

The **Triumph TR4** was a [sports car](#) built in the [United Kingdom](#)

by the [Standard Triumph Motor Company](#) and introduced in 1961. Code named "Zest" during development, the car was based on the chassis and drivetrain of the previous TR sports cars, but with a modern [Michelotti](#) styled body. 40,253 cars were built during production years.

The new TR4 body style did away with the classical cutaway door design of the previous TRs to allow for wind-down (roll-up) windows (in place of less convenient side-curtains), and the angular rear allowed a boot (trunk) with considerable capacity for a sports car. Other key improvements included a wider track front and rear, slightly larger standard engine displacement, full [synchromesh](#) on all forward gears, and [rack and pinion](#) steering. In addition , the optional Laycock de Normanville electrically operated overdrive could now be selected for 2nd and 3rd gear as well as 4th, effectively providing the TR4 with a seven-speed close ratio gearbox.

Advanced features included the first use of adjustable [fascia](#) ventilation in a production car and the option of a unique hard top that consisted of a fixed glass rear window (called a backlight) with an integral rollbar and a detachable, steel centre panel (aluminium for the first 500 units). This was the first such roof system on a production car and preceded by 5 years the [Porsche 911/912 Targa](#), which has since become a generic name for this style of top.

On the TR4 the rigid roof panel was replaceable with an easily folded and stowed vinyl insert and supporting frame called a Surrey Top. The entire hard top assembly is often mistakenly referred to as a "Surrey Top". In original factory parts catalogues the rigid top and backlight assembly is listed as the "Hard Top" kit. The vinyl insert and frame are offered separately as a "Surrey Top".

Features such as wind-down windows were seen as a necessary step forward to meet competition and achieve good sales in the important US market, where the vast majority of TR4s were eventually sold. However, dealers had concerns buyers might not fully appreciate the new amenities so a special short run of TR3A (commonly called [TR3"B"](#)) were produced in 1961 and '62.



1964 Australian registered right hand drive TR4, showing the optional 48-lace wire wheels, which have been painted metallic silver. The tyres on the car shown are 165x15 radial-ply.

Despite dealer concerns, the TR4 proved very successful and continued the rugged, hairy-chested image that the previous TRs had enjoyed. It became a celebrated rally car in Europe and the UK during early to

Triumph TR4



Manufacturer	Triumph Motor Company
Production	1961–1965
Predecessor	Triumph TR3A
Successor	Triumph TR4A
Class	Sports car
Layout	FR layout
Engine(s)	2138 cc straight-4
Transmission(s)	4-speed manual ^[1]
Wheelbase	2,238 mm (88.1 in) ^[1]
Length	3,962 mm (156.0 in) ^[1]
Width	1,461 mm (57.5 in) ^[1]
Height	1,270 mm (50.0 in) ^[1]
Curb weight	966 kg (2,130 lb) ^[1]
Fuel capacity	53.4 L (11.7 imp gal/14.1 US gal) ^[1]

mid-sixties. In America, the TR4 also saw a number of racing successes, even winning an SCCA class championship as late as 1991. In Australia the TR4 was a common sight at hill-climb events and various club rallies and circuit racing events. Some cars were fitted with vane-type superchargers, as the three main bearing engine was liable to crankshaft failure if revved beyond 6,500 rpm. Superchargers allowed a TR4 to produce much more horse-power and torque at relatively modest revolutions. The standard engine produced 105 bhp (78 kW) SAE but supercharged and otherwise performance-tuned a 2.2 litre version could produce in excess of 200 bhp (150 kW) at the flywheel. It should be noted that the TR4, in common with its predecessors, was fitted with a wet-sleeve engine, so that for competition use the engine's cubic capacity could be changed by swapping the cylinder liners and pistons, allowing a competitor to race under different capacity rules (ie below or above 2 litres for example).

TR4 were originally fitted with 15x4.5" disk wheels. Optional 48 lace wire wheels could be ordered painted the same colour as the car's bodywork (rare), painted metallic silver (most common) or in matte or polished chrome finishes (originally rare, but now more commonly fitted). The most typical tyre originally fitted was 165x15 [bias ply](#). In the US at one point, American Racing alloy (magnesium and aluminium) wheels were offered as an option, in 15x5.5" or 15x6" size. Tyres were a problem for original owners who opted for 48 spoke wire wheels, as the correct size radial ply tyre for the factory rims was 175x15, an odd sized tyre at the time that was only available from Michelin at considerable expense. The much more common 185x15 radials were too wide to be fitted safely. As a result, many owners had new and wider rims fitted and their wheels re-laced.

In 1965, the [TR4A](#) with IRS or [independent rear suspension](#) superseded the TR4. Apart from the rear suspension, which required a redesigned frame and a number of small styling changes and refinements, the two models appear nearly identical. In fact, an estimated 25% of TR4A were not equipped with IRS, but instead reverted to a live axle design similar to the TR4.

Performance data:

TR4 fact file

Speed	Time	
		Top Speed - 102 mph (164 km/h)
0 - 30 mph (48 km/h)	3.7 s	Overall Fuel Consumption – 18.5 mpg-US
0 - 50 mph (80 km/h)	8.3 s	Top Speed 102 mph (164 km/h)
0 - 60 mph (97 km/h)	10.9 s	Axle Ratio – 3.7
0 - 90 mph (140 km/h)	20.9 s	Unladen Weight – 2184 lb (991 kg)