



Popular choice: Anglia was Bath's first car



Y-type dwarfed by East Kirkby Lancaster



Built-in jacks make tyre changes a doddle



Owner Bath proudly poses with 'Sabrina'



Lovely '50s sprung wheel and timber dash



MG Y-type

Name Mick Bath **From** Lincoln
Age Old enough to know better!
First classic 1935 Morris 8
Dream classic Bristol 403
Daily driver BMW 320Ci;
 Bentley Turbo R
Favourite driving song *Go Your Own Way* Fleetwood Mac
Best drives Switzerland's Furka Pass; the Amalfi Coast in Italy; California's Highway 101; from Santiago, Chile, across the Andes to Mendoza, Argentina

SEDUCED BY RARE OCTAGON TINTOP

I've had a full driving licence since I was 17 and bought my first car – a 1953 Ford Anglia – before I'd even passed my test. Over the years, I must have owned more than 40 different cars including a Citroën DS21, Triumph 2000 Roadster, Beetles and various small Fiats.

For the past four years, my classic has been a 1952 MG YB. The Y-type was a '30s design that fell foul of WW2 – hostilities meant that the model didn't make its appearance until 1947, by which time it was already an anachronism.

In 1951, the Y-type was updated with a hypoid rear axle and twin leading-shoe front brakes. Renamed the YB, this revised version had a production run of just 1301 units before being superseded by the Z-type Magnette with its

modern, streamlined monocoque.

Despite its outdated appearance, the Y-type was more sophisticated than it looked. Rack-and-pinion steering, independent front suspension and a pushrod engine made this the hot-hatch of its day, although it still retained some traditional 1930s characteristics, such as the sliding roof, an opening windscreen and Jackall struts.

My YB is more than 60 years old and was first registered to a Mr EA Smith of Chingford, Essex, in October 1952. It remained in use until 1977, at which point it appears to have been laid up as a result of damage to the rear end. In 1992, it was rescued as a barnfind and became the subject of a five-year body-off rebuild and complete mechanical overhaul. After 20 years of inactivity, the car was returned to the road in April 1997.

The MG was restored as sympathetically as possible. It still has the original engine and running gear, and was resprayed in its factory colour of metallic Silver Streak Grey. The upholstery, wood and brightwork were also all refurbished to original specification.

When I acquired the car, the only concession to modern driving conditions that I felt necessary was the addition of flashing indicators to work in conjunction with its 1950s trafficators. I fitted the lights



Shape was dated in period, but aged well

'The MG runs on crossplies for an authentic '50s driving experience – radials spoil the character of old cars'

without any drilling into the bodywork, however, so that they could be easily removed if required.

Although this model had a very limited production run, many parts were similar to other Nuffield cars. The braking system is almost identical to that of the MG TD so spares are still readily available. The YB's XPAG engine is based on the same block as that used in the TD and TF sports cars, the biggest difference being the use of a single SU carburettor instead of the twin set-up of the two-seater roadsters.

The ride and handling are remarkably good, and the cornering is precise with its high-g geared steering. I run the MG on crossply tyres for the authentic 1950s driving experience – in my opinion



Restored MG has won numerous awards

fitting radials, five-speed gearboxes and disc brakes can spoil the character of some old cars. It might make it easier for the vehicle to keep up in modern traffic, but would anyone do such a thing to a veteran?

In the MG I am likely to be driving at a lower speed than other road users, so I try to be as considerate as possible. Usually, this results in a friendly wave from faster drivers – although maybe that's down to her big hooters? Because of those we call her Sabrina. If you've never heard of the glamorous British starlet, you're a lot younger than me!

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