



1959 MG MGA Coupe

POA

Overview

Mileage 9,686 miles

Fuel Type Petrol

Engine Size 1.6 l

Bodystyle Coupe

Transmission Manual

Exterior Colour Red

Previous Owners 5

Registration YDU55



Description

The 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe — one of the classic mid-century British sports cars that's still cherished by enthusiasts today.

Origins: The MGA Line

The MG A wasn't born overnight. Its story begins in the early 1950s when MG's pre-war styled T-series (TF-1500) was looking increasingly dated compared with smooth-bodied rivals like the Austin-Healey and Triumph TR-2. MG's designers, led by Syd Enever, developed a sleek new body in 1951 that eventually became the MGA's form — an aerodynamic, modern sports car that broke sharply with the old-fashioned lines of its predecessors.

The new MGA debuted in 1955 at the Frankfurt Motor Show and went into full production later that year. It used the tried-and-true BMC B-series four-cylinder engine and featured independent front suspension and rack-and-pinion steering — quite advanced for a small sports car at the time.

Evolution to the 1600

From 1500 to 1600 (May 1959)

The original MGA was produced as the 1500 (with a 1489 cc engine). But by May 1959, MG updated the model to what became known as the MGA 1600:

A larger 1588 cc B-series engine — producing about 79.5 bhp — replaced the smaller 1500.

Front disc brakes were added, enhancing stopping power over the earlier all-drum setup.

Exterior trim, lighting and badging were slightly modernized, including the new "1600" identification.

These changes helped the MGA stay competitive and appealing without stepping up to the pricier and more complex Twin-Cam variant (which, while sportier, suffered early reliability issues).

The 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe

Design & Character

The Coupe body was introduced a couple of years after the MGA roadster (1956) as a more refined, weather-protected alternative:

Steel roof, wrap-around glass and wind-up windows gave the Coupe a more GT-like presence compared to the open convertible.

Lockable doors and a better-insulated interior made it more suitable for touring and longer journeys.

The closed-roof design added weight, which slightly reduced performance versus the roadster, but added comfort and practicality.

Approximately 2,759 Coupes were built with the 1600 Mk I engine between 1959 and 1961 — a much smaller number than roadsters, making the Coupe comparatively rarer.

Notable Stories & Historic Uses

One of the most fascinating chapters in the 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe's story comes from competition history. A period example built on 22 July 1959 was entered into the 1960 Monte Carlo Rally by privateer driver Frank "Cliff" Ward. Despite being a relatively humble entrant without full factory support, he managed to finish 130th overall in harsh winter conditions — an impressive achievement for a privately entered British sports coupe of the era.

Many MGA 1600 Coupes today are restored and shown at historic tours, rallies and classic car events. Their blend of sporting heritage and everyday usability keeps them popular among collectors.

Legacy and Collectibility

The MGA 1600 occupies a sweet spot in classic MG history:

It followed the long-running 1500 with improvements that made it more comfortable at highway speeds.

It avoided some of the early problems of the high-strung Twin-Cam, making it a reliable choice for touring and vintage motorsport.

Although Coupes typically fetch less than roadsters among enthusiasts, they're appreciated for their distinctive looks and touring capability.

Production of the MGA series continued through to 1962, when it was replaced by the newer MGB — a more modern sports car with independent front suspension and a more robust engine.

The 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe in Context

Attribute

MGA 1600 Coupe (1959–61)

Engine

1588 cc B-series inline-4

Power

~79.5 bhp

Brakes

Front disc, rear drum

Body

Steel coupé with roll-up windows

Production

~2,759 Coupes

Role

Touring sports coupe with heritage appeal

In summary: the 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe represents a key evolutionary moment for MG — blending performance, style and comfort in a classic British sports car. Its history is enriched by real-world competition tales and its continued popularity among enthusiasts today.

Location

Classicmobilia

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Sunday	Appointment only		
