

The Motor Road Test No. 27/60

Make: Simca

Type: Aronde Monthéry

Makers: S.I.M.C.A., Nanterre, France

Concessionaires: Chrysler Motors, Ltd., Mortlake Road, Kew Gardens, Surrey

Test Data

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CONDITIONS: Weather: Dry, gusty wind up to 15 m.p.h. (Temperature: 63°-69°F., Barometer 29.2 in.Hg.). Surface: Dry tarmacadam. Fuel: Mixture-grade pump petrol approx. 90 Research Method Octane No.

INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h. 12% fast
 Speedometer at 60 m.p.h. 12% fast
 Speedometer at 80 m.p.h. 10% fast
 Distance recorder 2% slow

WEIGHT

Kerb weight (unladen, but with oil, coolant and fuel for approx. 50 miles) 18½ cwt.
 Front/Rear distribution of kerb weight .. 52/48
 Weight laden as tested 22 cwt.

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Flying Mile
 Mean of six opposite runs 83.6 m.p.h.
 Best one-way time equals 84.7 m.p.h.

'Maximile' Speed. (Timed quarter mile after one mile accelerating from rest.)
 Mean of opposite runs 82.2 m.p.h.
 Best one-way time equals 84.1 m.p.h.

Speed in gears

Max. speed in 3rd gear 63 m.p.h.
 Max. speed in 2nd gear 39 m.p.h.
 Max. speed in 1st gear 25 m.p.h.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

45.7 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h. on level.
 42.1 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h. on level.
 39.8 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h. on level.
 35.4 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h. on level.
 31.1 m.p.g. at constant 70 m.p.h. on level.
 25.6 m.p.g. at constant 80 m.p.h. on level.

Overall Fuel Consumption for 839 miles, 29.7 gallons, equals 28.3 m.p.g. (10.0 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). 35.0 m.p.g.
 Fuel tank capacity (maker's figure) 9.5 gallons.

STEERING

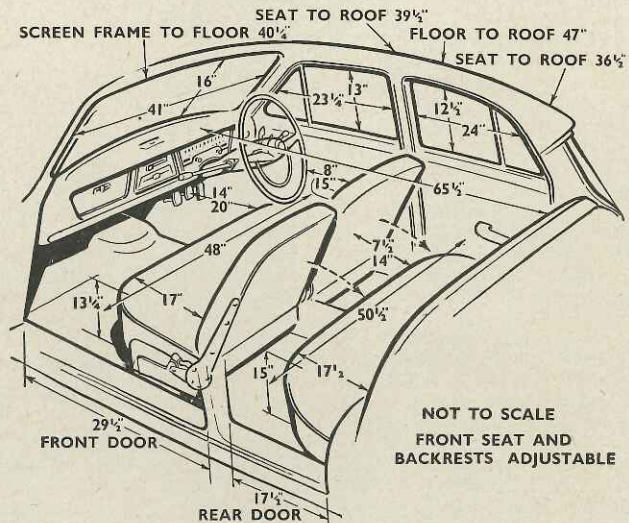
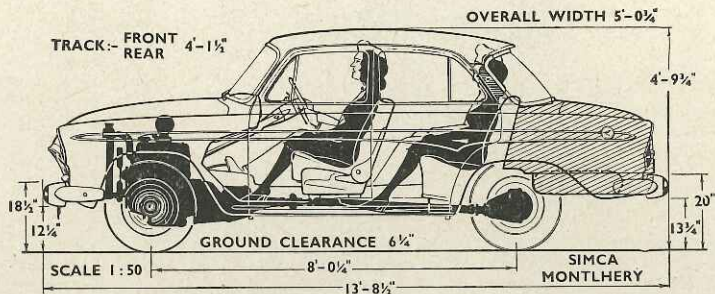
Turning circle between kerbs:
 Left 29 ft.
 Right 30½ ft.
 Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock 3½.

BRAKES from 30 m.p.h.

0.19 g retardation (equivalent to 158 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure.
 0.54 g retardation (equivalent to 56 ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure.
 0.84 g retardation (equivalent to 36 ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure.
 0.96 g retardation (equivalent to 31 ft. stopping distance) with 85 lb. pedal pressure.

HILL CLIMBING at sustained steady speeds

Max. gradient on top gear 1 in 13.5 (Tapley 185 lb./ton)
 Max. gradient on 3rd gear 1 in 7.4 (Tapley 300 lb./ton)
 Max. gradient on 2nd gear 1 in 4.7 (Tapley 465 lb./ton)



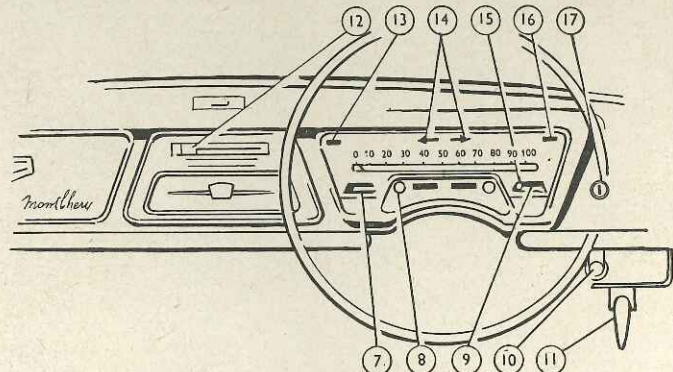
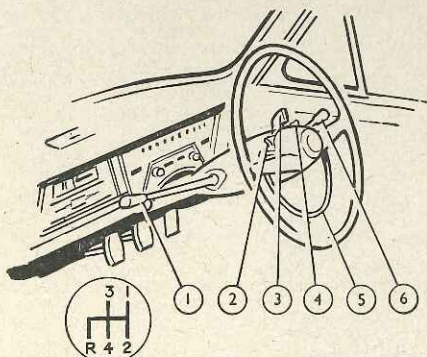
NOT TO SCALE
 FRONT SEAT AND BACKRESTS ADJUSTABLE

ACCELERATION TIMES from standstill

0-30 m.p.h.	5.2 sec.
0-40 m.p.h.	8.5 sec.
0-50 m.p.h.	13.3 sec.
0-60 m.p.h.	19.6 sec.
0-70 m.p.h.	30.2 sec.
0-80 m.p.h.	53.8 sec.
Standing quarter mile	21.3 sec.

ACCELERATION TIMES on Upper Ratios

	Top gear	3rd gear
10-30 m.p.h.	13.1 sec.	7.7 sec.
20-40 m.p.h.	11.5 sec.	6.4 sec.
30-50 m.p.h.	11.4 sec.	7.5 sec.
40-60 m.p.h.	14.0 sec.	10.7 sec.
50-70 m.p.h.	18.4 sec.	—
60-80 m.p.h.	34.2 sec.	—



1. Gear lever. 2. Windscreen wipers control. 3. Direction indicator switch. 4. Two-tone horn selector. 5. Horn ring. 6. Lights switch and dipper. 7. Fuel contents gauge. 8. Trip reset-

ting knob. 9. Water thermometer. 10. Windscreen washer control. 11. Handbrake. 12. Heater control. 13. Fuel contents warning light. 14. Direction indicator warning lights.

15. Oil pressure warning light. 16. Dynamo charge warning light. 17. Ignition and starter switch.

THE SIMCA ARONDE

MONTLHERY



A Family Saloon with a Sporting Character

SOME of the small popular cars now available combine exceptional qualities of steering and road-holding with excellent controls. Many keen drivers, having learned to value these qualities highly, wish to graduate to a more expensive car offering an equally high standard of roadworthiness, a little more accommodation and comfort and considerably more performance. They find this combination of virtues strangely elusive in cars costing less than £1,000 which gives the Simca Montlhery rather a special place as one of the very few cars to fall into this select category. This may be an interesting reflection on the qualities which a Frenchman demands from an ordinary family car with no sporting pretensions in its native land.

The handling is extremely safe with no tricks or vices, and the steering is positive, fairly low geared, and not particularly light. Driven right to the limit it drifts round corners very quickly, full throttle in top or third gears merely serving to tighten the radius of the bend a little but producing no

tendency to break away at the back in the dry, although a rather less throttle-happy technique gives better results on wet roads. With the standard tyre pressures (21 lb. front and 23 lb. rear) there is perhaps a little too much final understeer and we preferred the handling on corners with the front pressures brought up to 25 lb. However, although the directional stability is normally good, this change emphasizes a considerable sensitivity to side winds.

The French Dunlop G.T. tyres are very quiet for normal fast motoring and squeal much less than expected when really ill-treated. The revised rear suspension on the latest variants of the Aronde uses coil springs to provide vertical stiffness, semi-elliptic leaf springs which supplement the coil springs but which serve primarily as fore and aft radius arms to locate the axle, a panhard rod for lateral location and inclined telescopic dampers. This rather complicated layout works extremely well and there is unusual freedom

from the hop on corners and tramp on acceleration from which rigid axles tend to suffer, so that it can be thrown about with enthusiasm on bad roads as well as good. There is a small amount of initial roll which passes almost unnoticed except when negotiating S bends. Although these virtues naturally diminish when the car is fully laden, they do so far less than with most cars, and it can still be driven vigorously.

The ride is never hard or harsh but it is firm and well-damped. It is sometimes difficult to disentangle the effects of car suspension and seat upholstery, but a tendency for the occupants to bounce appeared to derive in considerable measure from an unfortunate choice of stiffness for the softly sprung seats. Otherwise these seats proved very comfortable and although

In Brief

Price (as tested) £632 plus purchase tax
£264 9s. 2d. equals £896 9s. 2d.

Capacity 1,290 c.c.

Unladen kerb weight 18½ cwt.

Acceleration:

20-40 m.p.h. in top gear ... 11.5 sec.

0-50 m.p.h. through gears... 13.3 sec.

Maximum top gear gradient ... 1 in 13.5

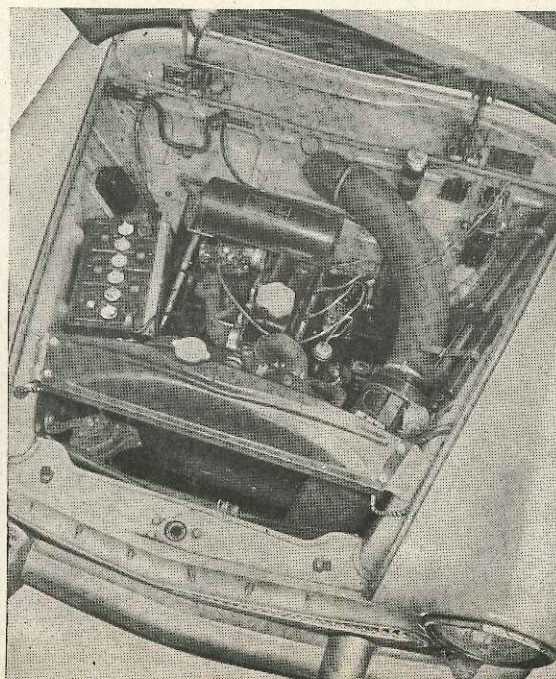
Maximum speed 83.6 m.p.h.

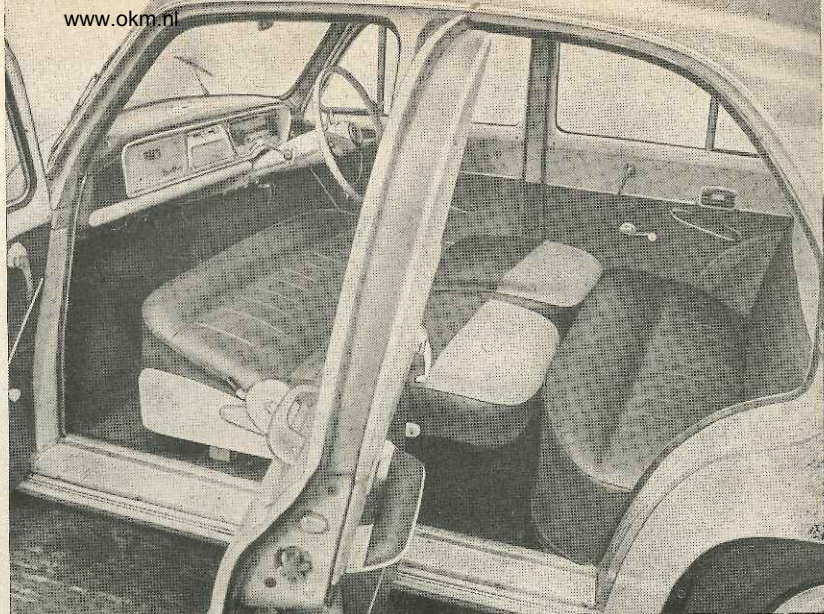
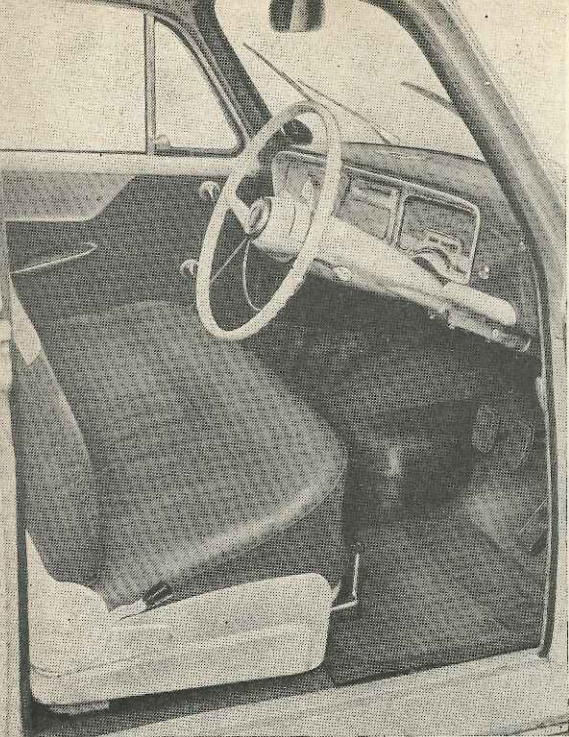
"Maximile" speed 82.2 m.p.h.

Touring fuel consumption ... 35.0 m.p.g.

Gearing: 15.6 m.p.h. in top gear at 1,000
r.p.m. 31.7 m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min.
piston speed

The rather inconspicuous 1,290 c.c. engine of the Simca gives little outward indication of the lively performance that it provides. Note the robust jack (on the right) and wheel brace (top left) with which the car is provided.





Caravan conversion? The individual back-rests of the bench front seat can be folded down to form a rather bumpy but very useful "bed." Numerous driving (and passengering) positions can be obtained through the fore and aft front seat movement and back-rest angles, the latter individually controlled by the rear-mounted lever (left).

THE SIMCA ARONDE MONTLHERY

not shaped to provide much lateral support, the high coefficient of friction of the plastic covering discharged this function adequately.

The front seats give a commanding driving position, well off the floor and well away from the wheel and have the unusual luxury, for an inexpensive car, of backs which are fully adjustable for rake, and which can be lowered flat to make a rather short bed. The rear seats remain comfortable, with adequate leg room for most people, even when the front ones are adjusted right back, but the inadequacy of this adjustment for a tall driver was accentuated by the long travel clutch pedal. As this operated only towards the outer extremity of its movement, adjustment might have improved it considerably. Although the Simca is really a four-seater, three smallish adults can be carried in reasonable comfort in the back, but the roof, which provides ample headroom in the front, inclines downwards rather sharply over the rear seat so that a passenger who sits with head well back may find on bumps that it con-

tacts the hard rubber moulding round the rear window.

The downdraught Solex carburetter is fitted with a fully automatic rich mixture device which gave immediate cold starting and smooth running during the warming-up period. With a very high power output from less than 1,300 c.c., it is surprising to find that this engine gives excellent torque at speeds as low as 1,500 r.p.m. Below this speed, which corresponds to rather less than 25 m.p.h. in top gear, it is rather rough when pulling due to resonance of the engine on its rubber mountings, and even the tickover is not entirely smooth when the engine is hot. With a speed range of 1,500 to 5,500 r.p.m. over which it pulls both strongly and smoothly, it is by no means necessary to use the lower gears continually in order to travel quite briskly, but the engine seems to thrive on hard use, and high revs cause it no distress.

The gearbox is reasonably quiet and has excellent synchronesh. The gap between first and second gears is slightly closer than that between second and third and many drivers would prefer a higher second gear. The general impression of a very pleasant gearbox was marred by a rather heavy and imprecise long-travel steering column

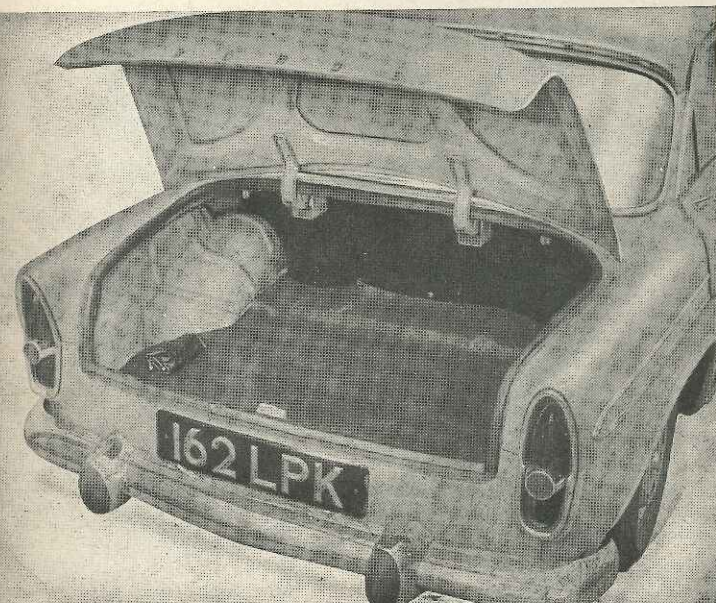
gearchange, and although familiarity enabled this to be used with reasonable dexterity it is felt that a floor lever would be more suitable for a car of this size and character; such a conversion kit is available for fitting by Simca agents. The brake and the organ-type throttle pedal are well placed for heel and toe operation.

The mechanical noise level of the Simca remains low up to very high engine r.p.m. and this enables it to cruise at any speed within its range without any feeling of distress. In the region of 45-50 m.p.h. there is an exhaust resonance which produces internal drumming of which the rear-seat passengers are particularly aware, but with all the windows shut the quiet and effortless high speed cruising was spoiled only by odd whistles which arose from ill-fitting draught seals on the front doors and windows; in this connection, heavy rain revealed a water leak into the dashboard locker and on to the front floor, which appeared to enter round the windscreen moulding. Although fresh cold air can be admitted through the heater, provided the hot-water tap under the bonnet is turned off, adequate warm-weather ventilation necessitates the additional wind noise of open windows. At the time of the test, the prevailing mild weather gave no opportunity to assess the efficiency of the heating system, but the booster fan was reasonably quiet.

Furnishing Details

From the point of view of appearance, the interior finish, trim and fittings did not appeal to all those who rode in the car, but this may be largely a matter of national taste. Certain features of the electrical equipment are interesting and uncommon in this country, notably the provision of a switch on the steering boss which selects a soft horn note for town use or a higher pitched strident tone more likely to penetrate fast-moving vehicles in the country. Exterior lights are controlled by a multiple function lighting switch comprising a slender stalk projecting to the right of the steering column and terminating in a knob which has four positions in rotation and can also be moved in and out. Apart from the usual combinations of side, tail and headlamps, this switch can provide port

A spring-loaded boot lid gives ample access to a large but rather shallow luggage locker, under which the spare wheel is stowed. Rubber overrider stops protect otherwise vulnerable chromium plating.





Front and rear views of the Simca show ample but not gaudy use of bright metal on an already good-looking car. Hooded lights are featured at front and back.

or starboard lights only for parking. On the road test car it was necessary to pull the knob out to switch the headlights to the dipped beam, but it would seem more natural to knock it in for a movement which must often be performed in a hurry; presumably the wiring could easily be re-arranged to suit the owner's preferences in this matter. The headlights appeared to be good, but were adjusted too low for proper assessment.

Awkward Switch

Flashing-type direction indicators are operated by a time switch mounted on the steering column just behind the wheel. As this switch is in a fixed position, it often tends to disappear behind a spoke of the steering wheel when needed, and there is some danger of inadvertently trapping the fingers between the two.

Although it is unlikely that potential

buyers of the Simca Montlhery will look upon fuel consumption as a decisive factor, a figure of over 28 m.p.g. driven extremely hard is remarkable in relation to the performance available (and used). The "touring" fuel consumption of 35 m.p.g. shows that much better figures are possible with more leisurely treatment, and all this is achieved on mixture grade fuel, despite a compression ratio of 8.2 : 1, which suggests that considerable benefit is derived from the use of an aluminium cylinder head.

The unusual combination of performance and handling offered by this full four-seater saloon, in conjunction with brakes which always proved light and entirely adequate for any situation, is likely to persuade many discriminating motorists that it fully justifies a price increased by import duty and a slightly lower standard of interior finish compared with equivalent home products.



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Specification

Engine	
Cylinders	4
Bore	74 mm.
Stroke	75 mm.
Cubic capacity	1,290 c.c.
Piston area	26.5 sq. in.
Valves	Overhead (push rods)
Compression ratio	8.2/1
Carburettor	Solex downdraught 32PB/CT
Fuel pump	S.E.V. mechanical
Ignition timing control	Centrifugal and vacuum
Oil filter	Full flow wire mesh
Max. power (gross)	60 b.h.p. at
at	5,400 r.p.m.
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	2,660 ft./min.
Transmission	
Clutch	7 in. Simca s.d.p.
Top gear (s/m)	4.44
3rd gear (s/m)	6.51
2nd gear (s/m)	10.40
1st gear	16.38
Reverse	20.94
Propeller shaft	Open
Final drive	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	31.7
Chassis	
Brakes	Hydraulic
Brake diameters	10 in.
Friction areas	132 sq. in.
Suspension:	
Front	Independent by coil springs and wishbones with anti-roll bar
Rear	Rigid axle with semi-elliptic springs, coil springs and panhard rod
Shock absorbers:	
Front	Telescopic
Rear	Telescopic
Steering gear	Gemmer worm and roller
Tyres	Dunlop G.T. with tubes, 5.60-14

Coachwork and Equipment

Starting handle	No
Battery mounting	Off-side under bonnet
Jack	Screw pedestal side jack
Jacking points	2 each side under body
Standard tool kit: 3 open-ended spanners, screwdriver, box spanner and tommy bar, pliers, jack and wheel spanner.	
Exterior lights: 2 headlamps, 2 sidelamps/flashers, 2 stop/tail/flashers, number plate lamp.	
Number of electrical fuses	4
Direction indicators	Flashers controlled by time-switch
Windscreen wipers	S.E.V. twin electrical, self parking
Windscreen washers	Simca
Sun visors	2
Instruments: Speedometer with total and decimal trip indicators, fuel gauge, water temperature gauge.	
Warning lights	Generator, fuel level, oil pressure, flasher operation

Locks:	
With ignition key	Ignition only
With other keys	Doors and boot lid
Glove lockers	One on fascia
Map pockets	One each side of scuttle
Parcel shelves	One behind rear seat
Ashtrays	One on fascia, two in rear compartment
Cigar lighters	None
Interior lights: One above windscreen operated by manual and courtesy switches.	
Interior heater	Fresh air heater with demister. Standard fitting
Car radio	Optional extra. Eye
Extras available: Radio, whitewall tyres, reversing lamp, auxiliary lamps.	
Upholstery material	Vinyl plastic
Floor covering	Rubber
Exterior colours standardized	19 at standard price
Alternative body styles: Other models available with different specification.	

Maintenance

Sump	9 pints S.A.E. 30 in summer, S.A.E. 20 in winter	closes 20° a.t.d.c. (The above figures are taken with .010 in. tappet clearances.)
Gearbox	2½ pints, S.A.E. 80 E.P.	
Rear axle	1½ pints, S.A.E. 90 E.P.	
Steering gear lubricant	S.A.E. 90 E.P.	
Cooling system capacity	11.6 pints (2 drain taps)	
Chassis lubrication	By grease gun every 1,250 miles to 23 points	
Ignition timing	4° b.t.d.c.	
Contact-breaker gap017 in. to .019 in.	
Spark plug type	Champion H10 or AC Delco 45L	
Spark plug gap024-.025 in.	
Valve timing: Inlet opens 12° b.t.d.c. and closes 60° a.b.d.c.; exhaust opens 52° b.b.d.c. and		
Tappet clearances (cold):		
Inlet004 in.	
Exhaust006 in.	
Front wheel toe-in	¼ in. toe-out	
Camber angle	1¼ deg. ± ¼	
Castor angle	2 deg. ± ½	
Steering swivel pin inclination	7-8 deg.	
Tyre pressures:		
Front	21 lb.	
Rear	23 lb.	
Brake fluid	Lockheed	
Battery type and capacity	12 v. 45 amp. hr.	