

# Alpine pass-notes

Rootes' stylish Alpine lasted eight years and spawned the fiery V8-engined Tiger. Andrew Noakes spots the differences.



### Engine

Series I has 1494cc four with tubular exhaust manifold, twin Zenith carbs. Series II bored out to 1592cc. Series III GT has cast manifold. After four months, Series III changes to a single, dual-choke Solex. Series V has 1725cc engine with cast manifold and twin Zenith Strombergs (left). Tiger's Ford V8 easy to sport (right).

### Doors/windows

Examine the doors and windows closely. Spot a Series I Alpine (left) from its very short support channel on the door window – Series II channel runs the full height of the window. Series III onwards has a quarterlight. Look at the lower rear corner of the door to spot a Series IV (or earlier – centre) from a Series V (right) or a Tiger from a Tiger II: on earlier cars the doors have rounded rear corners, on the later cars they are squared off.



Alpine was originally built at the **Armstrong-Siddeley** factory at Parkside in Coventry.



Ford V8-engined **Tiger** was built by Jensen, utilising the space liberated by the end of **Volvo P1800** production.

Series I Alpine launched in **1959**, replaced by Series II in **1960**. Series III takes over in **1963** but lasts just



Series III is the rarest Alpine, with fewer than 6000 built.



**Badges**

Alpine script on front wings (left). Look for 'Series III' or 'Series IV' badges on wings. On Series IV/V Sunbeam roundel moves from bonnet to grille bar. Tigers have 'Tiger' script and 'Sunbeam 260' badge (centre). Series V has '1725' badges on wings (right).



**Other items**

Hardtop rounded on Series I/II, squarer later. Auto optional only on Series IV. In 1965 reverse gear changed from left-back to right-back. Spare wheel changed from horizontal to vertical from Series III. Tiger has battery in boot and horizontal spare wheel.

**Front end**

Up to Series III, Alpine had circular sidelights below the hooded headlights and a grille with multiple horizontal chrome strips (Series I shown left). New grille for Series IV, with single chrome bar and Sunbeam badge, plus combined sidelight/indicator clusters under headlamps. Egg-crate grille planned for Tiger, but only appeared on Tiger II. Tiger II and last few Alpines (Series V shown right) had rounded headlamp trims rather than cowls.



**Rear wings and fuel filler**

Wings on Series I, II and III cars had pronounced fins and swept back rear light clusters (left). Round filler cap fitted to Series I, three-prong cap from Series II on – though early cars often have the later style fitted. Filler moved to the top of the wing on Series III (centre). Series IV/V has lower rear wings and vertical rear light clusters (right), plus lockable, flush-fitting fuel filler cap.



**Harringtons**

Three main types: finned (type A), hatchback with reworked wings (type B, below) and hatchback with standard wings (C). Majority Alpine II-based.



**Interior**

The Series I Alpine has large (16in) two-spoke steering wheel (far left). Series II has smaller 15in wheel mounted an inch higher – notice how much closer the horn ring is to the outer rim. If the Alpine you're looking at has Microcell seats (centre left) it should be a Series III or later. Tourers had a crackle black dash and plastic steering wheel, while the GTs and Tigers had wood-panel dash and matching wood-rim wheel. Spot a Tiger from the American-style chrome cross-bar on the gear lever to defeat the reverse gear detent – compare a Tiger (centre right) to a Series V Alpine (far right).



Wings toned down on Series IV/V as fins became passé in the late '60s.



10 months, before being replaced by Series IV. Alpine V unveiled **1965**, continues with detail changes until **1967**.

Prototypes for Tiger were built by **Ken Miles** and **Carroll Shelby**; Shelby car used as the basis of the production machine, introduced in 1963.

Total production: **69,251** Alpines and **7128** Tigers.