

Your MG Fuses May be Dangerously Oversized

If you have blown fuses in your MG and replaced them with those specified in the Drivers Manual or in the Haynes book, you may have selected a fuse of over twice the required current that will not protect your wiring harness from burning in the event of a short-circuit.

The T-series and MGA have both 35 Amp and 50 Amp fuses specified and the MGB and Spridgets had 35 Amp fuses in the fuse-block and, depending on their function, both 35 Amp and 10 Amp fuses recommended for any line fuse-holders that may be fitted. However, the way fuses were specified until the mid-1980s is different from the method used today.

Fuses were once rated based on the current required to blow them.

The trouble is, different amounts of current blow fuses at different speeds and for many years there were no real international standards. For example, an automotive fuse is guaranteed to blow at 135% of its rating, so a 10 Amp fuse will blow at 13.5 Amps. However, a detailed look at the specifications shows that the fuse can take ½ hour to blow at this current, meantime your car, garage and house may have gone up in flames. The same fuse, subjected to 200% of its rated current, 20 Amps in this example, will blow in about 1 second.

MG used the 1 second rating, so the 35 Amp fuse they specified would blow at that current in about a second. The carry current rating was 17 Amps, and that is important because today's fuses are rated on carry current, the current they can pass without nuisance opening.

Based on today's standards, the 50, 35, and 10 Amp fuses specified for MGs should be 25, 17 and 5 Amp respectively. You won't find 17 Amp glass fuses, so be on the safe side and use 15 Amp instead.

The glass fuses most commonly found in MGs are 1¼" long by ¼" diameter and if you need to buy them from the local gas station or auto-accessory store you will find them branded as Bussman Type AGC or Littelfuse Type 3AG.