

Mechanical timing sbc

Your initial timing (at idle) should probably be about 10-12 degrees advance.. what you need to check for is the timing at higher RPM's and at what point the advance timing happens. This is where a dial type timing light really works well. In the simplest of terms, as the RPM's increase, weights inside your distributor will open up (due to centrifical force) based on the type (stength) of springs you are running to hold the weights in place. You might've seen "advance curve kits" which (in part) are a series of springs usually lighter than stock to allow the centrifical force to advance the timing quicker than stock. My advice is to set the initial at about 10 degrees... then either using an advance timing light or full calibrated tape on the balancer check your total timing as you increase the RPM's. You are correct, 32-36 is normal for total advance at let's say 3K RPM's. IF you need to adjust the total advance, then you will need to change the springs (either more stiff or less) and a cam-spacer on the spring plate to keep the total advance where you want it. Remember, if the total is a bit too high, you can always put the initial a bit lower... let's say to 6 or 8 degrees.. the only trade off of doing that is sluggish engine performance especially at idle or off idle quick revs.. Finally another factor to think about with timing is compression ratio and fuel. The more timing (especially with higher compression).. the increased need for higher octane fuel..