First published in the October 2001 edition of

# practical CLASSICS



The Triumph 2000 2500 2.5
Register presents the most
comprehensive buyers'
guide for the Triumph 2000
series of cars ever written.

Six pages of detailed information on all aspects of buying and owning the Triumph 2000, plus addendum with current (February 2010) updates.

2000 E 2500-2-5

www.triumph2000register.co.uk



# TRIUMPH 2000

Triumph's executive contender still cuts the mustard but rock-bottom values mean they're disappearing fast. Richard Dredge explains what to look for



RODUCED to compete head-on with Rover's P6 2000, the Triumph 2000 saloon was introduced at the 1963 London Motor Show. The body was penned by Michelotti, who had also designed the Herald. The six-cylinder overhead valve engine was the same as that found in the Standard Vanguard but slightly more powerful thanks to improved carburation and a breathed-on cylinder head.

A 2000 estate joined its saloon sibling in October 1965 and three years later a fuel injected 2.5-litre engine made its debut in the 2.5PI. While it was basically the same as the one used in the TR5, it had a milder camshaft to improve torque at idle, which also reduced

the top-end power output slightly. Although an estate version was offered, it was to special order only. With just 223 examples produced, the Mk I 2.5PI estate is now by far the rarest of the breed.

October 1969 saw the Mk II model range introduced, with a restyled front end and, on saloons, a facelifted rear as well. The interior was also revised with a new dashboard, controls and seats.

Carburetted 2.5-litre cars went on sale in May 1974 when the facelifted 2500 hit the showrooms. A year later the 2000TC, 2500TC and 2500S were launched, with the S having a higher specification than the TCs and alloy wheels and tachometer as standard. In the

same year the 2.5PI (actually called the 2500PI in its last year) went out of production.

In 1977 the last cars came off the line. Featuring twin SUs, the 2000TC, 2500TC and 2500S bowed out a year after the introduction of the Rover SD1. Over 316,000 of all examples had been produced.

#### **BODYWORK**

THESE CARS weren't well rustproofed when they left the factory. Some owners had the foresight to invest in aftermarket treatments, but many cars that were mechanically sound have rusted into oblivion by now. The facelifted Mk IIs (May 1974-on) generally corrode more than any of the earlier cars.

Check the seam between the lower front wing and the valance, which often harbours rust. The front wings are double-skinned around the wheelarches, and this acts as a water trap. If the car has been restored, check that the drain holes along the top of the trailing edge of each front wing haven't been filled in. More importantly, check that the drain holes at the bottom of the front wings aren't blocked – if they are, water will have got into all sorts of places that it shouldn't.

The seam where the base of the windscreen meets the welded-on wings can rust, and repairs are tricky as the wings have to be removed first.

Sills on any monocoque are essential to the car's structural strength. On a 2000 or 2500 they are especially important and, like many cars of the period, they are rot-prone. Corroded sills are in fact the cars' biggest bugbear thanks to the drain holes either getting blocked or being filled during repairs.

If the sills look as though they've seen better days, the front footwells will have gone the same way, along with the under and inner sill box section that runs the length of the car. The front outriggers under the footwells frequently rot out because the drain holes get blocked under the front wings or the windscreen leaks – complete replacement of the outriggers is generally easier than trying to patch them up.

The rear suspension pick-up points get rather frilly after a while, so it's essential that you take a peek at these before buying. Ideally you should get underneath to do this but you can get an idea of how sound the area is by removing the rear seat cushion and looking at the state of the floorpan. If it's bad on the inside of the car it will be much worse on the underside.

The top spring mountings on the rear suspension can also rot and sag, so examine these – and while you're at it, inspect the sill closing panel and the inner wheelarch.

Check the door bottoms, which will have rotted out if the drain holes in the base have been allowed to get blocked.

On Mk II cars, watch out for rust along the join between the rear light panel and valance. Also make sure the bonnet is properly aligned. Being front-hinged, even the slightest knock will push it out of true, and putting it right will invariably be a lot more difficult than you think.

#### **ENGINES**

THE REMARKABLY smooth straight-six offers huge reserves of torque – especially the 2.5-litre versions. With regular oil changes and proper servicing the units will take 100,000 miles quite happily; some owners have seen more than twice this before major surgery is required.

The Mk II 2000 engine will often do 150,000 miles before it needs an overhaul but the 2.5-litre engine, with its longer-throw crank, usually needs a regrind after 120,000 miles or so. Unfortunately the Mk I 2000 engine has a tendency to blow head gaskets if driven hard thanks to its studs being too thin to be tightened sufficiently without stretching.

Check for play in the crankshaft thrust washers by pushing and pulling on the

bottom pulley. If it's a manual the job is made a bit easier by depressing and releasing the clutch – there should be no more than 0.015in movement at the pulley. It may also be possible to feel and hear a clonk as the crank moves. Any detectable movement means the thrust washers have dropped out, the crank and crank webs may be damaged and the engine may have to be thrown away running secondhand engines can be bought for £50 upwards, although you'll have to spend at least £200 to get one that won't need rebuilding before long. If the thrust washers are still in place it's possible to replace them with oversized ones, without having to remove the engine first.

Check to see if the original canister type of oil filter (used throughout production) has been replaced with a spin-on version – the conversion costs less than £40 and is a worthwhile investment because the canister filter has no anti-drain valve, which means the engine bearings can be starved of oil on start up. The spin-on type keeps the system primed, allowing the oil to circulate much more quickly from cold.

If the car is fuel-injected and is being run on unleaded fuel, it may be necessary to overhaul the metering unit – although there's some argument about this. Our expert Andy Roberts says it isn't always needed, and recommends replacing the unit only if there's a problem.

The fuel pump can also give problems due to overheating: it is sited above the rear silencer, which is why some owners have either moved it or fitted a cooling coil. If it overheats, fuel starvation will lead to the pump screaming and the engine cutting out.

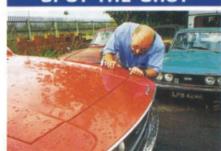
Fuel-injected cars don't have a very good reputation for reliability, but Andy reckons that's down to service technicians of the time not being trained properly. With today's knowledge, if the system is properly set up it will run perfectly and stay in tune.

#### **OUR EXPERT**

ANDY ROBERTS is the chairman and technical secretary of the Triumph 2000/2500/2.5 Register. Having owned an example of just about every version of these cars he knows his stuff – he still has five examples on his drive.



#### SPOT THE GROT



Uneven bonnet shut lines betray poorly repaired accident damage – tricky to fix.



Sills rot readily but are crucial to the car's strength and rigidity. Check them carefully.



A-post dissolves around the windscreen aperture and at the base of the rain gutter.



Trailing edge of front wing and surrounding area rot if drain holes become blocked.



Rear suspension mounts can pull through floorpan if unchecked. Lift out seat to see.



### BUYERS GUIDE TRIUMPH 2000/2500 RANGE



Laycock overdrive and Borg Warner automatic optional. 1965, estate with 50 cu ft of luggage space. 1966, leather seats.



1968-69

❖ 2.5 PI: 1968-69, with Lucas fuel injection (132bhp detuned TR5 engine). Estate version from 1969 - just 371 built.



❖ 2000 Mk II: 1969-77, longer nose, larger boot, revised facia, AC electrics, modified cylinder head. 1974, facelift included plastic

grille. 1975, 2000TC had more power.

#### **TRANSMISSION**

THE MANUAL transmission was based on that fitted to the TR4 but with lower ratios. They rarely give any problems as long as the oil level is maintained, although the gearchange won't be hurried. If the gearchange seems excessively recalcitrant it's more likely that the 'change or the clutch need attention rather than the gearbox itself.

The Laycock clutch cover originally fitted to these cars is long-lived and provides a smooth and consistent engagement. But if an aftermarket cover is fitted to a 2500 there could be problems with inadequate clutch disengagement, leading to difficulty in selecting first and reverse gears. To overcome this, it's possible to fit the longer-throw slave cylinder fitted to 2000s. It has a %in bore and normally does the trick.

Another potential problem with the clutch is breakage of the pin that holds the release fork onto the cross-shaft. This reduces the effective travel, causing the clutch to drag. To fix it, the gearbox has to be removed, although the pin itself costs just £7.

A popular option was the fitment of a Laycock overdrive - an A-type until 1972 and a J-type from then on – both of which are reliable. If the overdrive isn't working properly the chances are it's caused by an electrical fault. On the Mk II this is usually because the wire running up the middle of the gearlever has broken. Relays, wiring and connections can all give problems, so check these before removing the gearbox. If you start wielding your multimeter and still can't find the fault, then check there's the right level of oil in the gearbox.

Differentials are pretty tough but the

pinion oil seals have a tendency to leak, which is sometimes caused by the breather on top of the unit getting blocked. As most major differential damage is caused by allowing the unit to be run with a low oil level it's worth checking that the unit isn't nearly empty.

The differential nose subframe bracket tends to split, especially on later cars (post-May 1974) when the ride height was raised. A reinforced one is available for £71 and fitting it yourself isn't too difficult.

Clonking from the rear suspension when taking up drive indicates wear in one of the six universal joints or, more likely, play in the driveshaft splines. Although complete failure is rare, the rear end will get twitchy when accelerating out of corners, which can be rather disconcerting!

The twitch can also be caused by snatching of the driveshafts. The best cure is the application of molybdenum disulphide grease, as used on CV joints. You'll have to remove the four bolts at the inner end of the shaft, unclip the gaiter and separate the joint. Once lubricated it can be put back together again. The ultimate cure is the fitment of roller-spline driveshafts from the Datsun 240/260Z – at £235 per side.

The universal joints on the propshaft are a bit under-engineered, which means they don't last as long as you might expect.



❖ 2.5 PI Mk II: 1969-75, revisions as Mk II. 1974-77, 2500TC used carburettored, detuned 2.5 unit producing 99bhp.



1975-77

❖ 2500S: 1975-77, replaced PI with carburettor engine. Front anti-roll bar, overdrive and power steering, alloy wheels.





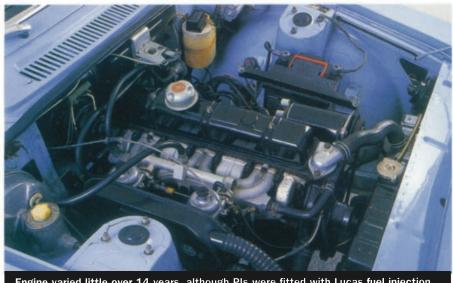
The automatic transmissions are pretty much bombproof until the clutches or bands wear out but they should take at least 80,000 miles before giving any problems. Other mechanical maladies are rare, but the friction material that has worn from the clutch and band linings sometimes clogs up the valves and makes them stick.

The governor valve can also stick, which is potentially embarrassing because the gearbox gets stuck in first gear when this happens.

Drive plates on autos are also prone to fracture, but repair plates are available at £27.

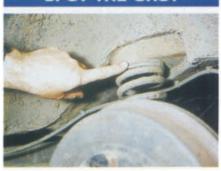
#### STEERING & SUSPENSION

THERE ARE lots of bushes in the 2000's suspension and many or all of them will probably have perished by now. Instead of fitting the original-spec rubber type you may prefer to replace them with polyurethane bushes, which give a slightly firmer ride and more positive handling.



Engine varied little over 14 years, although PIs were fitted with Lucas fuel injection.

#### THE GROT



Rear spring mounting can pull away from the inner wheelarch, so check it carefully.



Rear inner arch often rots badly where it meets the rear wing, and is hard to repair.



Seam just below rear light panel harbours rust, eventually causing boot to leak too.



Rear valance acts as a mud trap, causing it to rot from behind. Needs regular clean.



Front footwells corrode badly. This one has been patched, which is fine if done well.



#### PRACTICAL CLASSIC?

#### WHAT ARE THEY LIKE TO DRIVE?

All models are relaxing to drive thanks to the torquey six-cylinder engines and optional power-assisted steering. Whether you're in the front or back you can expect plenty of space and a cossetting ride. This was executive motoring 30 years ago.

#### WILL I FIT BEHIND THE WHEEL?

With acres of space front and rear, these cars are supremely comfortable – opt for an estate and you can let the labradors benefit from the smooth ride as well. Adjustable-reach steering column gives you extra room.

#### WHAT BODGES SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

- Glassfibre or filler repairs to the doubleskinned front wings round the wheelarches
- ❖ Tired exhaust subframe mountings, causing the system to rattle
- ❖ Poorly repaired sills

#### WHAT SHOULD I PAY?

Values will never be lower, literally, because this range of Triumphs starts at nothing – it's amazing how many people are happy to pass on a ropey example for free. Barmy? Well, if you consider that a roadworthy example of any of these cars could be yours for under £1500 (under £1000 in most cases) it doesn't seem so crazy. Even the best 2.5Pls are worth only £2500, with topnotch 2500s and 2000s worth around £500-£1000 less.

#### WHAT WILL INSURANCE COST ME?

Comprehensive cover for a £1500 1972 Triumph 2.5Pl based in Peterborough:

- ♦ £184.80 for 25yo, two years' NCB, clean licence, 10,000 miles, only car, kept on driveway, club member.
- **★** £81.90 for 42yo, full NCB, clean licence, 3000 miles, second car, garaged, club member.

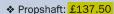
# Quotes from Firebond (08704 440 556) WHO ARE THE SPECIALISTS?

#### Parts

- Chris Witor, Somerset (07000 2000 25, www.bartlett-printing.co.uk/chriswitor.html)
- Mick Dolphin, Leics (01530 271 326, www.mickdolphin.co.uk)
- ♦ Rimmer Bros, Lincs (01522 568 000, www.rimmerbros.co.uk)
- ❖ T D Fitchett, Telford (01952 619 585)

#### WHAT ABOUT SPARES PRICES?

- PAS steering rack (rebuilt exch): £117.50
- ❖ Brake disc (Mk II): £49.93



♦ Wheel cylinder (Mk II OE): £31.40

#### CHEAP

♦ Door skin (front): £70.50



Starter motor (Mk II rebuilt): £129.25

- ♦ Bootlid (Mk I new): £294
- Fuel metering unit (recon, unleaded): £195
- ARE ANY PARTS HARD TO GET?

  ❖ Genuine Mk II front wings
- Genuine wik it from wing
- Clutch master cylinders



With the valves acting directly on the head, unless an additive is used there's no alternative to having inserts fitted. With the larger exhaust valves fitted to early Mk II heads, cracking could occur between the seats, so make sure the machine shop knows what it's doing. These valves are 32mm diameter, but it is possible to convert to the earlier size (30.3mm) without significant power loss.

If you want to know whether or not your head has the larger type of exhaust valves fitted, check its part number. Those stamped 219015 or 219016 have the smaller units fitted – the latter unit has a much better inlet port profile as well.

#### WHERE ARE THE IDENTIFYING MARKS?

The chassis number is on top of the nearside front suspension turret and the engine number is on the rear lefthand corner of the block face. The gearbox number is on the back of the clutch shaft bearing housing and the differential's number is on its underside.

#### WHICH OWNERS CLUB SHOULD I JOIN?

- ❖ Triumph 2000/2500/2.5 Register: £25pa plus £4 joining fee, 1000 members. Bi-monthly magazine Six Appeal (b&w A4 glossy), valuations service, technical help, regional and national meetings, classifieds, library service.
- Club Triumph: £25pa plus £5 joining fee. 1200 members. Bi-monthly A4 glossy Club Torque. Spares scheme, local and national meetings, technical help, library, insurance scheme.

#### WHICH IS THE BEST BOOK?

♦ Triumph 2000 & 2.5Pl – The Complete Story, by Graham Robson. ISBN 1-85223-854-2.

The tie bars and steering rack at the front, along with the trailing arms at the rear, will all need to have their bushes inspected. If the steering rack mounting bushes have degraded, it's worth replacing the clamps with solid aluminium mountings (at £23.50 per pair) to prevent further movement.

Rear wheel bearings are pretty tough, which is lucky because replacement is not a DIY proposition. Special tools are required, so most owners fit an exchange hub assembly at around £80 per side.

Also check that the rear subframe outer mountings are sound, as the central tube can pull out of the rubber. If they have already been replaced, ask where they were sourced, because cheap mounts from some suppliers need replacing almost as quickly as they've been fitted; they use low-quality rubber that doesn't bond properly. Raise the car by putting a jack under the subframe box section. If a gap appears between the rubber mounting and the washer below, the bonding has failed.

#### WHEELS & BRAKES

THROUGHOUT production the same braking system configuration was used – a servo-assisted disc/drum set-up. The 9.75in front discs and 9in rear drums are up to the performance of the car, but can fade if driven hard. This applies especially to the 2000 Mk I, which had thinner discs (0.35in whereas the other cars used 0.5in thick discs).

Tyres for the PI can be hard to source so a popular modification is the fitment of 2500S wheels (as fitted to the Stag), which allow 185/70-14 tyres to be used. Because these have virtually the same rolling radius as the original tyres the speedo doesn't need to be recalibrated.

# 🔼 TRIM

INTERIOR TRIM is virtually impossible to source new – secondhand is an easier proposition as the trim generally outlasts the body. Everything is interchangeable except for rear seats between saloon and estate models. It's hard wearing, although estate load bays can take a bit of a battering.

Front seat diaphragms perish and lead to the seat collapsing – but secondhand seats are out there. Headlinings are unobtainable, and although they don't split or tear they do suffer from glue staining.

The wooden cappings on the tops of the doors are attacked by direct sunlight – the

#### SPECIFICATIONS 2500TC (1974-1975) 2000 Mk II (1969-1975) 2.5PI Mk II (1969-1975) 2000 Mk I (1963-1969) **ENGINE** 2498cc/6-cv 132/5500 99/4750 90/5000 84/5000 POWER (bhp@rpm) TORQUE (lb ft@rpm) 4-sp manual 4-sp manual 4-sp manual **GEARBOX** 4-sp manual (o/d or auto optional) (o/d or auto optional) 97mph 106mph 103mph **TOP SPEED** 93mph 11.5se 0-60MPH 22mpg CONSUMPTION 21mpg 22mpg 25mpg LENGTH (saloon) 14ft 6in (4.42m) 15ft 2in (4.62m) 15ft 2in (4.62m) 5ft 5in (1.65m) 5ft 5in (1.65m) 5ft 5in (1.65m) **WIDTH** 5ft 5in (1.65m) 2681lb (1216kg) WEIGHT 2576lb (1168kg 2620lb (1188kg) 2760lb (1252kg



lacquer cracks and peels and the wood can split. Sourcing decent cappings isn't easy and the cost of refurbishing them is high.

Parcel shelves deteriorate because of leaking rear screen rubbers and the top of the back seat breaks down after years of exposure to sunlight.

The exterior trim gives few problems because, apart from the chrome bumpers, it's all made of stainless steel.

#### **ELECTRICS**

MOST OF the switchgear and instrumentation is fairly standard parts-bin stuff. That should make it easier to find because other Triumphs (and sometimes other makes) used the same bits. So if you need a new metering unit you can buy one for a TR5 and it will fit.

Dynamos on Mk I 2000s have a hard time if everything is switched on, so alternator conversions are popular.

Dip switches on Mk IIs are prone to failure thanks to the high current passing through them, so fitting a relay is advisable. If you're looking at a PI and the engine turns over reluctantly, it's probably because it needs a stronger battery. Ideally, these engines should have a higher-capacity battery than the one that was specified as standard.

#### CONCLUSION

buy and run, but it's all too easy to pick up something that looks good even though it's useful life has pretty much expired.

If you're set on buying one, it's worth spending £20 on a copy of the 2000/2500/2.5/1Register's binder Service Notes – a collection of articles taken from the first 10 years of the club's magazine. It gives expert advice on bodywork, mechanicals and electrics, written by specialists and owners.

If you find a car that has a good body but worn-out mechanicals it could be the perfect project car for you - it's easy to upgrade the suspension, brakes, engine, exhaust, wheels and tyres to make a classic Q-car.

THE 2000, 2500 and 2.5PI range is cheap to

## THE GROT



If stainless steel bright trim is missing, don't worry - it's usually easy to replace.



However, the wooden door cappings are expensive and tricky to restore properly.



Rear seat is attacked by sunlight through rear glass but can be found secondhand.

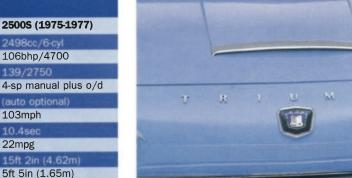
#### HOTLINKS

- Triumph 2000 survival guide, Apr '00
- http://www.kvaleberg.com/t2000.html

THANKS TO: Alan Crussell and Andy Roberts of the 2000/2500/2.5 Register and Chris Witor, main parts specialist.



Tie-bar bushes perish; polyurethane replacements last longer and improve feel.





Pull crankshaft pulley in and out to test for excessive wear in the thrust washers.

# Addendum

Over eight years have passed since this guide was originally published. The following notes give revised information. Each number corresponds to the warning marker on the document. The information was correct to the best of our knowledge on 1st February 2010.

 Current values as published in Practical Classics March 2010 are: Triumph 2000 (sal/est) 1963 to 1977

Condition 1: £2400 Condition 2: £1000 Condition 3: £300

Triumph 2.5 PI/2500 TC (sal/est) 1968-1977

Condition 1: £2850 Condition 2: £1300 Condition 3: £350

Triumph 2500S (sal/est) 1975-1977

Condition 1: £3000 Condition 2: £1400 Condition 3: £450

The Triumph 2000 Register currently considers these values to be on the low side. Values do vary, but good cars routinely fetch significantly more.

For a full valuation of your car, or of a potential purchase, contact the Register by emailing valuations@triumph2000register.co.uk.

- 2. Now £47.00 plus £5.29 for spin-on filter (Chris Witor)
- Roller-spline driveshafts (pair, including rebuilt hubs, all UJs and flanges, etc), when available: £609 + £100 exchange surcharge (Monarch, www.monarch-stags.co.uk).
   As an alternative, various parts dealers supply a GKN-manufactured splined driveshaft which has fewer, bigger, Rislan-coated splines

splined driveshaft which has fewer, bigger, Rislan-coated splines plus a grease-nipple for ease of maintenance. Rislan is a PTFE-like substance.

4. Sample insurance quote:

Agreed value comprehensive cover for a 1972 2.5 P.I. valued at £3500 based in Chester, 30 year old driver, 3000 miles per annum, only car, parked on driveway, club member: £90.56 Peter James Insurance (www.peterjamesinsurance.co.uk)

- 5. Chris Witor's website is now www.chriswitor.com
- Revised parts prices (all Chris Witor): P.A.S. rack (rebuilt exch.) £135.13 Propshaft (new): £155.68

Wheel cylinder (MkII OE Lockheed): £41.61

Door skin (front): £79.31 Bootlid (Mk I new): NLA

7. Parts hard to get - add the following:

Original panels are all but unobtainable. Occasionally they do come up for sale but are usually very expensive. Repro panels are also expensive, repair pieces more affordable. Interior seat fabrics - little about secondhand in good condition, especially corded bri-nylon which deteriorates in sunlight over time. A similar material is available but is slightly different and therefore only suitable for a full retrim.

- Triumph 2000/2500/2.5 Register: £28pa plus £5 joining fee. SIXappeal now colour/BW. Now possible to join online at www.triumph2000register.co.uk/shop
- Triumph 2000 & 2.5PI The Complete Story, by Graham Robson Now out of print. It can be found occasionally on ebay or at secondhand book specialists.

- 10. Solid manual steering rack clamps, quality aluminium: £35.25
- 11. Rear hub assembly (rebuilt exchange): £99.87
- 12. Register Service Notes: Volume 1 £20, Volume 2 £12.50 or buy both for £30 www.triumph2000register.co.uk/shop
- Triumph 2000 Register website: Now www.triumph2000register.co.uk

# Other information

#### **Parts Suppliers:**

As well as the acknowledged model specialists, other Triumph and classic car specialists stock parts for the Triumph 2000. Stag specialists can help with suspension and certain drivetrain parts, TR specialists can help with engine parts, and so on.

**Chris Witor** www.chriswitor.com **Earlpart** www.earlpart.co.uk James Paddock www.jamespaddock.co.uk **LDpart** www.ldparts.co.uk Mick Dolphin www.mickdolphin.co.uk Monarch www.monarch-stags.co.uk **Quiller Triumph** www.quillertriumph.co.uk T.D. Fitchett 01952 619585 Holden Vintage www.holden.co.uk Rimmer Bros www.rimmerbros.co.uk www.sportscarsupplies.com Sports Car Supplies Wins International www.winsandco.co.uk

#### **Garage Services:**

Canley Classics www.canleyclassics.com
Jigsaw www.jigsawracingservices.co.uk
Manvers Triumph www.manvers-triumph.com
Moordale Motors
Southern Triumph

Services www.southerntriumph.co.uk

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