

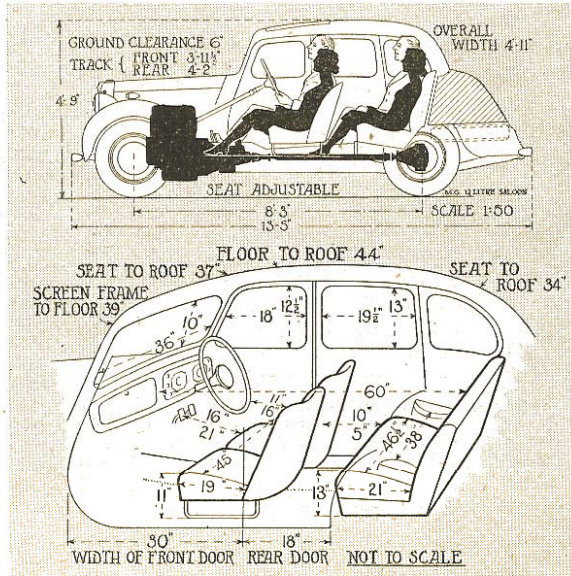
# The Motor Road Test No. 11/51

Make: M.G.

Type: 1½-litre Saloon

Makers: M.G. Car Co. Ltd., Abingdon-on-Thames, Berks.

## Dimensions and Seating



## In Brief

Price £565 plus purchase tax  
 £315 7s. 9d. equals £880 7s. 9d.  
 Capacity . . . . . 1,250 c.c.  
 Unladen kerb weight . . . . . 20½ cwt.  
 Fuel consumption . . . . . 29.5 m.p.g.  
 Maximum speed . . . . . 69.6 m.p.h.  
 Maximum speed on 1 in  
 20 gradient . . . . . 56 m.p.h.  
 Maximum top gear  
 gradient . . . . . 1 in 12.5  
 Acceleration . . . . .  
 10-30 m.p.h. in top . . . . . 12 secs.  
 0.50 m.p.h. through  
 gears . . . . . 18.8 secs.  
 Gearing, 14.6 m.p.h. in top at 1,000  
 r.p.m., 61.8 m.p.h. at 2,500 ft. per  
 min. piston speed.

## Specification

**Engine**  
 Cylinders . . . . . 4  
 Bore . . . . . 66.5 mm.  
 Stroke . . . . . 90 mm.  
 Cubic capacity . . . . . 1,250 c.c.  
 Piston area . . . . . 21.6 sq. in.  
 Valves . . . . . Pushrod, o.h.v.  
 Compression ratio . . . . . 7.2/7.4 : 1  
 Max. power . . . . . 46 b.h.p.  
 at . . . . . 4,800 r.p.m.  
 Piston speed at max. b.h.p. 2,835 ft. per min.  
 Carburettor . . . . . Single S.U. 1½ in. semi-down draught

**Ignition** . . . . . Coil  
 Sparking plugs . . . . . Champion L.105  
 Fuel pump . . . . . S.U. electric  
 Oil filter . . . . . Own, full-flow

**Transmission**  
 Clutch 7½ in. Borg and Beck single dry plate  
 Top gear (g/m) . . . . . 5.143  
 3rd gear (s/m) . . . . . 7.121  
 2nd gear (s/m) . . . . . 10.646  
 1st gear . . . . . 18.00  
 Propeller shaft Hardy Spicer, needle bearing  
 Final drive . . . . . Spiral bevel

**Chassis**  
 Brakes Lockheed hydraulic, handbrake cable  
 to rear only  
 Brake drum diameter . . . . . 9 in.  
 Friction lining area . . . . . 104 sq. in.  
 Suspension: Front, independent (coil spring)  
 Rear, semi-elliptic

Shock absorbers: Front Luvax-Girling piston type  
 Rear . . . . .

Tyres . . . . . 5.25 x 16 e.l.p.

**Steering**  
 Steering gear . . . . . Rack and pinion  
 Turning circle . . . . . 35 ft.  
 Turns of steering wheel, lock to lock . . . . . 2½

**Performance factors (at laden weight, as tested)**  
 Piston area, sq. in. per ton . . . . . 18.0  
 Brake lining area, sq. in. per ton . . . . . 86  
 Specific displacement, litres per ton  
 mile . . . . . 2.140  
 (Fully described in "The Motor," May 14, 1947)

## Test Conditions

Strong crosswind, heavy showers, dry road for acceleration and braking tests. Pool petrol.

## Test Data

**ACCELERATION TIMES on Two Upper Ratios**

	Top	3rd.
10-30 m.p.h. . . . .	12.0 secs.	9.0 secs.
20-40 m.p.h. . . . .	14.0 secs.	9.7 secs.
30-50 m.p.h. . . . .	18.0 secs.	13.8 secs.
40-60 m.p.h. . . . .	22.6 secs.	—

**ACCELERATION TIMES Through Gears**

0-30 m.p.h. . . . .	6.1 secs.
0-40 m.p.h. . . . .	10.8 secs.
0-50 m.p.h. . . . .	18.8 secs.
0-60 m.p.h. . . . .	29.9 secs.
Standing Quarter Mile . . . . .	23.8 secs.

**MAXIMUM SPEEDS**

Flying Quarter Mile	69.6 m.p.h.
Mean for four opposite runs	75 m.p.h.
Best time equals	75 m.p.h.
<b>Speed in Gears</b>	
Max. speed in 3rd gear . . . . .	55 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 2nd gear . . . . .	37 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 1st gear . . . . .	25 m.p.h.

**FUEL CONSUMPTION**

47 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h.
40 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h.
33 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h.
27.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h.
Overall consumption for 288 miles, 9.75 gallons, equals 29.5 m.p.g.

**WEIGHT**

Unladen kerb weight . . . . .	20½ cwt.
Front/rear weight distribution	49/52
Weight laden as tested . . . . .	24 cwt.

**INSTRUMENTS**

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h. . . . .	8% fast
Speedometer at 60 m.p.h. . . . .	13% fast
Distance recorder . . . . .	2% fast

**HILL CLIMBING (At steady speeds)**

Max. top gear speed on 1 in 20 . . . . .	56 m.p.h.
Max. top gear speed on 1 in 15 . . . . .	48 m.p.h.
Max. gradient on top gear . . . . .	1 in 12.5 (Tapley 180 lb./ton)
Max. gradient on 3rd gear . . . . .	1 in 9.3 (Tapley 240 lb./ton)
Max. gradient on 2nd gear . . . . .	1 in 7 (Tapley 320 lb./ton)

**BRAKES at 30 m.p.h.**  
 0.98g. retardation (=30.6 ft. stopping distance)

## Maintenance

Fuel tank: 8 gallons. Sump: 9 pints, S.A.E. 30. Gearbox: 1½ pints, S.A.E. 140. Rear axle: 1½ pints, S.A.E. 140. Steering gear: Rack and pinion. Radiator: 13½ pints (drain taps). Chassis lubrication: By grease gun to 13 points. Ignition timing: I.D.C. Spark plug gap: 0.020 in. to 0.022 in. Contact breaker gap: 0.010 in. to 0.012 in. Valve timing: Inlet opens 11° b.t.d.c., inlet shuts 57° a.b.d.c. Exhaust opens 52° b.b.d.c., exhaust shuts 24° a.d.c. Tappet clearances (hot): inlet, 0.019 in., exhaust, 0.019 in. Front wheel toe-in: Nil. Camber angle: Nil to -1½° on bump. Castor angle: 1° ± ½°. Tyre pressures: Front, 23 lb., rear, 25 lb. Brake fluid: Lockheed. Battery: Lucas STXW9A. 51AH at 10 hr. rate. Lamp bulbs: All Lucas, O/S head, No. 54, 36 watt, 12 volt; N/S head, No. 171, 36 watt, 12 volt. Side: No. 207, 6 watt, 12 volt. Reverse: No. 1, 24 watt, 12 volt. Panel: 986/987, 2.2 watt, 12 volt. Ignition: 970, 0.5 watt, 2.5 volt. Trafficator: 256, 3 watt, 12 volt. Fog: 87, 60 watt, 12 volt. Interior: 207, 6 watt, 12 volt. Ref.

# The M.G. Y-type 1 1/4 litre Saloon



An Economical  
Four-seater Saloon  
with Notable Ease  
of Maintenance

Just as this gear lever calls to mind the now-forgotten cliché "falls readily to hand," so does the forward view through the somewhat narrow screen bring the recollection of another lost phrase, to wit, "both front wings are visible." in the case of the M.G., they are clearly marked by the separate side lamps, and this undoubtedly assists in gauging the width of the car and helping the driver through heavy traffic and confined spaces.

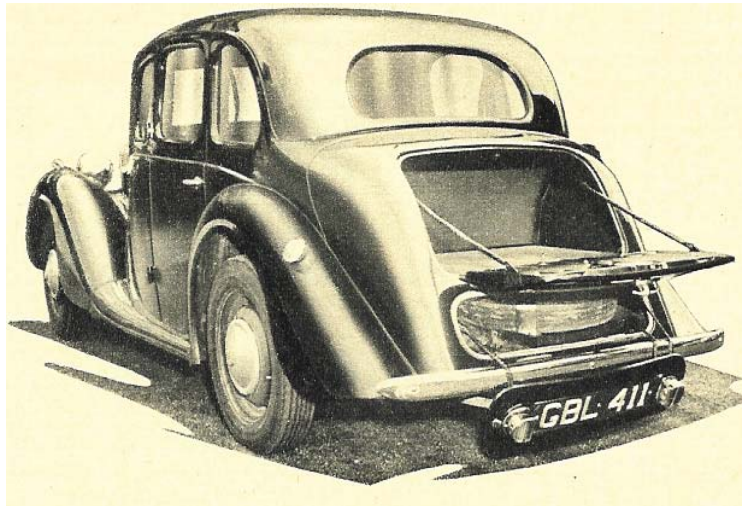
**T**HE current M.G. 1 1/4 saloon was introduced to the British market in mid-May 1947 and, in the subsequent four years, only the most minor modifications have been introduced. The car is therefore one of the very first post-war models, and it is an open secret that, in conception, it dates back to the immediate pre-war period at the Abingdon factory. It is therefore not surprising that, in contrast with later designs with all-enveloping form, the M.G. has a distinctly old-fashioned appearance, whilst a study of the specification reveals that a number of features now accepted as common fittings, such as the so-called air-conditioning system, self-parking windscreen wipers, steering-column gear lever, and bench-type front seat, are absent. But there are many who will rejoice that the appearance continues a long tradition and others who will shed few tears over the absence of some of the features set out above.

## Early Virtues Retained

This apart, after only a few miles at the wheel of the car, one becomes very deeply impressed by the retention of many old-fashioned virtues which have in large measure been washed into the sea of time by the inexorable flow of progress.

Putting first things first, both driver and front passenger find themselves in individually adjustable seats, well formed to give sideways support, and with an accessible and reasonably efficient hand brake placed between them. The extensible steering column makes it possible to place the wheel in the best position for the driver, and the instruments immediately in front of him are of sensible size with sober inscriptions. They are mounted in a fascia panel made of what an American salesman proudly called "genuine tree wood," and the whole of the left side of the panel is given up to a really large locker which will comfortably hold a small handbag in addition to other miscellaneous articles.

The necessary switch gear is disposed around the right hand side of the panel,



**SENSIBLE SCHEME**—The luggage-carrying capacity of the M.G. can be enlarged by using the locker door as a tray, beneath which the spare wheel and tools are accessibly housed. Inbuilt hydraulic jacks are provided.

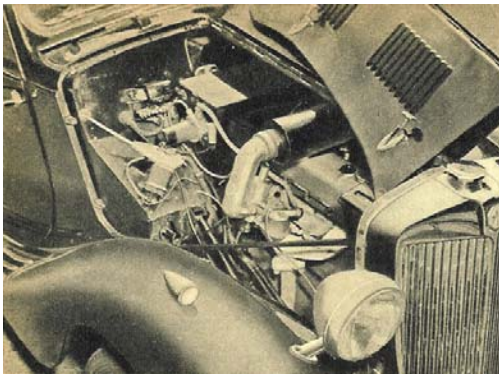
and in the centre is a now almost-forgotten handle which will open the front windscreen and will thus prove of invaluable assistance when fog be met upon the road. A further rare feature, but one perhaps even more appreciated by many motorists, is the sliding roof, whilst immediately ahead of the hand brake a short gear lever connects to a four-speed box giving a combination which is superlative in itself, and almost comically superior to the average steering-column type.

Finally, although the body is made from steel pressings, the interior furnishings, which include a number of wooden fillets, act as most effective sound dampers, and, although the engine in itself is far from quiet, one hears the noise by itself and not, as so often today, as "the echo of a cry." This freedom from reverberation is matched by a seemingly complete absence of draughts.

The points which have been mentioned will perhaps make it clear that we thor-

**OPENING UP**—The car is one of the few saloons available today offering a combination of sliding roof and opening windscreen. This picture also shows the separate seats and good position of the central gear lever.





**EASY ACCESS** - The traditional bonnet style gives full accessibility for components such as carburetter, petrol pump, wiper motor, and fuse box.

oughly enjoyed driving the M.G. 1¼-litre saloon and thought it an admirable vehicle for everyday purposes.

A glance at the test data shows that it is not outstanding either in maximum speed or acceleration, although all the figures were probably rather worse than normal owing to exceptionally bad weather experienced during the test period. Nevertheless, a genuine maximum speed of practically 70 m.p.h., representing a shade over 80 m.p.h. on the speedometer supplied to us, is certainly adequate for most normal motoring, whilst gradients steeper than 1 in 10 can be tackled at quite high speed if the really excellent gear-change is used for the engagement of third speed. In traffic, second gear is particularly effective, and the performance on this ratio is aided by the ability of the engine to soar up to 5,000 r.p.m. with no hesitation.

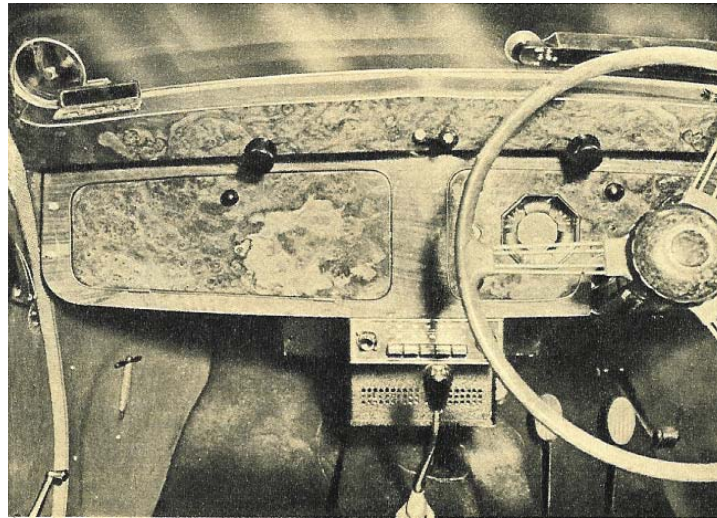
#### Real Economy

Again postulating free use of the gear box, really high average speeds can be accomplished and, even when driven very hard, the fuel consumption falls below 30 m.p.g. by a decimal point only, so that well over 30 m.p.g. could obviously be obtained if economy of running were thought to be more important than time spent on the journey.

With petrol at present prices, both here and in the world at large, this in itself is an important recommendation, but the merits of the M.G. are certainly not exhausted by a consideration of the utilitarian aspects of speed, acceleration and fuel economy. It is, above all, an exceedingly pleasing car to drive and in which to be driven. Not only does one welcome the sound-deadening properties of the body, but one also rejoices in the relatively low level of wind noise, these two features together making it quite easy to listen to radio programmes at sustained speeds of 60 m.p.h. The suspension may be thought a little on the hard side by 1951 standards, but there is an agreeable freedom from pitch and only moderate roll.

Driving the car on fast corners demands a certain degree of practice, for the car has over-steering characteristics which verge, perhaps, on the exaggerated. As a consequence, an almost imperceptible nudge on the steering wheel will set in motion a train of

dynamic and geometric sequences which will virtually steer the car round a corner of quite modest radius, whilst, on the other hand, substantial movement of the wheel, particularly when cornering at speed, may be followed by the dreaded side slip, because the tail of the car comes round quite quickly if the permissible limits of adhesion are exceeded. Owing, however, to the high gearing and positive connection in the rack-and-pinion steering gear, correction of the skid presents no difficulties to an alert driver nor, within the maximum speed limits of this particular car, does the over-steering quality generate any problems in control on straight roads,



**FINE FINISH** - The well-finished woodwork in the body interior, the neat lay-out of the instruments and the exceptionally large dashboard locker are clearly shown in this illustration. The radio set fitted is available as an optional extra.

although there is naturally a certain sensitivity to high cross winds.

Once the driver is used to the characteristics of the car, cornering becomes an extraordinarily easy and effortless activity and the car shows a power of manoeuvrability completely consonant with the well-known slogan of the makers.

Reverting now to some more practical points in connection with this car, one has to recognise that it is a four-seater, as although three persons can be carried on the back seat, the width is such that this number could only be tolerated for very short distances. With the designed maximum load, however,

everyone is seated in above-average comfort and there is an armrest separating the two rear seat passengers. Their outlook benefits considerably from the six-light body and each passenger has an individual ashtray. The rear window can be masked by a blind, the rooflight is of adequate brightness for book or map reading in either front or rear seats, and the headlights give a forward view well up to the speed of the car.

#### Luggage Platform

The space enclosed by the luggage locker is on the small side by modern standards, but, against this, the locker lid is hinged at its base and can be swung out to form a platform by which means really large pieces of luggage can be accommodated. The spare wheel and tools are carried separately, immediately above the fuel tank, and the accident of a nail penetrating a front tyre brought home the very real worth of the hydraulic "Jackall" system as a saver of both time and temper. Owing to the fuel economy, the car has a range of over 200 miles, despite the somewhat meagre tank capacity of 8 gallons, but on a car of this type, this obviously is a feature which could well be improved.

The type of front suspension and steering linkage used involves easier and

less-frequent attention to lubrication than normal, whilst any attention required by the engine is, of course, very greatly assisted by the use of the old-fashioned type of front end and bonnet.

Summing up, therefore, we found this car to be notably attractive in respect of owner and passenger convenience, economy, and ease of maintenance. Once the peculiarity of the handling has been mastered (not a difficult process) the car is exceedingly pleasant to drive and it has an all-round performance which is more than adequate for the needs of the overwhelming majority of motorists.

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