

Building the Y-type

Reproduced by kind permission of MG Enthusiast – originally published March 2002. Subscription to MG Enthusiast can be obtained at www.mg-enthusiast.com or by telephoning +44(0) 1924 499261.

Like all other MGs from that factory, the Y-type was merely assembled at Abingdon, the various components having been made elsewhere within the Nuffield empire. The build process started with frames being welded in the press shop, after which they were painted and stored until needed.

On the assembly line a frame was mounted on a special jig that could compress the coil springs so that the front suspension could be bolted together. The rear axles were fitted with wheels and bolted to the rear springs before being united with the chassis. Once the steering rack and front wheels were bolted in place the chassis could be rolled along the line to receive the brake pipes, wiring and, eventually the engine/gearbox unit and propeller shaft.

At the end of that line the radiator was installed, along with the valences that bolted to the chassis rails each side of the engine compartment.

Painted body shells were delivered from Morris Bodies Branch, four at a time, on flatbed, articulated lorries.

At Abingdon they were hoisted up to the top deck of the assembly building where, on a line staffed mainly by women, the trim was fitted. Many other items, like the wind-screen, interior lights, dashboard,



One of the last jobs to be completed was fitting the wings. This car has two-tone paintwork, the wings being a darker colour than the body. A popular combination was light green body and dark green wings.



and rear window blind were also installed at this stage. The trim assembly involved quite a number of complicated procedures for which the female staff, many of whom had worked on aircraft assembly during the war, were ideally suited. Unlike modern cars, not all the parts were designed to fit without alteration and items like the headlining, door seals and wheel arches covers had to be cut and shaped on the line.

Completed body shells were lowered down to the main hall and bolted onto waiting rolling chassis. With the body in place the steering column, gearbox cover, seats, wings, etc. could be fitted and the wiring connected. The final jobs included fitting the bonnet, filling with water, oil and a gallon or two of petrol, before the completed car was driven off the line and taken out on test.

Painted body shells were delivered to the top deck of the assembly hall at Abingdon. There the largely female workforce fitted the trim, door locks and numerous other components before the bodies were lowered onto the rolling chassis that had been assembled on the ground floor.