

The Motor

Road Test No: 23/59

Make: Morris

Type: Minor 1000 Convertible de Luxe

Makers: Morris Motors Ltd., Cowley, Oxford.

Test Data

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CONDITIONS: Weather Warm and dry with strong diagonal wind. (Temperature 63°-67°F., Barometer 29.7 in. Hg.) Surface: Dry tarred Macadam. Fuel: Intermediate-grade pump petrols (approx. 90 Research Method Octane Rating).

INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h. Accurate
Speedometer at 60 m.p.h. 3% fast
Distance recorder 2% fast

WEIGHT

Kerb weight (unladen, but with oil, water and fuel for approx. 50 miles) 14½ cwt.
Front/rear distribution of kerb weight 58½/41½
Weight laden as tested 18½ cwt.

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Flying Quarter Mile

Mean of four opposite runs 73.2 m.p.h.
Best one-way time equals 75.3 m.p.h.

"Maximile" Speed. (Timed quarter mile after one mile accelerating from rest)

Mean of four opposite runs 70.7 m.p.h.
Best one-way time equals 73.2 m.p.h.

Speed in gears

Max. speed in 3rd gear 62 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 2nd gear 38 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 1st gear 25 m.p.h.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

57.0 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h. on level.
52.0 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h. on level.
42.5 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h. on level.
36.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h. on level.

Overall Fuel Consumption for 1,188 miles, 31.4 gallons, equals 37.8 m.p.g. (7.5 litres/100 km.).

Touring Fuel Consumption (m.p.g. at steady speed midway between 30 m.p.h. and maximum, less 5% allowance for acceleration). 39.5 m.p.g.

Fuel tank capacity (maker's figure) 6½ gallons

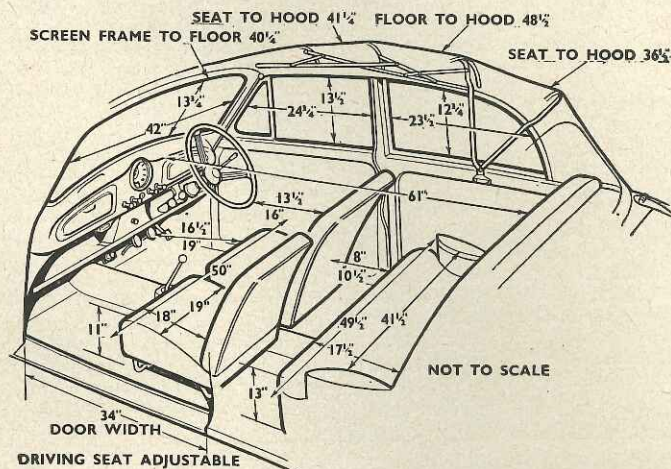
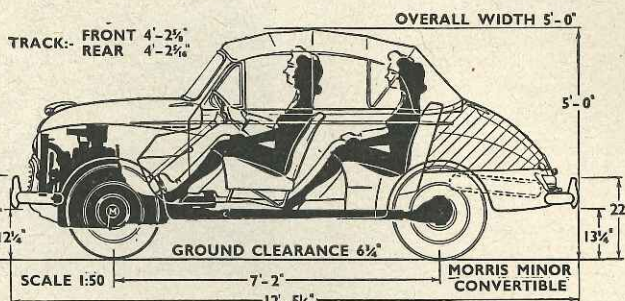
STEERING

Turning circle between kerbs:

Left 29½ feet
Right 32½ feet
Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock 2½

BRAKES from 30 m.p.h.

0.96g retardation (equivalent to 31½ ft. stopping distance) with 125 lb. pedal pressure
0.77g retardation (equivalent to 39 ft. stopping distance) with 100 lb. pedal pressure
0.63g retardation (equivalent to 48 ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure
0.40g retardation (equivalent to 75 ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure
0.16g retardation (equivalent to 188 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure



ACCELERATION TIMES from standstill

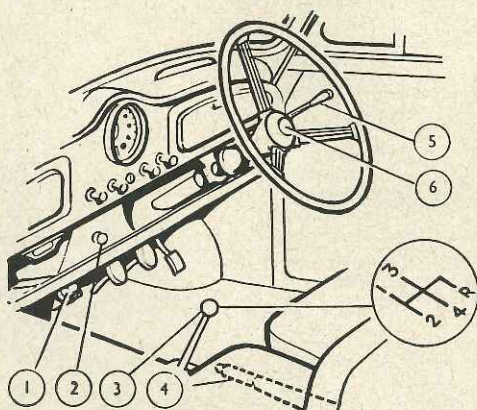
0-30 m.p.h. 6.2 sec.
0-40 m.p.h. 10.5 sec.
0-50 m.p.h. 16.0 sec.
0-60 m.p.h. 25.9 sec.
Standing quarter mile 23.4 sec.

ACCELERATION TIMES on upper ratios

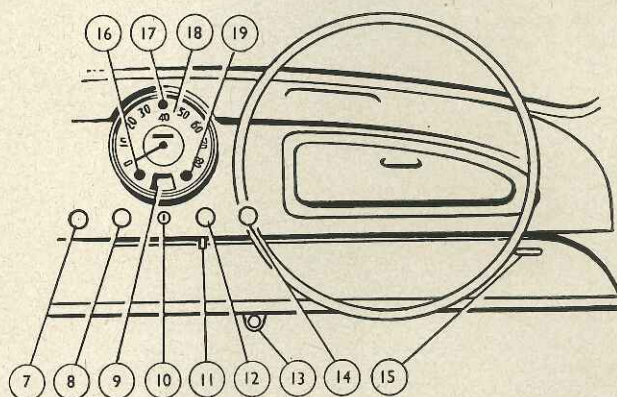
Speed Range	Top gear	3rd gear
10-30 m.p.h.	13.7 sec.	8.8 sec.
20-40 m.p.h.	14.6 sec.	9.4 sec.
30-50 m.p.h.	15.6 sec.	11.0 sec.
40-60 m.p.h.	20.0 sec.	—

HILL CLIMBING at sustained steady speeds

Max. gradient on top gear 1 in 13.3 (Tapley 165 lb./ton)
Max. gradient on 3rd gear 1 in 8.4 (Tapley 265 lb./ton)
Max. gradient on 2nd gear 1 in 5.3 (Tapley 415 lb./ton)



1, Headlamp dip switch. 2, Heater fan control. 3, Gear lever. 4, Handbrake. 5, Direction indicator switch and warning light. 6, Horn button. 7, Choke control. 8, Windscreen wipers switch.



9, Fuel contents gauge. 10, Ignition switch. 11, Panel light switch. 12, Lights switch. 13, Heater air inlet control. 14, Starter. 15, Bonnet catch release. 16, Oil pressure warning light.

17, Headlamp main beam indicator. 18, Speedometer and distance recorder. 19, Dynamo charge warning light.

The Morris Minor 1000

Convertible de luxe

A Well-tryed Open Car which Makes Low-cost Motoring a Pleasure

IMPROVED gradually over quite a long period of years, the Morris Minor is an extremely familiar-looking car which nevertheless can still provide one surprise for anyone who has not driven a recent example. The surprise comes in finding that, although newer small-car designs such as the transverse-engined Mini-Minor have brought a progressive rise in standards of comparison, this old-established model is still immensely competitive whether it be judged by measurable performance, by carrying capacity and running cost, or by those hard-to-define qualities which distinguish pleasure motoring from mere transport.

In its layout, the Morris Minor has changed little with the passing years, the most obvious difference being that a 948 c.c. overhead-valve engine developing 37 b.h.p. occupies the position which ten years ago accommodated a 918 c.c., side-valve unit of 27-b.h.p. output. In its details, however, there have been very numerous refinements, and since 1956 when we last tested a Minor 1000 a few visible changes such as a smartened-up facia have been introduced. Slightly closer study reveals that there is now a button conventionally placed at the centre of the steering wheel to sound a powerful horn, a self-cancelling fingertip switch for the turn indicators, ducting to lead fresh air to the interior heater and to distribute the warmed air more evenly within the car, and other valuable detail touches of this nature.

Economical Performance

Of a shape which is no longer fashionable but which cleaves through the air quite easily, this two-door four-seat convertible model is wide enough to give its full complement of passengers genuinely comfortable elbow-room, long enough to give four men reasonable leg-room, and provided with a conveniently arranged luggage locker of quite useful size. It accelerates two people and some test equipment from rest to 50 m.p.h. in 16.0 sec., or from 20 to 40 m.p.h. in top gear in 14.6 sec., reaching a top speed in excess of 73 m.p.h. Quite severe testing conditions produce overall fuel economy in the 35-40 m.p.g. range and a small degree



FRESH AIR motoring for four people, in a brisk small car with excellent road manners, continues to be provided at modest purchase and running costs by the Morris Minor 1000 Convertible.

of restraint will yield at least 45 m.p.g. on long runs.

Throughout its career this model has been renowned for good handling qualities, and though it cannot be claimed that today's Minors are superior in this respect to those of a decade ago (which had flatter rear springs), there is still the same impression that if any touring car could get out of an awkward or dangerous situation such as is liable to occur unexpectedly on the road, this car could. The rack and pinion steering gear transmits road reaction on some surfaces, but the car's response to the wishes of its driver is quite exceptionally quick and precise.

Contributing to the Minor's handling qualities is a suspension system which, using torsion bars at the front and leaf springs at the back, is firm enough to keep body roll within very small limits without any aid from anti-roll torsion bars. Lightly laden, the car has a quicker motion when driven over rough surfaces than some more softly-sprung types, a heavier passenger load softening the suspension, but the ride is flat and the springing gives effective insulation against shock as well as fatigue-free fast travel. General road-holding qualities are excellent, even though the rear axle carries no more than 41½% of the unladen weight, but on loose surfaces or occasionally at other times axle-tramp can be induced by hard acceleration in first or second gear.

A "chassis" which asks to be compared with sports cars is well matched by a power unit which, although docile, responds very willingly to a hard driver's use of the gear lever. For maximum acceleration, upward changes of gear are made at roughly 20, 30-35 and 55 m.p.h., the remote-control central gear lever being positive in action and conveniently positioned; the synchromesh on three of the four ratios is genuinely helpful, although it can be over-ridden by a driver in a real hurry. Open-road cruising in this modestly-dimensioned car at speeds around 65 m.p.h. does not seem to tire either mechanism or crew, the engine being quite well silenced. The clutch is positive almost to the point of fierceness, and the gearbox quiet under load, although less quiet on the over-run.

Rather small in size, but reasonably tolerant of broad footwear, the pedals are comfortable for most people and more suitable for feminine high-heel shoes than are some layouts. Although the clutch and footbrake are not perhaps quite as light to operate as might be expected on a small car, the brakes were well up to their job, resistant to fade but rather apt to lock the rear wheels in emergencies unless there was weight in the rear of the car. On damp mornings, the first few brake applications were apt to produce rather fierce response.

Our test being in summer conditions, we cannot make up-to-date comments

In Brief

Price £436 plus purchase tax £182 15s. 10d. equals £618 15s. 10d.	
Capacity	948 c.c.
Unladen kerb weight	14½ cwt.
Acceleration:	
20-40 m.p.h. in top gear	14.6 sec.
0-50 m.p.h. through gears	16.0 sec.
Maximum direct top gear gradient	1 in 13.3
Maximum speed	73.2 m.p.h.
"Maximile" speed	70.7 m.p.h.
Touring fuel consumption	39.5 m.p.g.
Gearing: 15.0 m.p.h. in top gear at 1,000 r.p.m.; 30.1 m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed.	

Morris Minor 1000 Convertible de luxe

CONVENTIONAL fore-and-aft location of the 948 c.c. engine leaves plenty of spare room beneath a broad bonnet. Note that even the front shock absorbers are easily accessible.

about engine starting in really cold weather but presume that this remains easy. Conveniently, the "choke" control of the S.U. carburettor gives a speeded tick-over without mixture enrichment during the first notches of its travel (it has a convenient twist-to-release action) and rich mixture only when pulled out rather further, but until warmed up by a short drive, the engine seemed a rather sluggish performer. Apart from the obvious economy indicated by steady-speed consumption figures such as 52 m.p.g. at 40 m.p.h. and 36½ m.p.g. at 60 m.p.h., this power unit will save money for its owner by operating without any trace of knock on intermediate-grade petrols such as retail in London at about 4s. 6d. per gallon.

For this test we were loaned a de luxe Morris Minor 1000 with the convertible body, which is an alternative to two-door

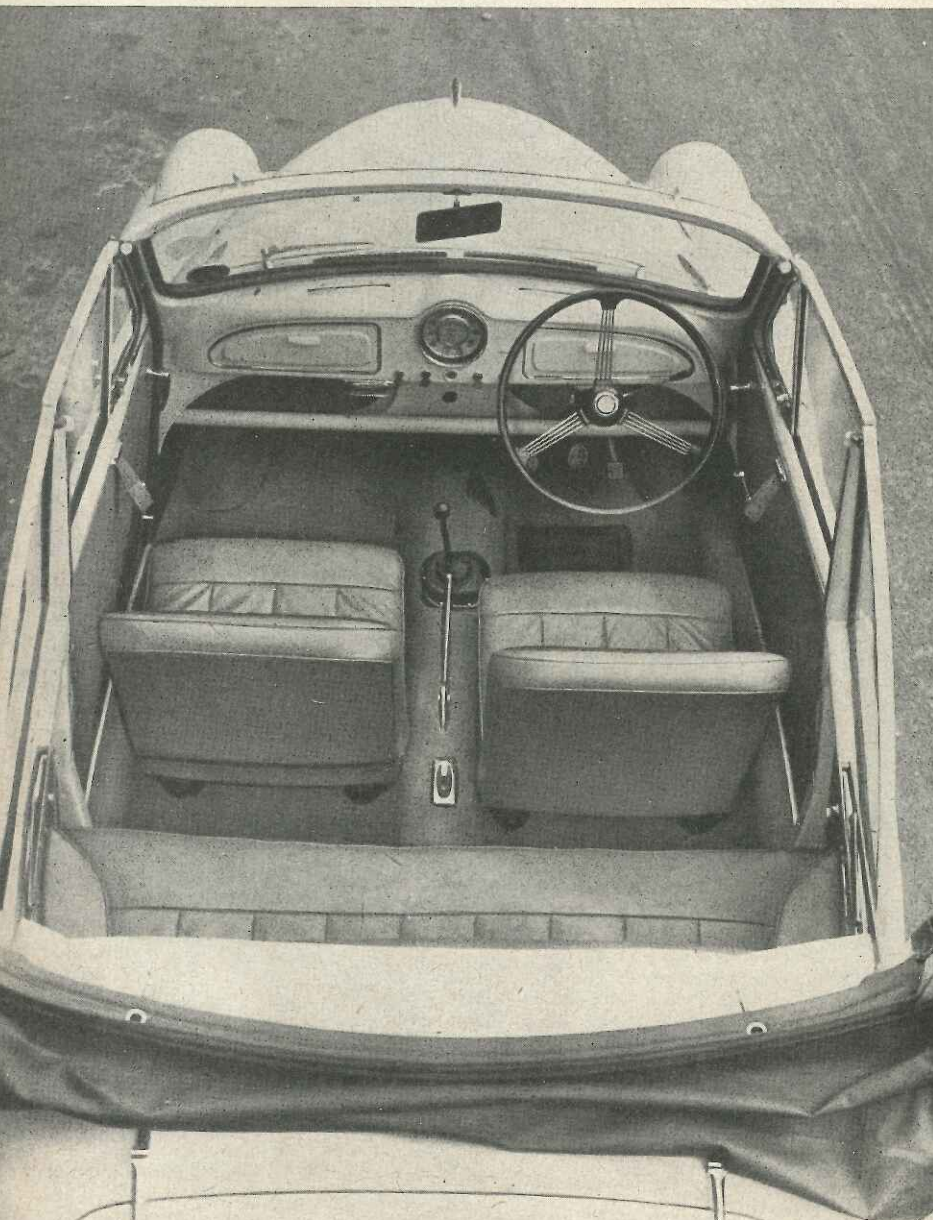
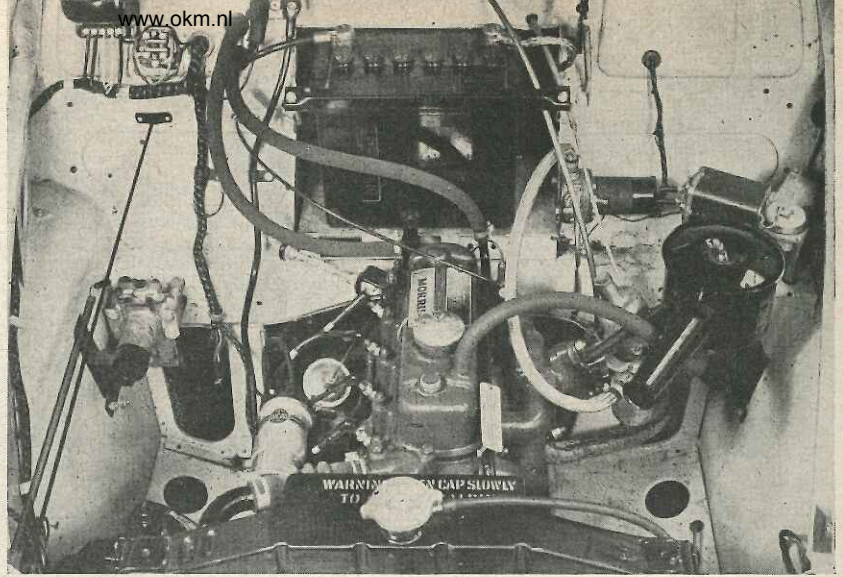
and four-door saloons of similar carrying capacity. Costing no more than the two-door saloon, and with almost every saloon-car amenity except sun visors, an interior light and a lined roof, this convertible model is exceptionally attractive value for its tax-paid price of £618 15s. 10d. When the roof is folded, it offers genuine open-car vision and ventilation, save for the continued presence of front window frames and of fixed rear windows. If the design has a limitation, it is that, with a dozen

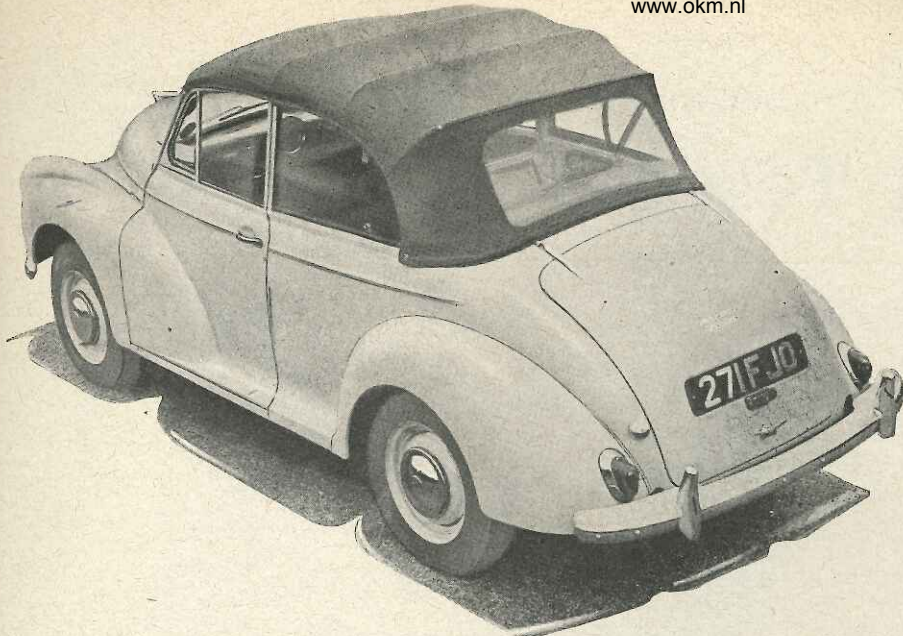
press-stud hood fixings above and behind the windows as well as the usual two fastenings above the windscreen, and six press-studs on the neat hood bag, weather-proofness has been combined with complete folding of the roof by acceptance of the need for single-handed raising or folding away of the roof to take several minutes. In respect of almost complete freedom from rattle, this model shames the majority of larger and more expensive convertibles, although on corrugated road surfaces absence of the extra structural stiffeners which a steel-roof panel provides can be detected.

Inside the body, the Minor 1000 has a rather more functional air than is nowadays usual, the fascia a comparatively flat painted-metal panel with a large circular speedometer dial incorporating a fuel contents gauge as the sole instruments, and considerable numbers of screw heads unashamedly visible and accessible. Most people find this slightly plain interior far from offensive, it being relieved by pile carpets on the floor and by leather-upholstered seats. The individual seats (between which a pull-up handbrake is mounted very conveniently) have transverse rubber straps beneath their cushioning, and provide quite good comfort. Only the driving seat is adjustable, and that clumsily over a very limited range, but alternative mounting points on the floor allow for the passenger seat and/or the whole range of driving-seat adjustment being semi-permanently set back a short distance if legroom in the front is more valuable than rear-seat roominess.

Whilst the use of a sloping tail does not allow for quite such vast luggage capacity as exists in some more square-cut modern bodies, this car has a very useful luggage locker, with its floor completely flat and the spare wheel slid onto a separate shelf which can also accommodate tools and some parcels. Inside the luggage locker, so that it cannot be reached without a key, there is a strap fastening which can be undone to let the rear-seat backrest fold forwards or be removed, so that a long or bulky load can extend from the luggage locker into the body, the extreme of carrying capacity being obtained when the front passenger seat also is folded and tipped forward against the fascia.

DOWNWARD view into the convertible body shows the positive-action central gear lever and pull-up handbrake between individual front seats, and the parcel shelf below a fascia which also has two glove boxes flanking the speedometer/fuel gauge dial.





FOLDING with the weatherproof hood, the rear window has a large area of clear plastic. The spare wheel is stowed separately from the luggage, capacity for which can be increased by folding forward or removing the rear seat backrest.

Amenities which are expected in a saloon and retained in this inexpensive Convertible include wind-down windows supplemented by hinged triangular ventilators on the front doors. The rear quarter windows are fixed, but the hood incorporates a flexible and truly transparent rear window of quite large size through which a big rear-view mirror provides good vision. There is also a simple heating system included in the de luxe specification, the water tap being on the engine so that the heater must be controlled mainly by the rheostat which varies its fan speed, or by means of a push-pull control on the fascia which lets the heater circulate air from inside the car or admit air from in-

takes beneath the front mudguards. A relic of the V-screen which preceded the curved glass now used is evident in the windscreen-wiper layout, which ignores a large area at the centre of the glass.

As an open car, we found the Morris Convertible extremely attractive, whether it was being used in London's congested streets, to explore country lanes, or for fast main-road travel. There is a circulation of air behind the curved windscreen which produces a forward draught beneath and around the tubular-framed front seats, but mile-a-minute cruising with the car open hardly disturbs the hair of a bare-headed driver. As with almost any open car, a sensible supplement to the hood

cover would be a full-length tonneau cover so that the seats could be protected against unexpected showers when the car is parked with its hood down.

Whilst the Morris Minor 1000 may now lack the appeal of novelty, its continued availability in de Luxe convertible form at a price of only £436 (plus purchase tax amounting to £182 15s. 10d. in Britain) makes it astonishingly good value for money. Extended development of what was in the first place a brilliantly clever design has produced a car in which low-cost motoring can be exceptionally enjoyable.



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Specification

Engine	
Cylinders	4
Bore	62.93 mm.
Stroke	76.2 mm.
Cubic capacity	948 c.c.
Piston area	19.3 sq. in.
Valves	In-line o.h.v. (pushrods)
Compression ratio	8.3/1 (optional 7.2/1)
Carburettor	S.U. inclined type H2
Fuel pump	S.U. electrical
Ignition timing control	Centrifugal and vacuum
Oil filter	Full-flow Tecalemit 2A693 or Purolator 2A789
Max. power (gross)	37 b.h.p. (35 b.h.p. net)
(Low compression engine gives 3 b.h.p. less power output.)	
at	4,800 r.p.m.
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	2,400 ft./min.
Transmission	
Clutch	Borg & Beck 6½ in. single dry plate
Top gear (s/m)	4.555
3rd gear (s/m)	6.425
2nd gear (s/m)	10.802
1st gear	16.507
Reverse	21.221
Propeller shaft	Hardy Spicer open
Final drive	9/41 hypoid bevel
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m.	15.0
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed	30.1
Chassis	
Brakes	Lockheed hydraulic, 2 l.s. front
Brake drum internal diameter	7 in.
Friction lining area	63.8 sq. in.
Suspension:	
Front	Independent by torsion bars and transverse wishbones
Rear	Semi-elliptic leaf springs
Shock absorbers	Armstrong lever-arm hydraulic
Steering gear	Rack and pinion
Tyres	Dunlop tubeless, 5.00—14

Coachwork and Equipment

Starting handle	Yes
Battery mounting	On scuttle behind engine
Jack Bipod screw type, operated by starting handle
Jacking points 2 external sockets under body sides
Standard tool kit: Jack, combined wheelbrace and starting handle, grease gun, tyre pump, sparking plug spanner, hub cover removal key, tyre valve key, distributor feeler and screwdriver, axle drain plug key.	
Exterior lights: 2 headlamps, 2 sidelamps, 2 stop/tail lamps, number plate lamp.	
Number of electrical fuses	2
Direction indicators: Semaphore type, self cancelling (flashers on export models).	
Windscreen wipers	Electrical two-blade, self-parking
Windscreen washers	None
Sun visors	None on Convertible
Instruments: Speedometer with non-decimal total distance recorder, fuel contents gauge.	
Warning lights: Dynamo charge, oil pressure, direction indicators, headlamp main beam.	

Locks:	
With ignition key	Ignition switch, driver's door, luggage locker
With other keys	None
Glove lockers	2 on fascia with non-locking lids.
Map pockets	None
Parcel shelves: Full-width shelf below fascia, shallow hood-well behind rear seat can be used for parcels when car is closed.	
Ashtrays	One below fascia
Cigar lighters	None
Interior lights	None (except internal lighting of instruments)
Interior heater	Fresh air type, with screen de-misters
Extras available	Radio
Upholstery material	Leather on wearing surfaces, and matching leathercloth
Floor covering	Pile carpets over felt
Exterior colours standardized	6
Alternative body styles: Convertible without de luxe equipment, 2-door and 4-door standard and de luxe saloons, "Traveller" 2-door Utility.	

Maintenance

Sump (including filter)	7 pints, S.A.E.30 (below freezing, S.A.E.20)
Gearbox	2½ pints, S.A.E.30
Rear axle	1½ pints, S.A.E. 90 hypoid gear oil
Steering gear lubricant	S.A.E. 90 hypoid
Cooling system capacity	9½ pints (2 drain taps)
Chassis lubrication: By grease gun every 1,000 miles to 10 points	
Ignition timing	T.d.c. static
Contact-breaker gap	0.014-0.016 in.
Sparkling plug type	Champion NS, 14 mm., ¾-in. reach
Sparkling plug gap	0.025 in.

Valve timing: Inlet opens 5° before t.d.c. and closes 45° after b.d.c.; exhaust opens 40° before b.d.c. and closes 10° after t.d.c.	
Tappet clearances (cold)	Inlet and exhaust 0.012 in.
Front wheel toe-in	½ in. at rims
Camber angle	1°
Castor angle	3°
Steering wheel pin inclination	7½°
Tyre pressures:	
Front	22 lb.
Rear	22-24 lb. according to load
Brake fluid	Lockheed, or to S.A.E. Spec. 70RI
Battery	Lucas 12-volt, 43 amp. hr.
Miscellaneous: Top up carburettor dashpot with S.A.E. 20 engine oil every 1,000 miles	