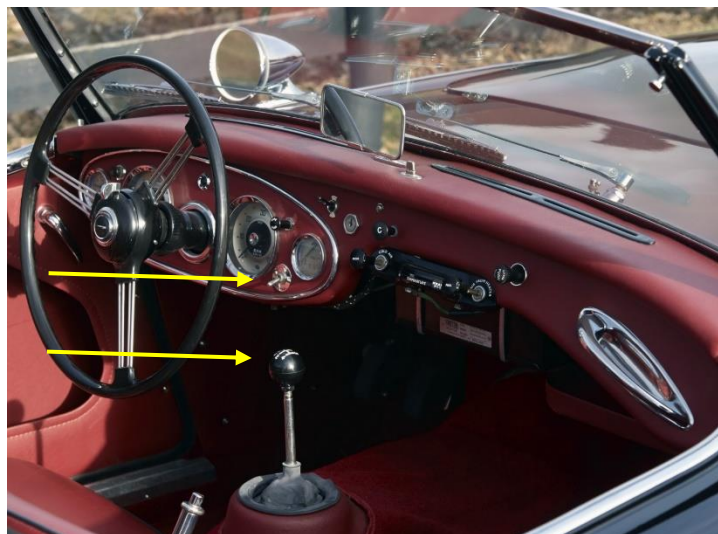
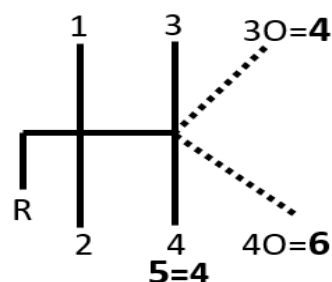
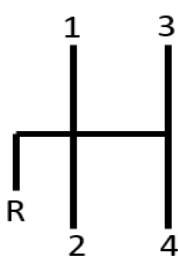
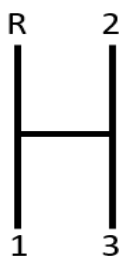


OK, let me start out by saying that I am not unfamiliar with 6 speed transmissions. My first was my 63 Austin Healey, shown here on the right, and unfortunately; I don't have a picture of the interior, so what is shown below is not a picture of my interior. I'm only using it in the explanation.



Take note of the two yellow arrows. I am using them to draw attention to the fact that the gear shift pattern shows the typical H pattern (with Reverse dog-leg not shown) for speeds one through four. That is where the second upper yellow arrow comes in. That toggle switch is important. Back in 1970, when I owned the Healey, I used that switch all the time. I thought it was the coolest thing to date at the time in my driving experience having been brought up with the traditional H pattern for shifting 3 speed transmissions.



On the left you see the shifting pattern I got used to, when I learned how to drive. Of course that pattern was not on the floor then, it was on the column. Never-the-less, I was very used to the 3 speeds up until I drove the Alfa-Romero, which had a "4 on the floor"; in the pattern shown in the middle above. And actually that was someone else's car, I just had the use of it for 3 months while the owner was at sea. But it set the stage for me buying the Austin Healey when I got to Hawaii. The Healey as I have mentioned had the pattern on the right – which as you notice with the dotted lines, requires an explanation.

Shifting the gears of the Healey was really not any different for gears 1 through 3. That's when things got cool. Once you hit 3<sup>rd</sup>, you hand would leave the shifter up to the dashboard and you would throw the toggle switch. That would turn on the electronically engaged over-drive in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> OVERDRIVE. Essentially you had reached an "interim 4<sup>th</sup>" with a partial range. When the revs maxed out, you would again reach up turn the switch off, lower your hand to the gear shift and shift into "4<sup>th</sup>" which was now actually by outward appearance be FIFTH. Which again you would max out the RPM before reaching up to the dashboard turning the switch on again; essentially completing the SIX SPEED TRANSMISSION, in 4<sup>th</sup> Overdrive. So the transition from a standard (manual) transmission to that of an electronically controlled SIX speed Transmission, I did now over 50 years ago.

My most memorable USE of the six speeds was one early morning as I was coming back to the south shore of Oahu on the Likelike Highway. I had pulled up alongside a brand-new Porsche 911 at the intersection where Highway 83 branches off. The driver and I exchanged compliments on our respective cars, and when the light turned green, we both accelerated up the Likelike. Going up the grade both of our exhausts sounded great, and all of a sudden, the driver of the Porsche started to slow down. When slow enough to be heard, he yelled over; commenting on how great our cars sounded together accelerating under load. He also said, "It will sound even better in the tunnel". I nodded my head and we both accelerated on our way to the tunnel.

Once we got to the entrance of the tunnel we both slowed, and came to a stop a short way in. We sat there revving our engines in harmony, and he gave a right hand count of 1 – 2 – 3; and we both took off. We were neck and neck accelerating through first, second, and third. I hit the switch after a momentary touch of clutch to insure he thought I had reached 4<sup>th</sup> as he did. Due to the limited range of the overdrive, he started to pull ahead. But then I hit the clutch, turned the switch off and shifted into the real 4<sup>th</sup>. BUT, from his perspective I had just shifted a 5<sup>th</sup> time.

Upon hearing that very distinctive sound of a 5<sup>th</sup> change of gear ratios, he turned and glared at me in amazement, mouth a-gap, as I slowly pulled ahead of him. I struggled to see his expression out the fender side-view mirror, as we cleared the tunnel and I flipped the dashboard switch for SIXTH.

I continued to pull away, perhaps 3 or 4 car lengths, riding the glory of the new day on the southern slope of the Kaliki Valley on Oahu, in Hawaii, 21 years old; having just bedazzled a new Porsche owner.

That's when the British Auto Electrical system LUCAS Electric, the people who bring you darkness came into play. My delightful Austin Healey brought to life another sound that I had gotten used to. It sounded like this; Cah, ditty Cah, ditty Cah, Cah, Cah . . . as it slowly lost all power and eventually coasted to a stop on the side of the road in silence. The Porsche driver had waved about the second ditty Cah, as he went by on the way to his morning. While I got out, opened the hood and replaced the damn coil wire that had a bad habit of falling off at the wrong damn times.

BUT – in that morning adventure – two thirds of the story is great and a huge benefit of having six gears.