

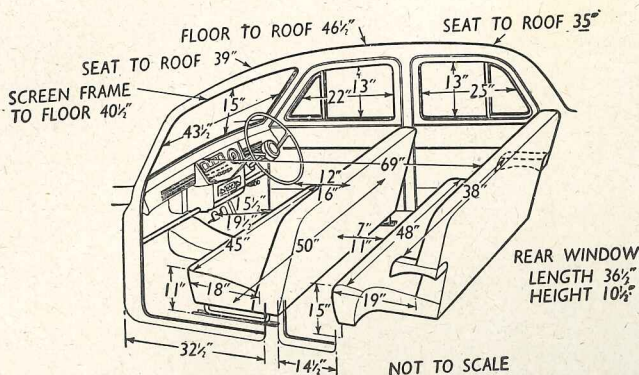
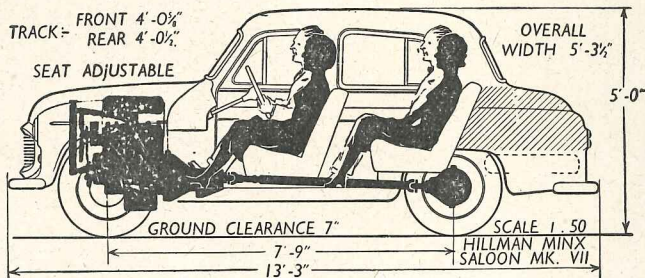
# The Motor Road Test No. 13/54

**Make:** Hillman

**Type:** Minx Saloon (Mk. VII)

**Makers:** The Hillman Motor Car Co., Ltd., Ryton-on-Dunsmore,

Coventry



## Test Data

**CONDITIONS:** Weather: Fine, mild, light wind blowing diagonally across course. Surface: Dry tar Macadam. Fuel: Premium grade.

### INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h. ... .. 8% fast  
Speedometer at 60 m.p.h. ... .. 6% fast  
Distance recorder ... .. 1% fast

### MAXIMUM SPEEDS

**Flying Quarter Mile**  
Mean of four opposite runs ... .. 69.1 m.p.h.  
Best time equals ... .. 71.4 m.p.h.

### Speed in Gears

Max. speed in 3rd gear ... .. 55 m.p.h.  
Max. speed in 2nd gear ... .. 32 m.p.h.

### FUEL CONSUMPTION

46.5 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h.  
40.0 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h.  
33.0 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h.  
28.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h.  
Overall consumption for 630 miles, 19.5 gallons,  
= 32.3 m.p.g.  
Fuel tank capacity 7 1/2 gallons.

### ACCELERATION TIMES Through Gears

0-30 m.p.h. ... .. 8.0 sec.  
0-40 m.p.h. ... .. 13.1 sec.  
0-50 m.p.h. ... .. 21.4 sec.  
0-60 m.p.h. ... .. 35.0 sec.  
Standing Quarter Mile ... .. 25.3 sec.

### ACCELERATION TIMES on Two Upper Ratios

	Top	3rd
10-30 m.p.h. ...	13.3 sec.	9.0 sec.
20-40 m.p.h. ...	14.2 sec.	9.9 sec.
30-50 m.p.h. ...	16.5 sec.	13.6 sec.
40-60 m.p.h. ...	24.6 sec.	—

### WEIGHT

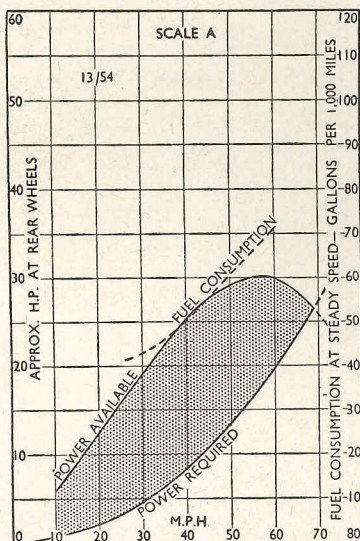
Unladen Kerb Weight ... .. 19 cwt.  
Front/rear weight distribution ... .. 51/49  
Weight laden as tested ... .. 22 1/2 cwt.

### HILL CLIMBING (At steady speeds).

Max. top gear speed on 1 in 20 ... .. 51 m.p.h.  
Max. top gear speed on 1 in 15 ... .. 44 m.p.h.  
Max. gradient on top gear ... .. 1 in 12.8 (Tapley 175 lb./ton)  
Max. gradient on 3rd gear ... .. 1 in 8.0 (Tapley 275 lb./ton)  
Max. gradient on 2nd gear ... .. 1 in 5.6 (Tapley 395 lb./ton)

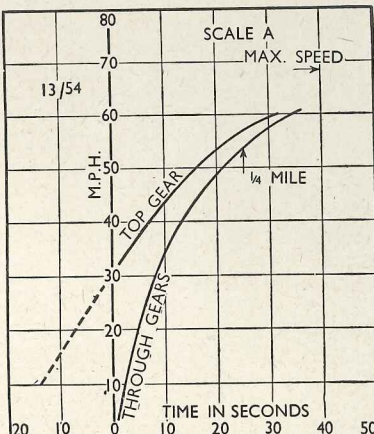
### BRAKES at 30 m.p.h.

1.00 g retardation (= 30 ft. stopping distance) with 100 lb. pedal pressure  
0.90 g retardation (= 33 1/2 ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure  
0.50 g retardation (= 60 1/2 ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure  
0.19 g retardation (= 159 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure



Drag at 10 m.p.h. ... .. 31 lb.  
Drag at 60 m.p.h. ... .. 121 lb.

Specific fuel consumption when cruising at 80% of maximum speed (i.e. 55.3 m.p.h.) on level road, based on power delivered to rear wheels ... .. 0.89 pints/b.h.p./hr.



## Maintenance

**Sump:** 7 pints, S.A.E. 30. **Gearbox:** 1 1/2 pints, S.A.E. 30. **Rear Axle:** 1 1/2 pints, S.A.E. 140 E.P. **Steering gear:** S.A.E. 140 E.P. **Radiator:** 11 pints (12 pints with heater), (2 drain taps). **Chassis Lubrication:** By grease gun every 1,000 miles to 8 points, and every 2,000 miles to 15 additional points. **Ignition timing:** 5° B.T.D.C. (standard grade fuel) or 8° B.T.D.C. (premium fuel). **Spark plug gap:** 0.028/0.032 in. **Contact breaker gap:** 0.014/0.016 in. **Valve timing:** Inlet opens 8° B.T.D.C. and closes 52° A.B.D.C. Exhaust opens 50° B.B.D.C. and closes 10° A.T.D.C. **Tappet clearances:** (Cold). Inlet 0.010 in Exhaust 0.015 in. **Front wheel toe-in:** 1/8 in. **Camber angle:** 1/2° - 1°. **Castor angle:** 3 1/2°. **Tyre pressures:** Front 25 lb. Rear 25 lb. (or 28 lb. with full load). **Brake fluid:** Lockheed Orange or No. 5. **Battery:** Lucas 12-volt, 38 amp./hr. **Lamp bulbs:** 12-volt **Headlamps:** 42/36 watt. **Side and rear number plate:** 4 watt. **Stop/tail lamps:** 18/6 watt. **Roof lamp:** 6 watt. **Direction indicator arms:** 3 watt. **Panel and warning lights:** 2.4 watt.

# The HILLMAN Minx Saloon (Mk. VII)

A Docile and Economical  
Small Car that Well Deserves  
its Continued Popularity

## In Brief

Price: £470 plus purchase tax £196 19s. 2d.  
equals £666 19s. 2d.

Capacity ... .. 1,265 c.c.

Unladen kerb weight ... .. 19 cwt.

Fuel consumption ... .. 32.3 m.p.g.

Maximum speed ... .. 69.1 m.p.h.

Maximum speed on 1 in 20 gradient 51 m.p.h.

Maximum top gear gradient ... 1 in 12.8

Acceleration:

10-30 m.p.h. in top ... .. 13.3 sec.

0-50 m.p.h. through gears ... 21.4 sec.

Gearing: 14.3 m.p.h. in top at 1,000 r.p.m.;

57.5 m.p.h. at 2,500 ft. per min. piston speed.



**SMOOTH CONTOURS.**—The clean outline of the Mk. VII Hillman Minx saloon, enhanced by the extended luggage boot, is shown to advantage in these photographs. The foglamp is an extra.



**T**HERE has been a Hillman Minx for twenty-two years. Anyone who spends a few hundred miles at the wheel of one of the current Mark VII models will find ample evidence of this exceptionally long and successful history, for it would be difficult to imagine a car which provides a better example of careful detail development. Metaphorically speaking—and literally, too, in the aerodynamic sense—most of the corners have long since been rubbed off, and the Minx does what it sets out to do exceedingly well.

The Minx, in fact, forms an outstanding vindication of its maker's two-fold policy of steady and continuous development coupled with a steadfast adherence to the basic appeal it was originally planned to fulfil. Temptations to let it "grow-up" (the ultimate ruination of so many excellent small cars in the past) have been resisted, and the current Minx appeals to exactly the same section of the motoring public today as it did in 1932.

Thus it continues to offer ample seating accommodation for four, coupled with a performance which meets the needs of the family motorist plus a useful margin to spare for the man in a hurry, and it does these things on a fuel consumption which can be regarded as very moderate even in these days of expensive highly-taxed motor

spirit. Add to these qualities the further appeal of good looks, and it is not hard to understand the continued popularity of this Rootes product.

Since the last occasion on which a Minx was tested by *The Motor*, the process of steady evolution has been continued and amongst the points which have come in for modification are the frontal treatment, the fascia panel and minor controls, the rear luggage boot (which, besides providing increased accommodation, lends a more modern aspect to the car), the brakes and the induction system (which now incorporates a thermostatically-controlled hot spot).

The Minx has always been a ready starter and the last-named change helps it to warm up to its work after a start from cold with a minimum of delay. Although performance tests were carried out on premium grade fuel, the engine is, in fact, quite happy on the standard grade or on a mixture of the two. In either case it is commendably smooth throughout the range, with no tendency towards pinking or running-on, and the principal benefit of better fuel is to make for even greater flexibility. This latter

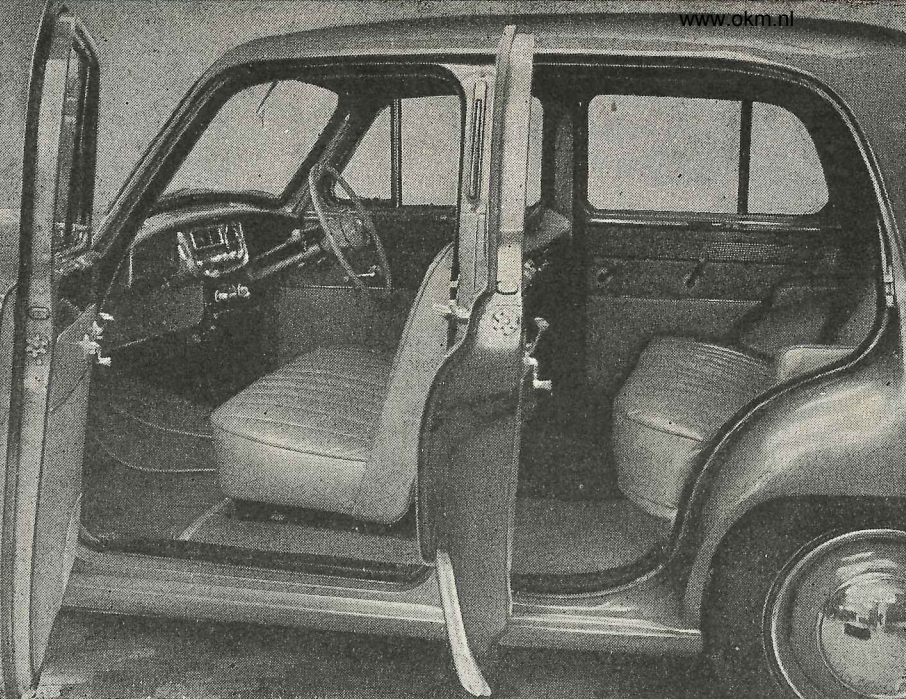
quality is a quite notable feature of the Minx and, during the top-gear acceleration tests, the engine proved most impressive in the way in which it would slog away from 8-9 m.p.h. in top gear, unhesitatingly and quite reasonably smoothly, when the throttle was opened wide.

As will be seen from the performance data, the maximum speed is virtually 70 m.p.h. and although "rumble"

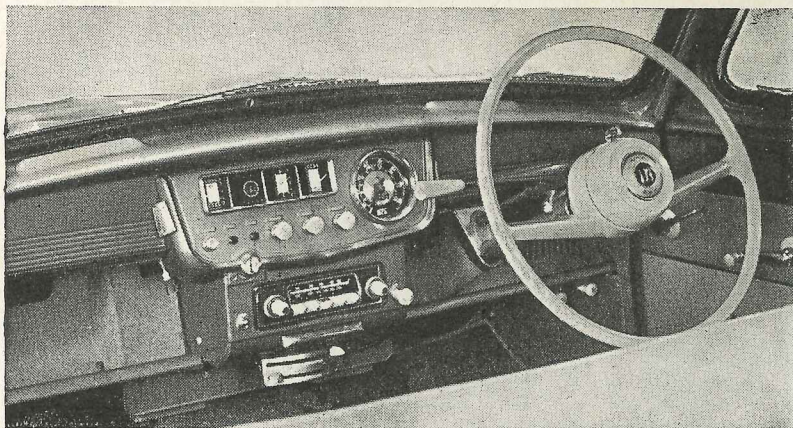
from the road surface becomes audible above 50 m.p.h. the Minx cruises at quite high speeds with so little mechanical fuss that a driver is apt to overlook the fact that a speed of 65 m.p.h. represents over 4,500 r.p.m. Whilst the present gearing is quite normal for a car of this type, a slightly higher top gear ratio would probably make the Minx even more pleasant on trunk roads without seriously spoiling its performance in town or on winding lanes. By the standards of moderately priced cars, the gearbox is very satisfactorily quiet.

## The Consumption Range

The question of economy was mentioned earlier and in this connection the bare figures quoted should be supplemented by the information that the 630 miles over which 32.3 m.p.g. was recorded included both the performance tests and a proportion of short town runs as well as several main-road journeys at averages above 40 m.p.h. Even a business user, therefore, might expect 30 m.p.g., whilst 35 m.p.g. should be obtainable under touring conditions. A good detail on the engine is the way in which the dip stick is marked to



**INTERIOR TRIM.**—Sensible features such as a combination of rubber matting and carpeting on the floor of the front compartment, wide-opening doors with rotary locks and well-spaced interior handles, are backed up by a high standard of general interior finish. Entry to the rear seat is reasonably easy despite the prominent rear wheel arches and low roof line.



**NEAT INSTRUMENTATION.**—All instruments and essential controls are neatly grouped on a compact panel, the starter push-button, on the left, being separated from the pull switches by ignition and oil pressure warning lights. Pipe smokers will particularly appreciate the pull-out ashtray beneath the optional radio which is large enough to accommodate a pipe.

indicate the actual amount of oil required, but the actual filler orifice could be improved by extending it slightly to make it easier to pour in oil from a bottle without spilling.

Like all the controls, the clutch is exceptionally light and although positive it is smooth enough in a forward direction to make second-gear starts normal on level roads; however, some care is needed in reverse if judder is to be avoided. As with most Rootes' products in recent years, the steering-column gear change is smooth in action and the synchromesh mechanism on the three upper ratios is really effective. When desired, very fast changes of gear can be made.

The latest brakes are both powerful and progressive with commendably modest demands in the matter of pedal pressure. Really excellent in shape, position and effectiveness is the man-size hand-brake lever, which is placed alongside the seat cushion where it is always at hand but never in the way. Similar good planning is in evidence in the remaining controls, a point not always found on small cars being

## The Hillman Minx

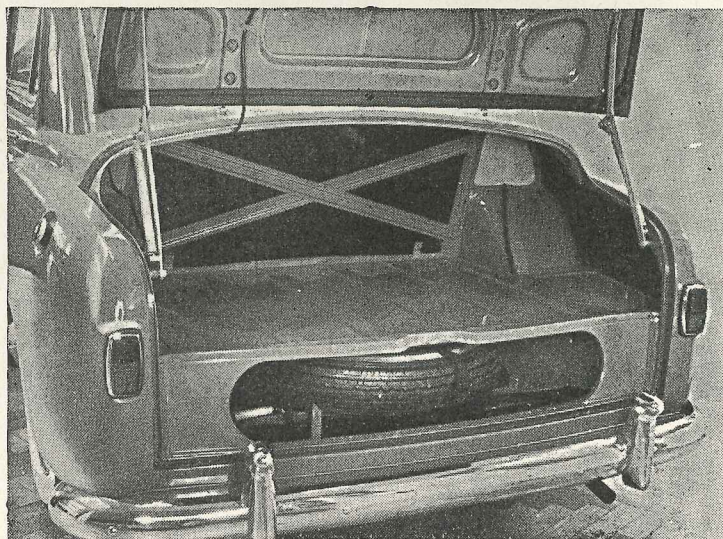
the provision of adequate room for the driver's left foot at the side of the clutch pedal. In this case, it rests on the foot dipper, which is of rather larger size than normal to make it suitable for this purpose.

Another sensible detail is that the smaller control knobs on the panel are all of the pull-out variety except for the starter, which, being of the solenoid type, takes the form of a push button and cannot therefore be confused with the remainder. On the car tried a minor point of criticism concerned the accelerator pedal, the cable action of which was by no means as smooth as one could wish. For the brake and clutch, pedal rubbers are an extra and one which the buyer will find a sound investment as, without them, we noticed some tendency for the feet to slip when the pedals were fully depressed.

### The Buyers' Option

To digress for a moment, it is worth pointing out here that pedal rubbers form one of a considerable number of extras which are obtainable for this car. The manufacturers take the line that buyers' ideas on what are, and are not, essential detail items vary very considerably, and that it is, therefore, better in a car of this kind to omit fittings which are open to debate in this respect, but to make them readily available as optional equipment for those who require them. In this way the standard price of the car is kept to an attractive and competitive figure, but the buyer has the choice of a very wide variety of suitable extras readily available to suit his own particular needs, even such equipment as loose seat covers and a tow-bar attachment being amongst the items listed. A full schedule will be found in the tabulated matter on the next page.

To revert to the behaviour of the Minx, the suspension provides a soft but adequately damped ride, completely free from pitch but not entirely innocent of



**ENLARGED.**—One of the principal features of the MK. VII Minx is the enlarged luggage boot and an arrangement whereby the rear lamp bulbs also illuminate the interior of the boot.

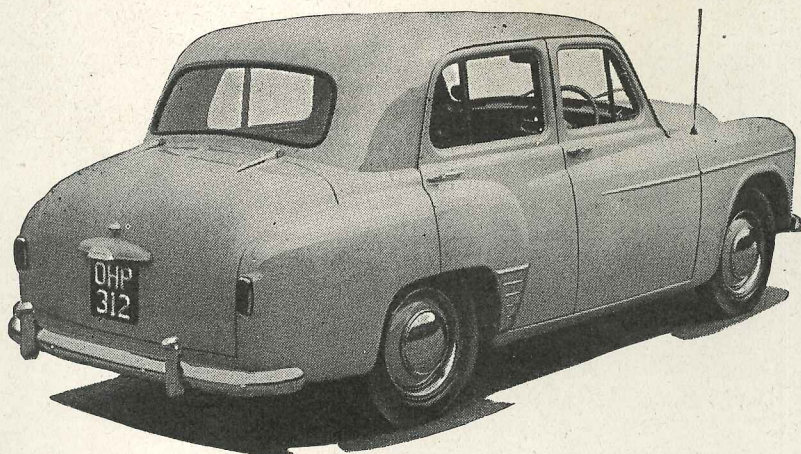
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roll, the latter however being restrained from assuming unpleasant proportions by an anti-sway bar at the rear. The steering is light and responsive, yet road shocks are not transmitted to the wheel. On corners, the Minx behaves very well when driven in touring fashion, although a considerable degree of oversteer is in evidence if sports-car tactics are employed.

In the matter of seating accommodation, the Minx offers a good standard of both room and comfort. At the front, a bench-type seat is provided and this could, perhaps, be improved if the cushion were extended slightly to give additional support to the thighs; as, however, spells of upwards of 2½ hours at the wheel gave rise to no serious discomfort, this point cannot be regarded as of major importance. Headroom generally is good and so is the all-round view offered by the large window area. Set higher than the front seat, the rear seat provides very adequate knee

suggestion of austerity although, in fact, the appointments are simple and straightforward. In this respect the reverse-finished transparent plastic fascia panel is both attractive and practical. The instruments have white lettering on a black ground and a sensible detail in these days of export sales and foreign touring is the inclusion of metric as well as English markings. A mileage trip recorder might, however, be added to the speedometer with advantage. At night, the panel lighting is perhaps a little on the bright side although a convenient switch (in an isolated position where it cannot be mistaken) makes this easy to switch off when not required.

Ventilation has obviously been the subject of considerable care and, in addition to hinged ventilators on the forward edges of the front windows, provision is made to admit additional fresh air quietly and without draughts via ducts taking their



**TAILPIECE.**—Compared with the Mk. VI version, the lengthened and reshaped tail enhances the "big-car" appearance of the current model.

room so long as the bench-type driving seat is not adjusted too far back.

Other detail features include checks which hold the doors fully open, wipers which clear a wide area of the large screen but are insufficiently powerful to work smoothly on drying glass, a well-placed sun vizzor with a universal mounting to give side protection when required, and window winders which are not only light to operate but also quick acting. Another small point which adds to user convenience is the fact that the interior handles of the rear doors are placed well forward where the driver can easily reach them to unlock the doors from the front seat, although in contrast the winder handle for the front window is awkwardly adjacent to the driver's knee. Less satisfactory is the accommodation for odds and ends, the parcel shelf below the fascia being rather small and having only a low ledge to retain articles, whilst the doors are not fitted with pockets. There is, however, a parcel shelf behind the rear squab.

In general trim and finish, the manufacturers have contrived to produce a comfortable and welcoming effect with no

supply from the front grille. When a heater is fitted, this unit provides for a further silent and draughtless supply of fresh air, either hot or cold at will, with arrangements also for de-misting. A control knob enables the air supply to the heater to be cut off temporarily, when the car is halted in traffic or on other occasions when the supply of outside air is temporarily far from fresh. The heater could, however, be improved if the control lever provided a more progressive adjustment between hot and cold.

Other details worth placing on record are the excellent double-dipping headlamps, which are entirely adequate in both range and spread, and the first-class luggage accommodation provided by the latest extended boot; this offers a large unobstructed platform for luggage (illuminated at night by the bulbs of the twin tail lights) with the spare wheel and tools accessibly housed beneath.

In all, this Minx leaves a lasting impression of being a well proven model which is both entirely adequate for its purpose and a very pleasing small car into the bargain.

## Mechanical Specification

<b>Engine</b>	
Cylinders	... .. 4
Bore and stroke	... .. 65 mm. x 95 mm.
Cubic capacity	... .. 1,265 c.c.
Piston area	... .. 20.6 sq.in.
Valves	... .. Side
Compression ratio	... .. 6.63/1
Max. power	37.5 b.h.p. at 4,200 r.p.m.
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	2,620 ft. per min.
Carburettor	Solex downdraught, 30 FAIO-2
Ignition	... .. Coil
Sparking plugs	... .. Champion L10.
Fuel pump	... .. AC mechanical
Oil filter	Optional extra, AC by-pass

<b>Transmission</b>	
Clutch	7½-in. Borg and Beck s.d.p.
Top gear (s/m)	... .. 5.22
3rd gear (s/m)	... .. 7.78
2nd gear (s/m)	... .. 12.89
1st gear	... .. 18.60
Propeller shaft	Hardy Spicer, open
Final drive	... .. Spiral bevel
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m.	14.3
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 ft/min piston speed	23.0

<b>Chassis</b>	
Brakes	Lockheed hydraulic (2LS front)
Brake drum diameter	... .. 8 in.
Friction lining area	... .. 92 sq. in.
Suspension:	
Front	Coil and wishbone i.f.s.
Rear	Semi-elliptic, with anti-roll torsion bar
Shock absorbers: Front and rear	
Armstrong lever-arm type D.A.S. 8R	
Tyres	Dunlop 5.00 x 16

<b>Steering</b>	
Steering gear	Burman worm and peg
Turning circle	33 feet
Turns of steering wheel, lock to lock	2½

<b>Performance factors (at laden weight as tested):</b>	
Piston area, sq. in. per ton	18.3
Brake lining area, sq. in. per ton	82
Specific displacement, litres per ton mile	2,390
Fully described in <i>The Motor</i> , October 21, 1953	

## Coachwork and Equipment

Bumper height with car unladen (figures when optional over-riders fitted shown in brackets):  
Front (max.) 17½ in. (21½), (min.) 14 in. (13).  
Rear (max.) 15 in. (19), (min.) 11½ in. (10½).

Starting handle ... .. Yes  
Battery mounting ... .. On front of scuttle  
Jack ... .. Screw type operated by wheel brace  
Jacking points 4 (at corners, below bumpers)  
Standard tool kit: Starting handle, tool bag, lubrication gun, wheel brace, jack, plug spanner and tommy bar, screwdriver, tyre valve key, distributor key and contact gauge, nave-plate removal key.

Exterior lights: Two headlamps, two side lamps, two stop/tail lamps, rear number plate lamp.  
Direction indicators ... .. Self-cancelling semaphore type

Windscreen wipers ... .. Dual electric  
Sun vizors ... .. One (for driver)  
Instruments: Fuel gauge, thermometer, speedometer (with non-decimal total mileage recorder only).

Warning lights: Oil pressure, dynamo charge

Locks:  
With ignition key ... .. Ignition, driver's door, and boot  
With other keys ... .. Nil  
Glove lockers and map pockets ... .. None  
Parcel shelves ... .. Below fascia board and behind rear squab

Ashtrays ... .. One front (below fascia) and one rear (in back of front squab)

Cigar lighters ... .. None

Interior lights: Central roof light and instrument lighting (rear lamps illuminate boot).

Interior heater ... .. Fresh-air heater and demister available as extra

Car radio ... .. His Master's Voice set available as extra

Extras available: Heater and radio (as above), over-riders, passenger's sun vizzor (with vanity mirror), petrol cap lock, electric clock, ammeter, oil pressure gauge, pedal covers, tow bar attachment, detachable central arm rests (front or rear) additional electric horn, AC by-pass oil filter, loose seat covers, external driving mirror, wheel rim-finishers, exterior sun vizzor, wind screen washer, additional fresh-air ventilator (not available in U.S. or Canada).

Upholstery material ... .. Leather-cloth

Floor covering ... .. Hair carpet with rubber tread sections in front

Exterior colours standardized: Black, mid green, quartz blue, claret, golden sand or mountain grey.

Alternative body styles ... .. Convertible, "hard-top" two-door saloon, estate car.