

INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO TR2/3/3A

Early TR's had a unique drainage system where water running off the bonnet drained down the sides of the wings towards the passenger compartment. At the corner of the front scuttle/bulkhead on each side there was a drainage hole so the water drained from the car. Either the hole blocked up or the water drained to the base of the front wing and the sill, the result rust, rusty sill, rusty wing, rusty "A" post, rusty bulkhead, rusty front scuttle in the extreme. There was a similar arrangement with the boot, water drained through a hole in each bottom corner, where the back panel abutted the wings (in theory). No drainage resulted in the corners of the boot lid rusting, together with the area of the backpanel and the wings.



The TR2 was introduced in August 1953 at commission number TS1 and ran to TS 8636 in October 1956 when the TR3 was introduced. The short door TR2 was introduced at TS 4002 due to the problems encountered when the long door would not open over the kerb! The TR3 ran until TS 13035 on drum brakes and front disc brakes were introduced at TS 13046 to 22013. The TR3A emerged at TS 22014 and ran to TS 82346 in October 1961. Engine size was 19914 cc but there was an option of 2138 cc from 1959. The TR3A continued in production for the export market and was known as the TR3B. It ran from TSF 1 to TSF 50 exactly as the TR3A but was re-commissioned TCF1 to TCF 2804 with the TR4 engine and all-synchromesh gearbox. Care should be taken when buying an early TR to ensure that the commission number corresponds within the model sequences given above. Cars have been known to be rebuilt on later chassis with early body panels and vice versa. If the engine number is with 200-300 of the commission number, it is usually assumed that this is the original engine. The suffix "O" indicates that overdrive was fitted as an optional extra from the factory and the "L" indicates left hand drive. Re-imported LHD cars tend to command a slightly lower price than original UK TR's.

BUYER BEWARE TR2/3/3A CHECK LIST

Bodywork In General

- Inner wing and floor pan condition
- Boot lid can rust
- Boot floor and spare wheel floor

Trim

- Check interior
- Check hood

Transmission

- Gear-box noise
- Overdrive operation
- Synchromesh

Engine

- Compression
- Water in oil
- Big end rumble
- Leaks

Electrics

- Instrument operation
- Condition of dynamo

Chassis

- Check for rust, accident damage and distortion
- Check all mounting points

Wire Wheels

- Condition of spokes
- Check splined hubs

Front Suspension

- Check trunnions
- Steering arms

Bodywork Originality

- Check commission number against TR type



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BUYER BEWARE

The most common enquiry received by the TR Register is "I'm thinking of buying a TR, what should I look for?" With this in mind a series of Buyer Beware guides has been produced to cover each of the series of Triumph TR sports cars.

Basic rules for searching for a sound example apply to all models. Like most cars, all TR's rust and over the years many have been partially or totally rebuilt with varying levels of competence. It is fairly easy to see or feel the weaknesses of a TR. Look along each side of a car for panel alignment, ripples and dents. Examine the whole length of the tops of the wings, where corrosion from beneath is common.

TR doors are hung between "A" and "B" posts. Open the doors and check the condition of these. While the doors are open also check the edges of the wings. Then, with care (rusty edges can be sharp), feel along the bottoms of the wings and along the sills, beneath the doors. Check the bottoms of the doors, both visually from the outside but also by feel underneath. Check the edges of the bonnet and boot panels, both externally and with them open.

Whilst the boot lid is open check carefully along the top edge of where the wing joins the body. A torch will be essential for this! Likewise, with the bonnet open check the inner panels carefully, especially at the top where they join the outer wings and around the front, near the headlights and bumper mounts. Leaking windscreen washer bottles can cause damage in an unexpected area. So check carefully beneath the bottle. Brake fluid and battery acid strip paint and cause corrosion of the metal beneath. Check these areas not only for signs of corrosion but also for any welds that appear non-original. All these areas should be finished in the same colour as the exterior of the body. A different colour, black, under-seal or anything else is not correct.

The TR2-6 were built on a very strong chassis, although the chassis used up to and including the TR4 were the strongest. They should all be checked for corrosion, as well as distortion (through impact damage) and poor repair. There should be no unusual welds or patches.

As a rule the front half of the chassis is protected from corrosion by oil leaks, but it is most prone to impact damage. The rear half should be thoroughly checked for corrosion, with the 6 cylinder cars appearing to suffer more than the TR4A.

The TR7, introduced in 1975, is completely different in body shape, engineering and mechanics to the earlier TR's. Initially produced only as a fixed head coupe, whereas the others were open sports cars, it is of monocoque construction (no separate chassis) and with an engine developed for the Triumph Dolomite. Front suspension is by McPherson strut whilst rear is by beam axle.

Throughout the whole life of the TR series by far the main market was the USA. Many cars have since been re-imported and this remains a regular activity. Buyers should be aware that not all US cars spent their entire life in 'dry' States and that corrosion on US cars can be just as severe as found on any home market cars. In addition, all US cars were originally LHD so it is important to ascertain the original specification of any car and verify the quality of any conversion work. Converted cars tend to have a slightly lower value than original RHD vehicles.

TR's originate from an era prior to VIN's (Vehicle Identification Numbers) and used a number identified as the Commission Number. It is this number that should be found on an aluminium plate affixed to the car and detailed in the V5 under 'VIN'. Ensure the numbers are the same then, if possible, armed with Registration, Engine and Body numbers contact the relevant Registrar for that model for advice on authentication.

Whilst the text overleaf gives more information specific to a particular model of TR this document is intended only as a guide to the TR buyer. It is not a comprehensive, definitive, 'checklist'. Would be purchasers who feel unqualified to assess the condition of a vehicle are advised to retain the services of someone capable of such an assessment.

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