

Supplemental Information & Instructions for ARH52 Shell & Grille Assembly MGA 1500-1600, 1956 - 61



Background Information

The Moss Motors MGA Grille Shell Assembly introduced in 2006 is the finest reproduction shell ever offered for the MGA. The tooling for this project was created from scratch, with careful reference to original factory drawings and new factory original samples. We have made every effort to ensure that we have created a reproduction that is as accurate as possible. These units are pressed in solid brass with polished stainless steel grille stats. They incorporate all of the subtle factory design features that are easily overlooked. The ever-critical back edge curvature is cut with a full precision clipping die which absolutely matches the genuine originals. Our investment in precision tooling ensures that every production grille surround is absolutely consistent. Our own product development staff has installed genuine and our own reproduction shells onto several MGAs, including a pristine (never damaged) original MGA owned by one of the sales staff here at Moss. The variation between grilles and the opening in the nose of the MGAs we have examined confirm what we believed, that these cars varied somewhat due to minor differences in the parts and the assembly. Swapping an original grille from one MGA to another will require some fiddling and adjustment of the mounting brackets, and even then the grille will not look or fit exactly the same way. It is no accident that the holes in the body sheetmetal for the ¼" mounting bolts were ½" in diameter, and some of those holes have been enlarged or elongated to facilitate the installation of a grille. If you add in the dents, wrinkles and repairs done over 45+ years it is not hard to see why fitting a grille requires patience and some effort. That said, we guarantee that the fit of our reproduction grille is every bit as good as the original factory part.

Our intention in the instructions that follow is to help you achieve the best possible fit in your MGA.

Contents of the Shell & Grille Assembly

The 990-068 Kit includes the

- Shell, stamped from brass and triple chrome plated as original
- Grille assembly, with the individual slats made from polished stainless steel, as original
- False nose, stamped from brass and triple chrome plated as original
- MG medallion, cloisonné, black letters on white field.

In addition, we are supplying

- Six 051-391 mounting bolts 6 MM x 1.0 x 20 MM
- Six 051-351 mounting lock washers, 6MM
- Six 771-370 mounting washers, 6 MM, large OD
- One 470-120 piping, grille shell to nose

The first production run was made with 6MM x 1.0 captive nuts instead of the correct ¼ UNF nuts. After four years of development, we decided to accept the first 48 grilles this way with the understanding that the next batch would be correct. We are including the necessary metric hardware and apologize for the fact that you will need to find a 10MM socket.



The original grille shell had a slotted plate brazed in place to attach the upper corners of the grille slat assembly. We have incorporated this design feature into our reproduction.



The location of the lower mounting tabs on some of the reproduction grilles has been a problem. Ours are in the correct place, and they sit at the correct angle.

Fitting the Shell & Grille Assembly

The ideal situation is to fine-tune the fit of your new grille early in the restoration process while carrying out all preliminary bodywork. With the body in primer, you don't have to worry about chipping a fresh paint job. A competent body man, especially one with experience with MGs, can fit the grille to the opening so that once the car is fully painted and assembled the grille shell will fit as perfectly as possible.

If the car is already painted, realize that chipping the paint is a real possibility as you fit the grille. We suggest you put painter's masking tape around the opening in the nose to protect the paint, and proceed carefully.

When offering up the grille, leave the piping off. It is much easier to see what you are doing and deal with the fit issues if you don't have to fiddle with the piping. Carefully check the position of the captive nuts on the mounting tabs attached to the grille in relationship to the oversized holes in the bodywork. The six mounting bolts should not be hard up against the edge of the holes. If they are, it may be necessary to tweak the brackets on the grille, or elongate one or more holes in the bodywork. If you are doing the fitting, enlist the aid of a friend. Have them apply gentle pressure to the corners of the shell assembly as each mounting screw is tightened, being careful not to apply so much pressure as to dent or distort the brass surround.

Installing the Shell & Grille Assembly

Preparing the Car

Jack up the front end of the car and support it securely on proper jack stands
It has been suggested that you will need to pull the radiator, front bumper and front apron to have unrestricted access to the grille and the attachment points. While this is certainly useful if you are fitting the grille before the car is painted, we did the installation in a finished MGA without removing anything other than the old grille.

Organize your tools

You will need a ratchet and a 10 MM socket, and a bottle of Loctite Superglue "Gel Control".

Check the Fit One Last Time

Get a friend to assist you.

Check the fit of the grille shell assembly without the piping.

About the Piping

To allow for far easier installation, we suggest gluing on the outer grille piping (Moss # 470-120) using superglue. We found the Loctite Superglue "Gel Control" was easy to apply and cured fast enough to make this practical. Carefully cut small notches in the inside edge of the piping at all four corners to allow the piping to more easily follow the curve of the grille. Apply the adhesive to the back outer edge of the shell only, staying well away from the edges of the grille itself. Hold the piping in place with your fingers until the adhesive dries. Exercise care while gluing the piping in place to insure that it is in the position it will take once it is on the car. Trim the ends neatly and join the piping at the bottom center. Clean up any cement visible on the front side before it dries. This procedure will eliminate the frustration long associated with trying to keep the piping in place during the installation process, and it will allow the piping to bridge minor gaps without rolling over the edge or becoming uneven. If you don't glue the piping in place, you will need two to three helpers; one to hold the shell in place, and two to control the piping while you tighten the bolts.

Terminology

For the purpose of these instructions, right (RH) and left (LH) are used as if you were sitting in the cockpit.

Securing the Grille Assembly in Place

Start with the upper right hand (RH) corner.
Offer up the grille and have your assistant hold it in place.
Place the lock washer and flat washer on one of the six mounting bolts.
Start the upper RH bolt (1A).
Do not tighten it yet.

Repeat the process on the upper LH corner.

Slide under the car.
Locate the holes for the three lower mounting bolts in the underside of the horizontal radiator duct panel.
Have your assistant push on the lower corners of the grille to hold it in place. *They should be able to see if the hole in the panel lines up with the captive nut.*
Start the lower RH bolt (2A).
Repeat the process with the lower LH bolt.
Start the lower middle bolt (2B).

Back up top.
The upper middle bolt (3A) is hidden behind the brace near the hood latch mechanism. You can't really see it when you are starting the bolt; it's done more by feel.

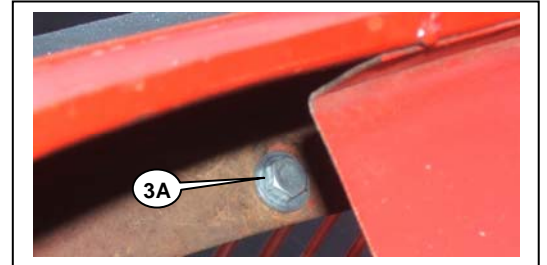
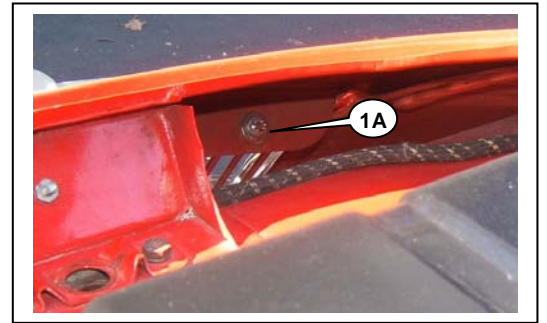
Adjust the grille for the best possible fit.

Have your assistant hold the grille in place while you tighten up the bolts.

The degree to which the grille fits your car depends on how much work you can do before the car is painted. Because the corners have the correct radius, the fit of these new grilles is very good in areas where previous grilles had problems.

Maintenance

Chromed brass and polished stainless steel are very durable, but they do require attention to keep them looking their best. Stainless steel will oxidize. Keep the grille slats clean and if needed, you can polish them with Auto Glym Metal Polish, 220-954 . When you wax your car, wax the chromed shell. To keep the shell looking new, periodic use of a good quality chrome polish is recommended. We suggest Simichrome Polish, 225-350.



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