

ADWEEK

MONROE SHOCKS & STRUTS

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Why did the squirrel cross the road? Actually, the question in this weird-but-charming online video is, If the squirrel suddenly crosses the road in front of your car, will you be able to avoid running it over? You won't if your shock absorbers are too old, because you won't have adequate control of your car. The vignette opens with a bright-eyed young squirrel standing by a mailbox (across the road from his home) and reading the exciting letter he's just received: an acceptance notice from Acorn State, presumably a distinguished seat of learning in the squirrel world. He calls across the road to his parents, who are delighted by the news. "Now you get over here and give us a hug," Mom commands. As he bounds across the road to join them, though, we see a car bearing down on him. Will our protagonist be roadkill before he even matriculates? At this point, the frame freezes, leaving us in suspense on that matter. "Squirrels make bad decisions," intones a voiceover. "You can make a good one. Replace your shocks at 50,000 miles." The video then launches into a show-and-tell discussion of exactly what shocks do. You wouldn't want to watch this repeatedly, but it's interesting enough to see once as you learn how shocks work in tandem with tires, brakes and steering system to keep the car on an even keel. We get the inevitable footage of a car swerving

around a deer in the road, as well as shots of a car plowing into a stack of bricks because it couldn't stop in time. By the time the voiceover tells us that fresh shocks "could mean the difference between having an accident and avoiding one," we understand why this is true. So, what about the would-be pride of Acorn State? At the close of the spot, we see that the car did stop in time, thanks no doubt to a good set of shocks. I don't know that this squirrel family will turn into online-video cult figures, but they do an amiable job of enlivening a low-interest product category.

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