

How easy is it to get a personalised number plate for an MG?

Well George Wilder explains how he got an "MGR" plate for his RV8 and found the process was easy, quick and efficient. (Aug 10)

Many cars today have personalised registrations - some identifying with the owner, some with the vehicle. There are two main sources: the first is the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) for new unissued registrations sold directly or via an auction and the second the companies that sell both new DVLA registrations and existing registrations which have been issued but are now held on retention.

The DVLA is currently releasing from its stock a range of unissued registrations of the earlier prefix type – for example P88 MGR - and from the current registration scheme, for example MG55FUN. They can be bought directly or via the internet. The DVLA also has three or four auctions a year for non prefix registrations and certain current registrations. Buying directly from the DVLA is quite simple as is the process for transferring the registration, but the auction route means bidding at the auction of course although the transfer scheme is the same.

The commercial companies selling registrations often offer the current DVLA registrations at a premium - don't be fooled by the headline price. However they come into their own with numerous previously issued registrations which will be available, usually on a retention certificate (V317).

To find out which registrations are available from the DVLA (currently 30 million) use their well sorted website <http://dvlaregistrations.direct.gov.uk> All their prices include VAT and the transfer fee. This site gives detailed information on the easy steps you have to follow to follow to buy a registration number.

After buying the registration the DVLA will send you a Certificate of Entitlement (V750), usually in a couple of days. You then complete the V750 with details of the vehicle to which the registration is being transferred. The V750, V5C and MOT (if applicable) can be taken or posted to the local DVLA office. The DVLA will issue a new tax disc and MOT Certificate along with a letter (V832) showing the assignment of the registration – this is useful if you are stopped by the police – and a Number Plate Authorisation Certificate (V948) allowing you to purchase number plates for the number you have bought. All you have to do is purchase the new plates and fix them on the car. Job done.

On two occasions recently I have bought personalised plates from the DVLA and the process was easy, quick and efficient. For my RV8 I obtained an "MGR" number plate – P88 MGR - and found the process was very straightforward and not unduly expensive. Buying the registration direct from the DVLA including all taxes and transfer fees cost £250. I walked into the local DVLA office in Chelmsford and waited five to six minutes to see the counter staff, and then the process took less than five minutes including printing a new tax disc and MOT certificate. The Form V5C will follow later. For my daughter's car, I purchased a registration and gave her the V750. She then posted this with the V5C on a Monday morning to the local DVLA office in London and it was all returned by post on Wednesday morning! I brought my first personalised number - 251 GRW - at an auction a long time ago. The auction was nerve wrecking - the process easy.

The companies selling number plates usually offer to carry out the simple procedures for the transfer for you as the justification for their higher prices for unissued DVLA registrations. Where these companies really come into their own is in the supply of previously issued registrations transferred from another vehicle. These registrations are widely advertised on the internet and in the Sunday papers. In most cases the prices are subject to negotiation, so do not just pay up. The process is the same except that it usually starts with retention certificate V317 which one sends to the DVLA instead of the V750.

So if you want an earlier prefix registration or a current scheme registration – do not forget you are not allowed to make your vehicle look newer than it is – go straight to the DVLA. If you want a previously issued registration, look at the dealers and private adverts in the papers and on the internet, however the transfer process is the same.



<http://dvlaregistrations.direct.gov.uk>