

The Motor Road Test No. 16/60

Make: Morris

Type: Oxford de luxe, series V

Makers: Morris Motors, Cowley, Oxford

Test Data

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CONDITIONS: Weather: cool and mainly dry with moderate wind (Temperature 56°-63° F., Barometer 29.8-29.9 in. Hg.) Surface: Dry and damp tarred macadam. Fuel: Premium-grade pump petrol (approx. 96 Research Method Octane Rating).

INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h.	3%	fast
Speedometer at 60 m.p.h.	3%	fast
Distance recorder	1%	fast

WEIGHT

Kerb weight (unladen, but with oil, coolant and fuel for approx. 50 miles)	21½	cwt.
Front/rear distribution of kerb weight	54/46	
Weight laden as tested	25¼	cwt.

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Flying Quarter Mile	
Mean of four opposite runs	78.3 m.p.h.
Best one-way time equals	80.4 m.p.h.
"Maximile" Speed. (Timed quarter mile after one mile accelerating from rest)	
Mean of four opposite runs	75.6 m.p.h.
Best one-way time equals	76.6 m.p.h.
Speed in gears.	
Max. speed in 3rd gear	62 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 2nd gear	42 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 1st gear	24 m.p.h.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

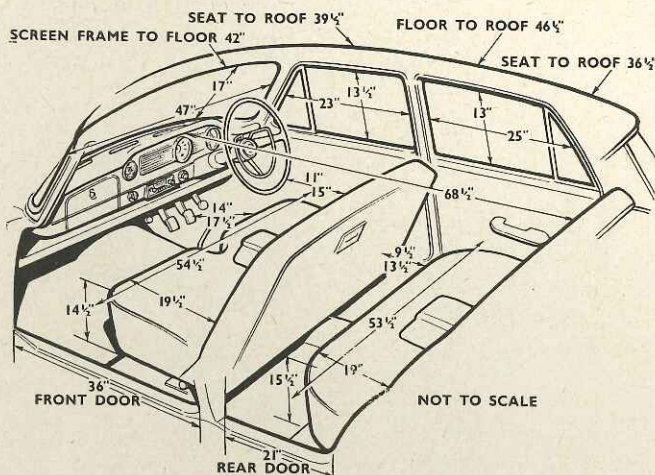
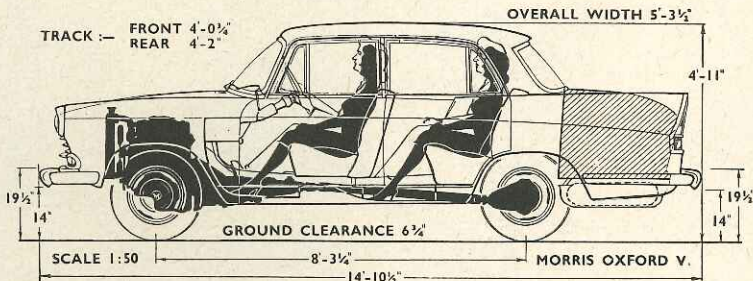
42.0 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h. on level.
38.0 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h. on level.
33.5 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h. on level.
28.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h. on level.
23.5 m.p.g. at constant 70 m.p.h. on level.
Overall Fuel Consumption for 1,065 miles, 40.65 gallons, equals 26.2 m.p.g. (10.8 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). 29.8 m.p.g.
Fuel tank capacity (maker's figure) 10 gallons

STEERING

Turning circle between kerbs:	
Left	35 feet
Right	34½ feet
Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock	
	3

BRAKES from 30 m.p.h.

0.95 g. retardation (equivalent to 31½ ft. stopping distance) with 85 lb. pedal pressure.
0.85 g. retardation (equivalent to 35½ ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure.
0.58 g. retardation (equivalent to 52 ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure.
0.24 g. retardation (equivalent to 125 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure.



ACCELERATION TIMES from standstill

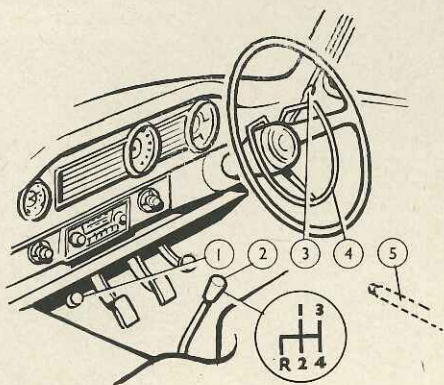
0-30 m.p.h.	6.6	sec.
0-40 m.p.h.	10.7	sec.
0-50 m.p.h.	16.6	sec.
0-60 m.p.h.	25.4	sec.
0-70 m.p.h.	39.3	sec.
Standing quarter mile	22.8	sec.

ACCELERATION TIMES on Upper Ratios

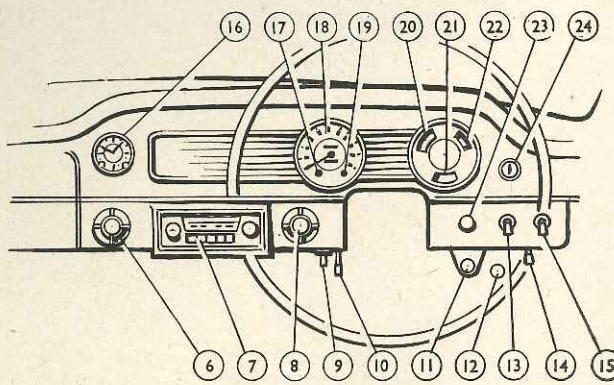
	Top gear	3rd gear
10-30 m.p.h.	11.9	sec.
20-40 m.p.h.	11.6	sec.
30-50 m.p.h.	12.6	sec.
40-60 m.p.h.	15.7	sec.
50-70 m.p.h.	25.0	sec.

HILL CLIMBING at sustained steady speeds

Max. gradient on top gear	1 in 11.1 (Tapley 200 lb/ton)
Max. gradient on 3rd gear	1 in 7.8 (Tapley 285 lb/ton)
Max. gradient on 2nd gear	1 in 5.2 (Tapley 420 lb/ton)



1, Headlamp dip witch. 2, Gear lever. 3, Direction indicators switch and warning light. 4, Horn ring. 5, Handbrake. 6, Heater temperature control. 7, Radio controls. 8, De-mister control. 9, Heater fan switch. 10, Trip adjuster.



11, Windscreen washer button. 12, Bonnet catch release. 13, Windscreen wipers switch. 14, Panel light switch. 15, Lights switch. 16, Clock. 17, High beam indicator. 18, Speedometer and

distance recorder. 19, Dynamo charge warning light. 20, Oil pressure gauge. 21, Fuel contents gauge. 22, Water thermometer. 23, Choke control. 24, Ignition and starter switch.

The Morris Oxford V de luxe

A 1½-litre Family Saloon of All-round Merit



As a model, the Morris Oxford is backed by a tradition even longer than that lying behind *The Motor's* series of Road Test Reports. Looking back to our issue of February 6, 1923, we found that our testers described the Morris Oxford of that date as "a car for the family motorist who likes to do his driving with as little exertion, both mental and physical, as is possible," and the same description still seems appropriate 37 years later when a very different car (of much the same engine size) is being judged by far more severe standards.

The 1960 Morris Oxford is a 1½-litre saloon of the size which appeals to many family and business motorists, big enough to give four people unrestricted elbow room and to accommodate six people should need arise, yet reasonable enough in exterior bulk to fit into most garages with-

out difficulty. It has enough power to attain an honest 80 m.p.h. in mildly favourable conditions, and without being flashy in appearance it looks like the notably well furnished touring car which it is. Viceless handling qualities, an engine which will cope quietly with surprisingly steep gradients in top gear, and a good fresh-air heating system are major contributions to that possibility of "driving with as little exertion, both mental and physical, as is possible" about which our predecessors wrote.

Smooth Torque

Styled by Pinin Farina, the four-door saloon body is longer and wider externally than some other designs in relation to its passenger-carrying capacity, but is both comfortable and good looking. Our test model was to "de luxe" specification, an extra 3½% on the price providing such additional items as the interior heater, a screen washing spray, twin sun visors, twin horns, bumper over-riders, a clock and leather-covered seats. A bench seat is used at the front, cut away slightly to clear the central gear-lever, and is comfortably upholstered although its upright backrest and limited range of rearward adjustment do not let a long-limbed man enjoy an ideal driving position. The folding central armrest seems pointless unless the optional steering-column gear lever is chosen in place of the usual very positive floor-mounted remote-control gearchange. In the rear compartment a folding central armrest is also provided, and here it serves

a useful purpose. Thanks partly to the limited range of driving seat adjustment, the back seat feels quite comfortably roomy in almost all directions, one exception being headroom for those who are "tall in the saddle," and the doors are big enough to let elderly passengers get in and out of the rear seats with reasonable ease.

Developed over quite a long period of years, the 1½-litre engine which powers this car is a notably good all-round performer. Certain if not always instantaneous in starting from cold, it warms up without temperament, and makes little or no protest if an economy-minded driver buys "mixture" rather than "premium grade" petrol. Right down to 10 m.p.h. or less in top gear, this four-cylinder engine will pull almost as smoothly as a "six" and, although the substantial flywheel which contributes to this docility does not make for vivid acceleration, deceptively good pick-up in top gear (from 20 m.p.h. to 40 m.p.h. takes only 11.6 seconds) goes with a surprising ability to surmount hills without any gearchange.

Rear-seat Comfort

Although these characteristics have been secured partly by use of a top gear ratio giving no more than 15.6 m.p.h. per 1,000 engine r.p.m. good silencing prevents the Oxford becoming fussy on main roads and, noting the engine's negligible oil consumption even when driven hard and its close basic similarity to the more highly tuned power units fitted into M.G. and Riley cars, we would not expect sustained high

In Brief

Price £595 plus purchase tax £249 0s. 10d. equals £844 0s. 10d.

Price without de luxe equipment (including purchase tax), £815 14s. 2d.

Capacity 1,489 c.c.

Unladen kerb weight ... 21½ cwt.

Acceleration:

20-40 m.p.h. in top gear ... 11.6 sec.

0-50 m.p.h. through gears ... 16.6 sec.

Maximum direct top gear

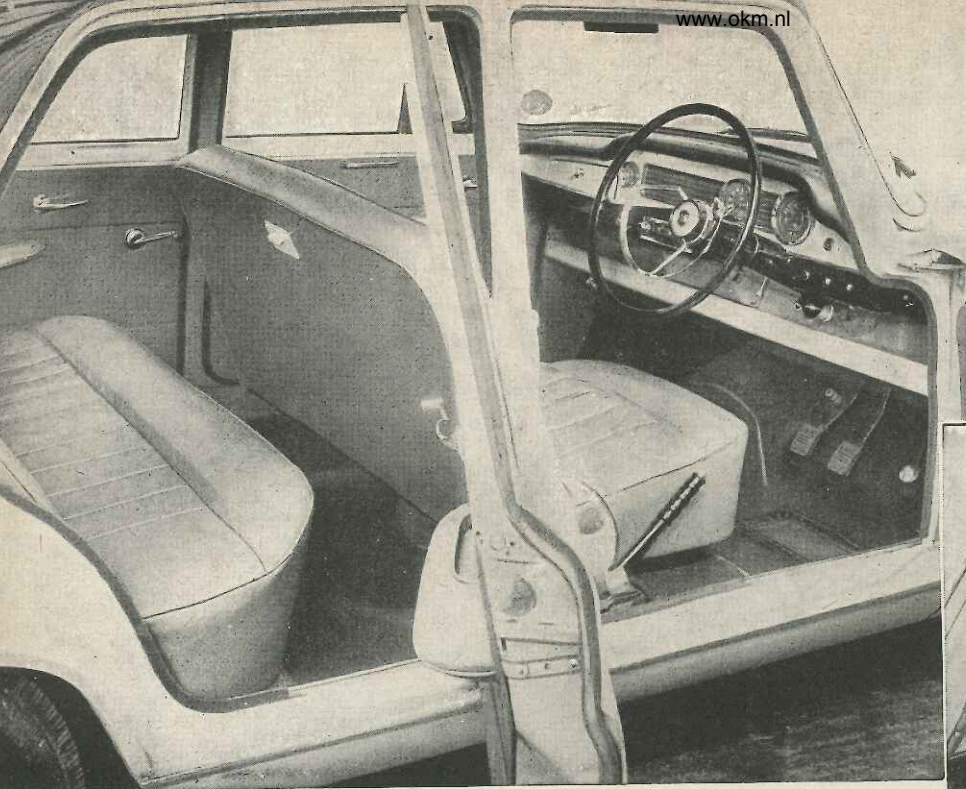
gradient 1 in 11.1

Maximum speed 78.3 m.p.h.

"Maximile" speed 75.6 m.p.h.

Touring fuel consumption ... 29.8 m.p.g.

Gearing: 15.6 m.p.h. in top gear at 1,000 r.p.m.; 26.9 m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed.



The Morris Oxford V

INTERIOR details visible on the left and below include the four broad doors, bench seats upholstered in leather, a neat fascia with a parcel shelf and glovebox, the central gear lever and a pull-up handbrake.



r.p.m. on the motorway to worry it. Only the fairly rapid increase in fuel consumption at high cruising speeds, and the prompt drop of speed if the throttle is eased back when cruising at 70 m.p.h. or more, remind the driver that this is a fairly low-g geared car.

A smooth clutch which encourages second-gear starts is nevertheless positive enough to let the sporting driver make cruelly hurried changes of gear. The gearbox also deserves much praise, third gear in our test model being mildly audible at low speeds but the transmission otherwise combining quietness with sports-car responsiveness. It is possible to exceed 60 m.p.h. in 3rd gear without frenzy, but diminishing torque at such high engine r.p.m. makes it pointless to go beyond about 55 m.p.h. in this ratio save in exceptional circumstances.

Whereas most cars, even in this age of inter-axle seating, offer somewhat "second class" standards of riding comfort to back seat passengers, the Oxford is a very comfortable car in which to be driven, providing a smooth rear seat ride, and not throwing a passenger around even when it is driven as fast as is safe. Judged from the front seat, this model provides quite good average modern standards of riding com-

fort, but evokes no especial commendation.

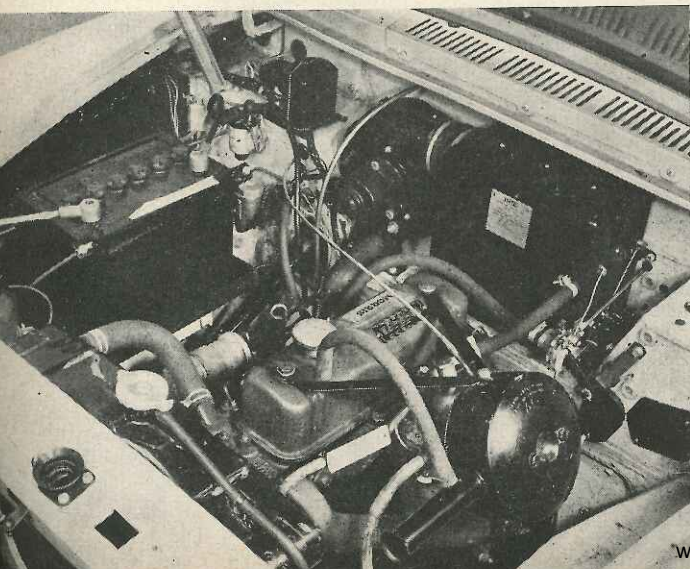
Cornered fast, the Morris Oxford shows the moderate amount of body roll expected of a conventional present-day touring model, but if the tyres are allowed to drop a couple of pounds below their correct pressures they will squeal a reminder to the neglectful owner. Cam-and-peg steering insulates the driver against road shocks without much loss of that mechanical precision which characterized the rack-and-pinion steering of recent Oxfords, friction being moderate but the self-centring castor action noticeably stronger than usual. Making absolutely no pretence to sports car characteristics, the series V Morris Oxford can, in fact, be hustled along England's varied and winding roads at quite a high speed without becoming frightening, its brakes working smoothly and powerfully in response to quite moderate pedal pressures.

Tastes in car interior design vary widely, but the layout and the simple but quite good finish of this model's interior earned almost universal approbation. Neat but not plain, the fascia breaks away from the present-day tendency towards designs which are too-conspicuously adaptable to production in both left-hand and right-hand drive form. The speaker and con-

trols of an optional radio, plus a full set of legible instruments, blend well into the whole layout, and the minor switches manage to be neat yet not so close or similar to one another as to invite confusion after dark. A partial horn ring forms more than a semi-circle, and the efficient pull-up handbrake is conveniently positioned to the right of the driving seat. Safety in accidents has been considered to the extent that the fascia top is padded and the lower edge of the fascia has a rounded shape; equally sensible is the matt black finish applied to the whole area of metal and leathercloth below the windscreen interior. Since it keeps the windows clear of mist and the driver comfortably alert, a heating system which admits plenty of fresh air at a readily controllable temperature may also be regarded as a contribution to safe motoring.

Locks, Handles and Winders

On our test model, the door locks provoked some criticism, exterior press-buttons proving very stiff, and lift-to-unlock interior handles safe but clumsy in operation: sensible protection for children is provided by safety catches with which it is possible to render any interior door handle inoperative, catches which can be set or released only when the door is open. Commendably smooth and quick-acting



TORQUE for hill-climbing and get-away from low speeds in top gear is the 1½-litre engine's especial merit, and a wide bonnet gives easy access to almost everything save the low-placed ignition distributor.

winders are provided for the four side windows, all of which can be lowered completely, and there are four hinged ventilator panels with rather flimsy catches. Luggage accommodation is in a large and easily loaded locker with a flat carpeted floor and an automatic support for the lift-up lid, the spare wheel hanging below the tail of the body and a 10-gallon petrol tank occupying space directly over the rear axle. At the other end of the car, the bonnet also has an automatic strut to support it (with a safety catch so that wind lifting the bonnet panel cannot make it shut itself) and most mechanical components other than a low-mounted ignition distributor seem reasonably accessible.

According to how it is driven and whether it is used on long or short jour-



FINS are a conspicuous styling feature which, in conjunction with a big rear window, make accurate reversing easy.

BALANCED by torsion-bar springs, the boot lid lifts to give access to a flat carpeted luggage floor which at night is lit internally by the number plate lamp.

neys, the Morris Oxford seems likely to give owners a fuel consumption in the range from 24 m.p.g. to 30 m.p.g., our strenuous testing over a four-figure mileage showing 26.2 m.p.g. overall. As has been indicated, the timed maximum speed is closer to 80 m.p.h. than to 75 m.p.h., and through-the-gears acceleration times such as from rest to 50 m.p.h. in 16.6 seconds indicate that this big, quiet, 1½-litre saloon is no sluggard. With its de luxe options, the Morris Oxford still costs only 20% more than the cheapest 1½-litre saloon car on the British market, and for this premium it provides a most worthwhile refinement of finish as well as equipment comprehensive enough to leave little need for extras. In quite an unspectacular way, the series V Morris Oxford provides pleasant and sensible motoring at a truly competitive price.

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Specification

Engine		4
Cylinders		4
Bore	73.025 mm.	
Stroke	88.9 mm.	
Cubic capacity	1,489 c.c.	
Piston area	26.0 sq. in.	
Valves	Pushrod o.h.v.	
Compression ratio	8.3/1	
Carburettor	S.U. inclined, type HS2	
Fuel pump	Rear-mounted	
Ignition timing control	S.U. electrical type PD	
Oil filter	Centrifugal and vacuum	
Max. power (gross)	Full-flow (Tecalemit or Purolator)	
at	55 b.h.p. (53 b.h.p. net)	
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	4,200 r.p.m.	2,440 ft./min.
Transmission		
Clutch	Borg & Beck 8-in. s.d.p.	
Top gear (s/m)		4.55
3rd gear (s/m)		6.25
2nd gear (s/m)		10.08
1st gear		16.55
Reverse		21.64
Propeller shaft	Hardy Spicer open	
Final drive	9/41 hypoid bevel	
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m.		15.6
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed		26.9
Chassis		
Brakes	Girling hydraulic (2 l.s. front)	
Brake diameters		9 in.
Friction areas: 146.65 sq. in. of lining area working on 240 sq. in. rubbed area of drums.		
Suspension:		
Front	i.f.s. by coil springs and transverse wishbones	
Rear	Semi-elliptic leaf springs	
Shock absorbers	lever-arm hydraulic	
Steering gear	Cam and lever	
Tyres	5.90-14 Dunlop tubeless	

Coachwork and Equipment

Starting handle	Yes
Battery mounting	On right of engine
Jack	Bipod pillar type operated by starting handle
Jacking points	2 external sockets below doors
Standard tool kit: Jack, wheelbrace, starting handle, contact breaker screwdriver/feeler, tyre valve key, sparking plug spanner, sparking plug and tappet feeler gauges, screwdriver, hub cap removal key, rear axle drain plug key, grease gun, tyre pump; all in tool bag.	
Exterior lights: 2 headlamps, 2 sidelamps, 2 stop/tail lamps, rear number plate lamp.	
Number of electrical fuses	2
Direction indicators	Self-cancelling
flashers (amber lenses at front and rear)	
Windscreen wipers: Lucas DR3 electrical twin-blade, self parking.	
Windscreen washers	Trafalgar manual pump
Sun visors	Two, universally pivoted
Instruments: Speedometer with total and decimal trip distance recorders, clock, oil pressure gauge, coolant thermometer, fuel contents gauge.	
Warning lights: Dynamo charge, headlamp main beam, turn indicators.	
Sump (including filter)	7½ pints, S.A.E. 30 summer, S.A.E. 20 winter
Gearbox	4½ pints, S.A.E. 30
Rear axle	2½ pints, S.A.E. 90 hypoid gear oil
Steering gear lubricant	S.A.E. 90 hypoid gear oil
Cooling system capacity	12½ pints (2 drain taps)
Chassis lubrication	By grease gun every 1,000 miles to 17 points
Ignition timing	5° before t.d.c. static
Contact-breaker gap	0.014-0.016 in.
Sparking plug type	Champion N5, 14 mm.
Sparking plug gap	0.025 in.
Valve timing: Inlet opens T.D.C. and closes 50° after B.D.C.; Exhaust opens 35° before B.D.C. and closes 15° after T.D.C.	

Locks:	Ignition/starter switch, either front door, and petrol filler cap.
With other keys	Luggage locker
Glove lockers	One on fascia, with lid
Map pockets	None
Parcel shelves	One below fascia, one behind rear seat
Ashtrays	Two in front doors, one behind front seat
Cigar lighters	None
Interior lights: One on centre body pillar, with courtesy switches on front doors.	
Interior heater: Smiths 3.9 Kw. fresh air heater and screen de-mister.	
Car radio	Optional extra, Smiths Radiomobile
Extras available: Duotone body paintwork, radio, wheel rimblishers.	
Upholstery material: Leather, with leather-cloth on non-wearing surfaces.	
Floor covering	Pile carpets with underfelt
Exterior colours standardized: Six (at extra cost, three duotone colour schemes).	
Alternative body styles: None ("Traveller" estate car uses same engine but Series IV suspension etc.).	

Maintenance

Tappet clearances (hot)	Inlet and exhaust 0.015 in.
Front wheel toe-in	¼ in. to ½ in.
Camber angle	2°-1°
Castor angle	1½°
Steering swivel pin inclination	6½°
Tyre pressures:	
Front	23 lb.
Rear	25 lb.
Brake fluid	to S.A.E. spec. 70 R 1
Battery type and capacity	BT7A, 12 volt 43 amp. hr.
Miscellaneous: Top up carburettor dashpot with S.A.E. 20 engine oil every 1,000 miles.	