

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 fittings 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 listed 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 exactly what it is 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.

Change Points

In the catalogue you will see parts changes referred to by dates. We have steered away from the tradition of listing change points by chassis or commission number (they're different, and the factory parts books used both) because they are so complicated on Minis. All the models had different change points until 1984 (after which it got much easier) and to list change point numbers often amounts to half a page of text!

As a result, we've used years instead. While much more simple, we acknowledge that using dates to portray change points is not perfect. For example, you will know the year of registration of your car but you might not know the year of manufacture - the two aren't necessarily the same. Also, a revised part was often introduced during a year rather than at the beginning or end of it. If you have difficulty in establishing which part is for your car, you will find a list of Mini models production history at the end of this catalogue which may help. If it doesn't, contact us, preferably with your chassis, commission or engine number to hand, and we'll do our best to sort it out for you.

Mini Transmissions

The manual gearbox created for the Mini in 1959 was an essential factor in the amazing space efficiency of the car. Developed from the gearbox used by BMC's other A Series-engined cars of the time like the Morris Minor (and sharing many of the gearbox internals), the Mini gearbox was the first to be positioned under the engine. This allowed the entire power unit to be mounted transversely in the car, keeping the area occupied by it to a bare minimum.

Gear selection was made by a long gear lever ('direct change'), remembered affectionately as the 'magic wand' or 'pudding stirrer' by those who owned early Minis. Power was transferred from the engine and clutch down to the gearbox via a series of three gears colloquially referred to as the drop gears; the design initially allowed oil onto the clutch all too frequently, causing severe slippage. The sealing system had to be quickly redesigned and a programme was carried out to modify the Minis built thus far.

After this hiccup the Mini gearbox settled down to a reasonably trustworthy existence. It was, however, still subjected to many improvements through the years and apart from the basic shape of the gearbox case very little of the 1990s Mini gearbox is recognisably the same as that on early cars.

Most of the modifications centred on improving the gearchange - a remote gearchange arrived in 1961 (for several years fitted only to Coopers, it had the additional benefit of considerably steadying engine movement), cone synchromesh gave way to baulk rings in 1962, a proper synchromesh gear replaced the old 'crash' first gear in 1968 and the remote gearchange plus the gear selectors were replaced by a system known as 'rod change' in 1973.

Two other major design modifications are worthy of note, both involving quietening the gearbox. Around 1963-64 the angle of the gear teeth was changed (post-modification gears being known as B Type and pre-modification retrospectively becoming A Type). This happened again around 1982 (the new gears being known as A Plus), bringing the Mini gearbox in line production-wise with the recently introduced Austin Metro. Exact identification of a Mini manual gearbox prior to replacement of gears is therefore of paramount importance - different angled gear teeth will not mesh together!

Automatic transmission arrived in the Mini for 1965. A special automatic specification engine block had to be cast, a fact not lost on Mini owners who have converted their cars from automatic to manual and had to change the engine as well as the gearbox.

The Mini automatic has significantly worse fuel economy as well as poorer acceleration than that managed by manual Minis, detracting from the automatic's claim to be the

better town car, which in some other respects it undoubtedly is. Also, refinement is not the automatic's greatest feature; it changes gear rather a lot (often downwards), subjecting the car's occupants to even more noise than in a manual Mini.

It is surprising that the innovative and promising Mini automatic was largely starved of development during its 35 years in production, major changes being confined to the gearchange mechanism, plus the introduction of A Plus drop gears in 1982.

Opinions concerning Minis fitted with automatic transmission entrench the enthusiast fraternity, the vast majority believing that the only good thing you can do with an automatic Mini is to convert it to manual. Yet the automatic Mini still does have its supporters, not least in Japan, the Mini's biggest market in the 1990s, where nearly all of the Minis sold were automatics because of that country's highly congested city roads.

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Opening Times

Monday to Friday: 9.00am to 6.00pm
Saturday: 9.00am to 2.00pm Sunday: Closed

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