online. In RR363 it's an ethoxylated/propoxylated castor oil, which is chemically quite different.

That's why we recommend RR363, and our customers drive squeak-free Rolls-Royces...

