

SPARES AND TOOLS TO TAKE WITH YOU IN A MORRIS EIGHT 1934-38. (JUST IN CASE!)

Suggestions from previous experience!

I believe that these cars, if properly overhauled and maintained, are generally reliable.

Unless you know your car well over an extended period, it is not always possible to be sure whether or not it has been cared for properly, or whether it has been badly maintained or rebuilt.

Over the years Morris 8s have been known for certain failures. These were half-shaft failures, half-shaft oil-seal failures, crown wheel/pinion failures and intermittent fuel pump problems.

Half-shafts can break without prior symptoms and cannot be foreseen. Half-shaft oil seals beginning to fail can be noticed as oil appears on the backplate and wheel hub.

A reasonably quiet later type rear axle with the ribbed cast steel case, correctly filled with SAE 140 EP oil, should be reliable.

A correctly rebuilt SU fuel pump should be reliable for 5-10 years or so, but if you do not know how long it has been on the car, it is best to overhaul or replace it.

Under the bonnet or behind the rear seat of my car at all times (amongst other things!) are:- toolkit with jack and wheel brace, engine oil, spare coil, spare distributor base plate fitted with condenser and with points already gapped, spare rotor arm, rags, self amalgamating insulation tape, small coil of galvanised wire, bulbs, fuses, fanbelt and carburettor dashpot oil. And for good measure a spare inner tube and valve. It is also worth having a warning triangle and a wind-up torch.

In the unlikely event of me using the car on an extended tour, I would add to this a spare fuel pump, a spare distributor cap and leads, a halfshaft with hub and a differential unit complete, a cylinder head gasket and a crankshaft pulley. These could all be fitted at a garage if necessary; at least you have the parts!

Oh, and I nearly forgot, I am in AA Relay as well! A service that I did use a few years ago as my condenser (a new one) failed and I did not carry spares then. AA Relay were extremely good, used a flat bed truck as they knew the track of the Morris 8 was so narrow, and were generally very careful with the car.

BOB BRYAN 2009

bobbryan@waitrose.com