

# David's MGB gets its skates on



1971 MGB GT

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For the last few weeks my MGB GT has been sat on three wheels while I initially ignored and then pondered the problem of which tyres to fit to it. Now it's on 20 wheels, and I have to say it handles like it's on skates... But it's much easier to manoeuvre around my packed rented barn.

I'll start again without the bad jokes. A flat tyre earlier in the year prompted me to check the MGB's tyres, and I found to my horror that they date back to 2003. Not ideal on a fast road/track day car, even if I haven't used it much lately. While I gathered up information, my barn filled up, with photographer Matthew Howell's lovely '62 Beetle joined by publishing director Geoff Love's not-so-lovely Morris 1000 Tourer (it's a restoration project for his wife), alongside my own [cough] long-term project Saab 96.

The barn is dry, secure and cheap, but it's an awkward shape, and the doorway is roughly 20mm wider

than the width of the MGB's extended arches, so manoeuvring cars around, and in and out, isn't easy. Hence the B's new skates, two of which are old-but-excellent CarDogs, bought 20 years ago and no longer made, and two of which were cheapies bought recently on eBay for £40 for the pair. With the skates in place, the MGB is no longer stuck in a corner of the barn.

So that allowed me to get back on the case, changing the oil, replacing a leaking fuel pipe and **re-routing the wiring for the heated front windscreen (a brilliant addition, by the way, bought a while back from Moss Europe).**

That just left the tyres to sort out. The MGB sits low, on 6in Minilite centre-lock wheels, and wheelarch clearance is tight. Ridiculously tight. But it looks great!

I consulted Dougal Cawley at Longstone Tyres and Ben Field at Vintage Tyres for advice. Dougal pointed out that the previous super-sticky Yokohama 185/60s

were probably limiting my trackday fun and my learning, because they're actually too grippy and because the MGB wasn't designed for such wide, low-profile rubber. Both advised that a 185/70 Avon CR6ZZ, which was designed specifically for fast road and trackday classic cars, would be perfect – if the extra 18.5mm radius would fit under the wheelarches.

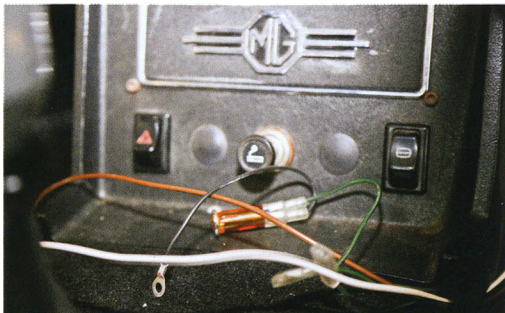
The Avons aren't cheap, and I decided it was too much of a risk, so instead I went with a less sticky 185/60: a Dunlop BluResponse. I've had the same on my Impreza for over 20,000 miles and they've

proved to be quieter than the previous tyres, and remarkably hard-wearing.

I've no idea how they'll feel on the B but one is now fitted, and the others are jammed into the boot ready to be changed at the MoT station, along with a new track-rod end that I ran out of time to fit.

I did take the B for a quick run, initially across the barn on the skates (handling was unpredictable) and then around the local lanes on one new tyre and three old ones.

As ever, it started immediately and was as much fun as ever. It's noisy and scruffy but I love it.



#### Below and right

The MGB is easier to move around its new (caster) wheels; David refits the heated front screen wiring, to incorporate warning lamp and original switch.



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