

Background information for identity plate order for Mini cars (and similar BMC/BL/MG/Rover models) - 1959-2000

Chassis / VIN plate:

There are various styles and types. We will normally supply the correct style that relates to the age of your car and this is the main plate that identifies it. We generally source our plates from BMIHT (Heritage) approved suppliers so the quality of reproduction will be as near to original as we can achieve.

The plates were usually embossed but some were indented (stamped from above – which we can also do). If you need some assistance in querying the design or style of plate, ask

This aluminium plate was known as the Chassis plate on pre August 1980 cars and has rounded ends. There are loads of forums and sources of information on how to determine the details on plates including this pointer from BMIHT (the official BMC/BL/Rover source) including where to look for the chassis plate: Search: British Motor Museum archive heritage certificates



Typical early 60's chassis plate

After this, the rectangular plate known as the VIN plate and was fitted in addition to the same number being stamped into the body. VIN plates originally had three lines of embossed information, which relate to the type of model of car, the VIN number and the trim and paint codes. If you wish these numbers to be included, you will have to specify separately. For legal purposes, you will only need the VIN number on the plate. In the UK the load weights were generally left out of the boxes in the centre columns



VIN number with three lines embossed

There are other plates that were fixed to the car over the years listed below which you may wish to have reproduced to return it to as it would have been when new:

Commission Plate:

This was fitted to cars 1967-1980 in addition to the chassis plate as an extra way of identifying model and detail changes. It is not a vital part of the identity for legal purposes, and no records exist of the numbers with the original manufacturers. If you want a plate done to restore the car to as original as possible and you have lost the original, we can supply a plate and put on a number that would be approximately right for the age of the car according to our researches. The prefix would be specific to each model; the serial number we will have to guess. We don't need proof of ownership for just one of these plates



Engine number:

This is supplied together with the original type of fixing; Hammer Drive Screws (these look like rivets but are actually a screw that is fixed in position by a – yes , you guessed)

If the original fixings are sheared off in the block, the screws are hardened and can't simply be drilled out. 3 ways to remove: 1. Spark erosion (technical process), 2. Welding something to them and turn as you pull them out or 3. Spend a very long time with lots of tiny drills drilling around the circumference so as to make the hole bigger round one side to allow the screw to come out.

Or; you can either re-drill two new holes to one side or cut the heads off the new screws provided and glue the whole lot on. We supply two generations of plate as it changed shape in 1967 and we have enlarged the hole where the screw goes to give a bit more tolerance

We can supply an longer engine number plate (2.625" inch hole centres as opposed to 2.5" standard). If you just need an engine number, there is a separate application form. We don't need proof of ownership for these. There's more detail in the specific engine number order info



Body Number:

We can supply the earliest style of body number that was fitted on Mk1/2 (1959-67) cars. This was a stamped rectangular plate welded to the front slam panel. It was also used on other BMC derived cars like Austin Healeys.

Later cars (late 60's and 70's cars had an embossed steel plate that we can be able to supply (similar to FE type plate at the bottom . 80's and 90's cars had a long thin embossed strip along the lines of the second picture.



Above and below show a Mk1 and an 80-90's body plate that we have added fake welds to, if you need to stick one on after painting the shell .Let us know if you need this doing.



FE / Bodysell plates:

When BMC type cars were made, the bodysell would often be made up from of sub-components often from different factories. Each main component had a serial number attached to it , usually on a welded on steel embossed plate. On the Mini in particular the main bodysell would have numbers attached with numbers on the front floorpans which identified the type of vehicle IE. Saloon/ Van/ Estate etc

The front end would similarly have a plate attached to it to identify the type, which on the Mini consisted of the windscreen surround and toeboard forwards. These would usually have the prefix FE... on the plate (Front End) . No factory records exist of numbers fixed to them so we can only make a guess as to what the serial number would be and our knowledge of these numbers is at an early stage.

On the Mini the FE number lives above the radiator cowl on the inner wing just above where the chassis number would have gone on a Mk1 and it continued to be used into the 70's. They are of no legal consequence but for originality they form part of the picture



Austin Healey body number in alloy

