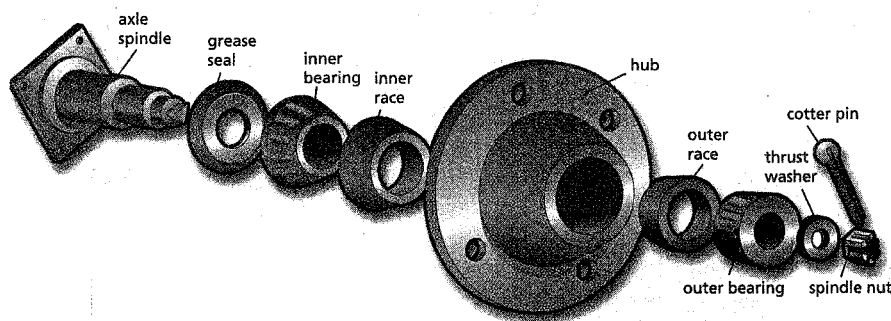


For most trailerboat owners, repacking the trailer wheels is a once-a-year chore. It may not be the cleanest project in the world, but it's a relatively simple one that can pay off in longer trailer life.



Here's how to do it right:

1 Remove the boat from the trailer. Put chocks under the wheel you'll be working on last (opposite the one you're looking at now).

Then, put a jack under the trailer axle and jack up the wheel you will be working on first. It's a good idea to cushion the axle by placing a board between the axle and the jack.

Next, clean away all dirt from the front and back of the wheel.

2 Remove the wheel bearing protector, or dust cover, which is fitted to the hub. It can usually be removed by inserting a screwdriver blade between the hub and the outer edge of the protector. Pry it out a little at a time, taking the blade entirely around the inside of the hub.

3 Take off the cotter pin and spindle nut, and wipe away any grease. If the pin is worn, replace it later with a new one.

4 Grab the tire, tilt it upward slightly and pull it outward. Then, lift the thrust washer and outer bearing

cone out of the hub.

After removing the hub, clean all pieces, then set them aside.

It may take a tap of a rubber hammer on the back side of the hub assembly to loosen the inner bearing cone and seal.

Take the grease seal and inner cone out of the hub by placing the hub flat on two parallel boards, atop a layer of fresh newspaper, with the seal and cone at the bottom.

Wipe away the grease in the hub's hole, then put a wooden tool handle into that hole. Set its end on the face of the inner cone and tap gently around the hub's perimeter until the grease seal and cone pop out onto the newspaper.

5 Clean the grease off all parts with commercial solvent. Make sure rollers in the cones turn freely, and look for any signs that a part may need to be replaced — such as rust, heat discoloration or pitted surfaces.

6 If the axle spindle is badly worn, the bearing may be frozen. File off any odd bumps you find on the spin-

dle and finish it with emery cloth.

If the seal surface on the rear of the spindle is roughened by rust or pitting, it can be repaired with a spindle seal kit — containing a stainless steel collar, an O-ring and a replacement seal.

7 Replace all the old seals with new ones.

8 If one bearing needs to be replaced, it's a good idea to replace both at the same time. Remove the inner race from the hub.

Be sure to use the proper size bearings. Replace both the race and its mating bearing cone as a unit.

9 Repack bearings with new, clean wheel bearing grease. Put a large dollop of grease in a plastic bag and drop the inner bearing cone into it.

Push grease into the cone until it permeates the inside space between the rollers. When the inner cone is well coated, remove it from the bag and set it in its race.

Tap the grease seal into the inside of the hub with a rubber hammer. Fill it with new grease, then slip the hub over the spindle.

10 Then, install the newly greased outer bearing cone, thrust washer and spindle nut. Tighten the nut by hand, then spin the wheel and tighten the nut until the hub begins to bind as it turns.

Back the nut off one notch, and the wheel should spin easily and smoothly. When you are satisfied with the movement, put in the cotter pin.

11 Fill the bearing protector with new grease, coat the mating surfaces and tap the protector into place with a rubber hammer.

Pump the protector full of grease, using a grease gun, until the piston moves off its seat almost to the top. Then stop, so that the piston can push out a little more when the hub gets hot during use.

12 Lower the wheel and remove the jack. Then, begin the process all over again for the second trailer wheel.