

V8NOTE397

The V8 Wiring Colour Code

Barrie Jones has produced a very useful guide to the wiring colour codes used on the MGBGT V8 model.

The automotive wiring colour code that we know today was invented around 1936. I believe the company that invented and maintained it was Ripaults, not Lucas. Ripaults Cables Ltd is a long-established manufacturer of automotive cable and wiring looms in the UK. www.ripca.com

The Ripaults colour code quickly became the de facto standard in the UK. Each colour was denoted by a unique letter, and some letters were reserved for other purposes.

I assume that Ripaults chose S for Slate Grey because they had already used G, R, and Y, and E was reserved for Earth.

Colours

B = Black
R = Red
O = Orange
W = White
N = Brown
U = Blue
P = Purple
Y = Yellow
K = Pink
S = Slate Grey
G = Green
LG = Light Green

The first table shows the meaning of the primary colour. For example, all white wires are part of the ignition circuit, they are not fused, and they are switched via the ignition switch

Primary Colour Code – V8

Primary Colour	Code	Use	Fused	Switched
White	W	Ignition & Fuel pump (also HRW)	no	Ignition switch
Black	B	Earth (also radiator fans)	no	no
Brown	N	Charging & main power circuit	no	no
Blue	U	Headlights	no	Headlight switch
Red	R	Sidelights, numberplate & dashboard illumination	(1 & 2)	Sidelight switch
Green	G	Brake lights, HRW, rev counter, fuel gauge, turn indicators, reversing lights, hazard flasher unit & radiator fans, heater motor, wiper motor, screenwash pump & radio	3	Ignition switch
Purple	P	Horns, interior courtesy lights & cigar lighter	4	no

In the second table I have listed all the colours used in the V8 loom. For example, the wire from the radiator fan relay to the radiator fans is coloured black with a green stripe, so the colour code is shown as BG.

Wiring Loom Colour Code (V8)

Primary Colour	Colour Code	Use
Black	B	Earth
	BG	Radiator fan relay to fans
	BO	Radiator fan thermostat to relay
Brown	N	Alternator to Starter motor
	N	Alternator to fuse (4)
	N	Fuse 4 to starter relay
	N	Alternator to hidden crimp connector (inside loom)
	N	Connector to light switch
	N	Connector to ignition switch
	N	Connector via line fuse (6) to hazard flasher unit
	NY	Alternator to ignition warning light
	NLG	Wiper motor to wiper switch
Blue	U	Light switch to dip switch
	UW	Dip switch to headlamp main beam

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		Dip switch to main beam warning light
	UR	Dip switch to headlamp dipped beam
	ULG	Wiper motor to wiper switch
Red	R	Fuse (1) to offside sidelights
	R	Fuse (2) to nearside sidelights
	R	Fuse (1) to number plate light
	RG	Light switch to fuses (1) & (2), and to panel light rheostat
	RW	Panel light rheostat to panel lights
	RLG	Wiper motor to wiper switch
Purple	P	Fuse (4) to horns, interior courtesy lights & cigar lighter
	PB	Horns to horn button
	PW	Interior lights to courtesy switches
White	W	Ignition switch to fuse (3)
	W	Ignition switch to resistive wire
	W	Ignition switch to overdrive switch
	W	Ignition switch to fuel pump
	W	Ignition switch to ignition warning light
	WG	Ignition switch to line fuse (5)
	WLG	Resistive wire to coil (+)
	WU	Starter solenoid to coil (+) bypassing resistive wire
	WR	Starter switch to starter relay
	WN	Starter relay to starter solenoid
	Thin WB	Coil (-) to distributor contact breaker & rev counter
	Thick WB	HRW switch to HRW & warning light
	Green	G
G		From hazard flasher switch to turn indicator flasher unit
GK		From line fuse (5) to heater switch, wiper switch, screenwash switch & radio
GY		Heater switch to heater motor
GP		Brake light switch to brake lights
GB		Petrol tank sender to fuel gauge
GR		Nearside turn indicators & dashboard lamp
GW		Offside turn indicators & dashboard lamp
Light Green	LGG	Voltage stabiliser to fuel gauge
	LGB	Screenwash switch to pump
	LGN	Hazard switch to hazard flasher unit
	LGN	Turn switch to turn flasher unit
Yellow	Y	Overdrive switch to overdrive inhibitor switch
	YP	Overdrive inhibitor switch to overdrive solenoid
Pink	K	Resistive wire hidden inside front loom

Notes:

- 1) Not all wires are direct. In particular, there are 4 black multi-way bullet connectors under the dashboard. All the wires going into them should be the same colour. The wires are coloured White, Green, Green & Pink, and Black. There are two more by the heater unit, coloured White and Green. The two 'White' ones regularly cause ignition problems, because the power to both the coil and the fuel pump go through them.
- 2) Several multi-way crimp connectors are hidden inside the loom, notably Brown and Black.
- 3) The main difference between fuse (3) and fuse (5) is that fuse (3) remains live when the starter motor is being operated, whilst fuse (5) does not. If the HRW is switched on and/or the cooling fans are running, this places a significant extra load on the battery during starting. It also places a large load on the ignition switch contacts themselves. I recommend that the power supply to the HRW should be re-routed via fuse (5), and the power to the fans should be taken directly from the spare terminal on the alternator via a fused relay.