

Welcome to Somerford Mini Ltd.

Somerford Mini Limited was established in 1990 by Peter Hines, a Mini enthusiast. The company has been very successful and now boasts a huge spares department alongside the original restoration business. Manned by restorers with a deep passion for (and vast knowledge and experience of) the Mini, our workshop enjoys a reputation as one of the country's leading Mini restoration centres. With the spares and restoration departments together as a team, we have the full blessing of MG Rover, through being a British Motor Heritage Approved Specialist. We are justifiably proud of this accolade.

The spares side of the business started in 1994 and has grown at an incredible rate. We now stock over 8000 lines, with more being added all the time. We cater for all Minis, from 1959 to the end of production in 2000, with the parts needed to carry out a full restoration, including very specialised body panels that are not otherwise widely available. Other stock ranges from service items right the way through to accessories, performance parts and all the latest gizmos to dress up your Mini.

Somerford Mini Limited is still a small enough company to guarantee a personal service, a very important consideration. Unlike many of our competitors, we can offer proper advice before you make your purchase. We know from our own workshop experience what works and what doesn't, so if you're not sure about something please ask — the chances are we can help. Our workshop is also able to fit any part we sell, if you so choose. We take a pride in being totally honest with our customers and not making false promises (tales of which you hear only too often with some mail order companies).

We look forward to helping you to care for your cherished Mini.

Peter Hines
Somerford Mini Limited.

Ordering Parts

When ordering parts, it is very helpful if you also provide us with information about your car. Details such as the chassis number (or vehicle identification number on later models), engine number, year of manufacture, whether the car is right or left hand drive and details of any modifications will all help to ensure you get the parts you need.

You can order parts by telephone, fax, mail, e-mail, through our website, or alternatively you would be most welcome to visit our shop during normal trading hours (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 9.00am to 2.00pm, Sunday closed). We provide a range of methods of despatch for your order, from regular post through to next day courier delivery. Sometimes the method of despatch is dependant on the weight or size of your order. We are of course happy to give you a quotation, including delivery costs, before you place your order with us.

Overseas customers should note that sometimes shipments will be subject to local import duties, which are not included in the price we charge for your order, or the delivery costs. These duties must be paid by you before you can receive your shipment. Value Added Tax at the current United Kingdom rate will be levied on all orders despatched to countries within the European Community, but will not be levied on orders despatched to the rest of the world.

We accept payments for orders by cash, personal cheque, bank draft, Sterling travellers cheque and most credit or debit cards, including Visa, Mastercard, Maestro (Switch) and Delta. If you intend to pay by personal cheque or bankers draft, we would advise you to ask for a parts availability check and quotation before placing your order.

Using This Catalogue

Illustrations and Illustration Numbers: The illustrations are carefully crafted to guide you to the parts you want for your car. Each assembly is depicted in an exploded format and for consistency, where practicality permits, the view is from a left hand front three quarter angle (we're also aware that many customers use catalogues as a visual guide to the assembly procedure of their car!). If only one hand is illustrated of a part with right and left hand versions, both hands will be listed under the matching illustration number in the text, usually with the right hand shown first.

Part Number: A part number is the identifying name for a part in our stock control system, and differentiates between versions — right hand or left hand, early or late model. We ask you, where you can, to use part numbers when ordering — it helps to guarantee you get the exact parts you need. If you can't work out which part number or you're having difficulty working out what you need, please contact us. We are only too happy to guide you or work it out for you.

Description: We need to clarify here what we mean by right and left hand. Right and left hand is always taken from a viewpoint of sitting in the car, not from standing in front of it. So why don't we say 'offside' or 'nearside'? Because offside for a right hand drive car is nearside for a left hand drive car (you can see how this becomes easily confused...).

Quantity Required: This is always the quantity required per car. For example, if two bolts hold a hinge, and there are four hinges on the car, the quantity required will be shown as 8, not 2.

Remarks: This is additional descriptive information to help you identify the part you need, to tell you exactly what you'll receive if you order that part, or to make you aware of an available alternative. It does this by telling you to which models or in which years a part was originally fitted (if there is a choice), or what that part includes, or whether that part can be used on other models.

Parts Availability

While the great majority of the parts listed in this catalogue are currently available, there are some that are not. A few of the parts shown in this catalogue are there in anticipation of what may become available in future (new or reintroduced products are constantly under development). A handful of others are there to historically acknowledge what would have originally been fitted and are, where possible, accompanied by an alternative, serviceable product. It therefore follows that this catalogue does not constitute a definite offer for sale of any particular item.

In the accompanying price list, a price beside the part number indicates that the part is usually available; if the part number is absent it indicates non-availability. If the comment 'use' (followed by a different part number) is found, the original part has been superseded by an available alternative.

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British Motor Heritage Approval

Somerford Mini Limited is a British Motor Heritage approved specialist. Our agreement with British Motor Heritage permits the use of certain marque logos and some of the artwork contained in this catalogue. The remainder of the artwork is the intellectual property of Somerford Mini Limited.

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Saturday: 9.00am to 2.00pm

Sunday: Closed

Building The Mini Bodyshell

From the outset, with the revolutionary use of external seams to join the major subassemblies together, the Mini bodyshell was designed to be easy to construct. That it is definitely not regarded as such today is in part due to its longevity in production - it understandably compares very badly to cars designed forty years later. However, it can also be said that the Mini was never regarded by the men on the production line as being particularly easy to build. Many of the panels were complicated to press (and still are - ask British Motor Heritage) and the little car's trademark external seams required the very skilled operation of awkward roller welders to ensure they sealed properly. And despite the external seams, there were still plenty of other welded joints hidden in places almost too small to get access to, as any of you who have repaired a Mini body will testify. Getting the doors to fit was something else...

Mini bodyshells have been built all over the world - literally. Aside from UK production, at various times in the Mini's history bodies have been either pressed and assembled or simply assembled (from completely knocked-down kits, or CKD) in factories in Belgium, Italy, Spain, South Africa and Australia.

Mini bodies built at these overseas outposts differed in detail to a greater or lesser extent to their UK cousins. Some Italian, Spanish and Australian bodies had quarterlight-fitted doors for example (Australia also used flush door handles), while probably the strangest duo were built in South Africa. There, the Leykor plant built a 'Wolseley 1000', a Hornet body with a standard Mini rear end, and duly replaced it a few years later with their Mini 'MkIII' body, a standard Mini MkII with a Hornet extended rear end! Also somewhat off-beat was the plastic bodied Mini from Chile, followed twenty years later by the similarly constructed Mini Cord, assembled in Venezuela. Meanwhile, although the Mini Moke ceased to be a UK produced model in 1968, the tooling was then shipped to Australia where production continued until the tools were moved again, this time to Portugal.

Even UK production was spread around a network of plants. Initially, three plants shared most of the workload of bodyshell production: Castle Bromwich (the old Vickers Supermarine Spitfire factory, now a Jaguar plant) and Longbridge, both in the West Midlands, plus Cowley in Oxford. Bodyshell production at that time was in the charge of the Pressed Steel Fisher (PSF) division of BMC. PSF had been formed by the merger of two concerns: Pressed Steel, based in Cowley, and Fisher and Ludlow of Castle Bromwich. Incidentally, that's why many Riley Elf and Wolseley Hornet models carry a 'Fisholow' body plate in the engine compartment.

As production grew and the range of Mini body types increased, more PSF plants were brought in to manufacture large sub-assemblies of the bodyshells. Large chunks such as complete floor assemblies and front end assemblies were built at Speke in Liverpool, and Llanelli in South Wales. Many detail parts and assemblies came from Longbridge's West Press building and its South Wales satellite plant in Bargoed (this factory being best known for building the Austin J40 pedal car).

From the start of the 1980s production fell to a more sedate level, and this coupled with the cessation of the Estate, Van and Pick Up variants allowed the majority of saloon bodyshell assembly to be concentrated at Longbridge, although the Llanelli plant (by this time owned by an outside concern) continued to manufacture most of the substructure from the dash (bulkhead) forwards, plus the door assemblies, right up to the end of Mini production. Latterly the lion's share of panel pressing was done by another former PSF plant, in Swindon.

The Old West Works at Longbridge, destined to become the last volume producer of Mini bodyshells, coveted one fascinating little twist in the story. The one remaining Mini bodyshell production line in use from 1997 onwards, Track 10, was in fact the line specifically equipped for building Mini Estates, Vans and Pick Ups, models which had finished some 16 - 18 years earlier!

As is well known, Mini production ceased in 2000, but thanks to British Motor Heritage the story of Mini bodyshell production didn't end there. All the jigs, fixtures and special welding equipment from West Works were saved and taken to BMH's Witney, Oxfordshire factory where low volume production of original specification Mini bodyshells for the enthusiast market continues to this day.

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