

BADGES

Badging on Australian-assembled vehicles pretty much followed the UK development, with some notable differences.

On the first MGBs, the 'brand' marking consisted of:

- **radiator grille:** a chromed plinth was situated in the centre of the grille with a black, plastic shield, edged in chrome paint. In the centre was a chrome-painted octagon. Inside the octagon was the chrome-painted 'MG', on a red, curtained background.



Early grille badge (photo: A. Brown)

With the possible exception on the very first cars (see Note 1), this badge remained the same right through to 1970 in Australia. The badge was changed with the introduction of the Mk II 'facelift' vehicles; with the recessed grille, a totally new emblem was situated still in the centre of the new grille.

Note 1: For safety reasons the very first badge was changed as it was found that the paint/colour used on the curtained background was reflective. It is believed that this took place prior to full production in UK. I have not seen an Australian-produced Mk I with one of these badges.



Facelift grille badge



Facelift grille badge positioned Photo: P Rogers

- **steering wheel:** In the centre of the wire-spoked steering wheel was a large plastic horn-push with the MG logo, similar to that of the early grille badge. This remained unchanged until the 1970 (facelift) model.



Early horn-push



Mk I steering wheel showing early horn push

With the change of steering wheels, a different badge was used for the horn-push.



1970 New wheel, new horn push

- **radio blanking plate:** The chrome, die-cast MG emblem (looking very art-deco), was positioned on the blanking plate for the radio recess. After fitting a radio, a lot of people, perhaps feeling it was too nice to discard, decided to position this badge elsewhere on the car, but it was only ever used for the radio blanking plate.



Chrome badge on radio blanking plate

- **boot lid:** On the early Mk I cars, there was a 3-piece, chrome, die-cast 'MG' logo surrounded by an octagon. These were attached inside the boot with clips like the above black clips for the radio blanking plate.



Early 3-piece boot badge



Later, solid boot badge

This badge was changed on the later cars (Mk II facelift) to a solid badge.

Above the large badge was a small MGB badge, showing the letters 'MGB' with a thick strikethrough.



MGB badge with strikethrough

Unique to Australian-assembled cars with overdrive (*see Note below*) was the inclusion of a badge below the large MG badge.



Australian 'overdrive' badge



Australian 'automatic' badge

Another unique badge to the Australian market was the use of an 'Automatic' badge on the YGHN7 and YHN10 cars. It was positioned similarly to the 'overdrive' badge.

Yet another badge that was unique to Australian-assembled cars (Mk IIs) was the position of a 'Mk II' badge, close to the nearside reversing light. (*also see Note below*)



Mk II badge

The vehicles in the photos below, show these badges in their designated positions.



Badges on Mk II with overdrive



Badges on MGBL

photo: P Rogers

(if the vehicle was an 'automatic' then the badge (*Automatic*) would go where the 'overdrive' badge is)

Note: Some confusion surrounds the placing of the '**overdrive**' badge on the last of the YGHN3 vehicles (Mk 1) that were still being assembled well after the order for the badges was placed. Some cars received them, some didn't. It is suspected that some dealers, not wanting to appear to be stuck with old stock, had the badges fitted themselves.

Today, many of the late YGHN3 vehicles can be seen sporting these badges. A question I received from an owner caused me to write to Tom Aczel and ask his opinion. The following emails were received...

"Hi Roger

This was the topic of much, at times, heated debate (with owners) some years back. John Lindsay eventually found his requisition form ordering the overdrive badges, dated '**February 1968**'. So, the first of these badges would not have been delivered until a little while later.

I eventually concluded that the overdrive badge was fitted only from the Mk II overdrive cars. The earlier overdrive cars' badges would have been fitted by dealers or owners.

John Burns has an August 1968 build YGHN4 Mk II (known history from new). It never had an 'Overdrive' badge fitted, even though it was a Mk II car (with overdrive) (albeit one of the very first)."

Tom then sent a subsequent email...

"A couple of other snippets re the "Overdrive" badge that I recall;

1) According to John Lindsay, the head of Styling at BMC at that time (I think it was Roman Rodbergh that John mentioned), wanted the Overdrive badge to go on to the panel below the boot lid and off centre, as they did do with the Mk II badge. John pointed out that this would never work, and it would always look 'wonky' because of the curvature of the boot lid aperture. After trying various positions, the decision was made to place the 'Overdrive' badge in the centre of the boot lid, towards its trailing edge (exactly where John Lindsay had originally proposed!).

- 2) John made a box template for the Overdrive badge mounting holes' placement, out of fibreglass. He told me that he went to a lot of trouble to make this template exactly right. It then frustrated John greatly when watching these holes being drilled; that the workers on the line would move the drill around in an arc to make the holes a little larger, making the badges a bit easier and quicker to fit!" T Aczel, March,2024
- **Leyland badging:** After the takeover by Leyland, badging was changed to reflect the change of ownership. Some might say subtle, the front guards were graced with a small Leyland logo badge, close to the door. There were two versions of this badge, as shown (colours reversed and one was pressed whilst the other just screen-printed).



Leyland badge (below and right of antennae)