



Registering an MGBGTV8 in France

John Upton returned to UK from Africa with his MGBGTV8 (Bracken 1322) a few years ago and his V8 reverted to its former UK registration. He subsequently retired to France and was able to get the V8 registered there without difficulty. Here he provides an update on the current procedure which revises the information provided by Franck Morand in an earlier [V8NOTE295](#).

Residency requirement

Firstly, it is important to remember that you cannot register a car in France unless you are a permanent resident (since Brexit you have held a residency permit of one type or another). Having a holiday home in France will not suffice. If you are not a resident you can bring your car to France and use it with its UK registration for 6 months in any 12.

Vehicle compliance

The next thing is to make sure your vehicle complies with the French definition of a "Vehicule de Collection." The criteria for this are:

- it was built or registered for the first time at least 30 years ago;
- its particular type is no longer produced;
- it is historically preserved and maintained in its original state, with no essential changes made to the specifications of its main components.

A basically original Factory V8 therefore complies (mine did), despite the model never having been sold in France when new. Conversions and indeed kit cars can be imported but it's more complicated.

Importation requirements

Since 1st January 2021 the UK has reverted to being a "third country," no longer having EU status. This means that importation is now dealt with by the French customs (Douanes). If you have your residency permit and import a V8 you must start this customs procedure within one month of the car's arrival. You can declare your car at your point of arrival or, perhaps preferably, at your local customs office. I'm aware of one recent case where a resident imported an MGC from UK. He simply

emailed his local customs office and asked what documents they required. They replied sending a list, he then emailed everything to them. Shortly, they invited him to bring the vehicle to them so that they could verify the chassis number etc and he paid the necessary duty and taxes. Post Brexit, importing an ordinary car from UK would cost you 30% of its value (as defined by the customs). The good news is that this is reduced to 5.5% for a Vehicule de Collection. In return for your payment, you get a completed customs form 846A.

Note: if you are moving to France for the first time and include your car in your inventory of the personal effects you are bringing, the news is even better – no taxes and duties are payable provided you have owned your car for at least 6 months.

Registration Step 1, FFVE



For newer cars you would need a Certificate of Conformity (ie. with EU regulations) as issued by the car's manufacturer – these can be expensive. For classic cars it's different. Instead, you apply to an organisation called the FFVE (Fédération Française des Véhicules d'Époque) for an Attestation (Certificate) that your car is eligible to

be classed as a Vehicule de Collection. The FFVE is an association (non-profit making) that represents the interest of classic car owners, for example it negotiates with towns to allow classic cars access to their low pollution zones. Applications for an attestation are now online and their website will tell you what is required - photos etc. The fee for cars is €60. Link to copy: [Attestation FFVE pour la carte grise de collection | FFVE - Fédération Française des Véhicules d'Époque](#). « Carte Grise » is the French equivalent of a V5C.

Registration Step 2, Contrôle Technique

Having received your Attestation from FFVE, which should take about 4 weeks, the next step is to obtain a Contrôle Technique (CT), equivalent to UK's MoT. Test stations in France are independent from garages and the fees vary slightly. You will need your FFVE Attestation. Headlights should be changed although it is possible to get away with stickers providing the computer agrees that you have placed them correctly. If you have a single rear fog lamp this must be on the left. Having passed, the tester will fix a sticker onto your windscreen – this will show your UK registration, which you don't need to change when you get a French one. Vehicles de Collection, unless first registered before 1st January 1960 - these are exempt, require a CT every 5 years (as opposed to every 2 years for normal cars, after 4 years from new).

Final step is to obtain your registration document

This is done via the French Government's ANTS website – you have to open an account. ANTS stands for Agence Nationale Des Titres Sécurisés or National Agency for Secure Documents so a certain amount of cross checking is automatically carried out for example with the tax authorities, with the electoral roll etc. to make sure you are who you say you are and not just a passing tourist. If the system cannot find you, you can go to any Post Office with your passport, utility bill etc. and get a La Poste ID which ANTS may accept. The link (to copy) to the ANTS page for first time vehicle registrations in France is: [ANTS - Immatriculer pour la première fois un véhicule en France](#). The

application form, which you can download from here, is called a cerfa 13750*07. Make sure you upload all the required documents, including your V5C, in a format (pdf etc.) that ANTS will accept. The fee for a new Carte Grise is based on the “puissance fiscale” or “fiscal horsepower”, the “CV” of your vehicle, which is calculated using a formula based on the vehicles power and CO2 emissions. An MGBGT V8 is certainly not a Citroën “2CV” – my V8 was rated at 21CV. Today, for a 21CV vehicle, you will have to make a one-off payment of around €490 for your Carte Grise; this does vary according to your Département, as they are allowed to tax the fee. On the plus side there is no annual Vehicle Excise Duty payable in France.

Arrival of your Carte Grise

Your Carte Grise, emblazoned with the words “Vehicle de Collection,” should then arrive in the post, thus allocating you your registration number.

If necessary, your local Préfecture, who used to issue all Carte Grise themselves, are supposed to offer a free assistance service and let you use one of their computers.

If, however, you don't fancy tackling ANTS yourself there are plenty of "Carte Grise" agents willing to do it for you, for a fee (was €40 - €50).

Hang on to the covering letter that came with your Carte Grise, there is a reference number printed on it that ANTS will need if you ever change your address or come to sell your car. Don't forget to carry your original Carte Grise with you in your car, this is mandatory – obviously scan it or keep a copy in a safe place.

Carte Grise for MGBGTV8 (Bracken 1322)

Certificat d'immatriculation

N° Immatriculation A DC-199-Z8 Date de 1^{re} immatriculation B 04/06/1974

C.1 UPTON

JOHN

C.4a EST LE PROPRIÉTAIRE DU VÉHICULE

C.4.1

C.3

FRANCE

D.1 MG

D.2 BGT

D.2.1

D.3 BGT V8

F.1 0 F.2 0 F.3 0 E. GD2D11322G

G 0 G.1 0 G.2 0 J.3

K J.1 VP J.2

P.1 P.2 P.3 ES P.6 21

Q S.1 4 S.2 U.1

U.2 V.7 V.9

X.1 VISITE AVANT LE 17/01/2016

Y.1 378 Y.2 0

Y.3 0 Y.4 4

Y.6 2.5 Y.8 384.5

Pour le ministre et par délégation,
Le sous-directeur de l'action interministérielle

Ludovic GUILLAUME

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I 11/02/2014

Z.1 VÉHICULE DE COLLECTION

Z.3

Z.4

Classic Car (Z.1)

Certificat d'immatriculation

DC-199-Z8 11/02/2014

2014AP06102

GD2D11322G

MG

UPTON

JOHN

CFRADFC199ZB06D2D11322G<<<<<<<<97406047VP<<<<

a registration - you will just get the next number available and this stays with your vehicle for the vehicle's life. The current number series started in 2009 at AA-000-AA and has now (February 2024) reached around GV-123-AB. Cars registered before 2009 had numbers with the owners Département number, e.g. 24 = Dordogne, as a suffix. However, when such vehicles change hands, they are simply allocated the next available number in the new series, so a registration number is not always a guide to the vehicles age.

Buying your numberplates

Armed with your Carte Grise you can go and buy your numberplates as you would in UK. Vehicles de Collection are permitted to have black background numberplates which contain neither the EU logo nor your Département number. If you opt for the normal white reflective numberplates these will have the EU symbol and an "F" on the left and a Département number with its logo on the right – however the latter is no longer a requirement, in fact you can choose to display any Department number, subject only to the numberplate provider having the one you want stock. For example, a popular choice is to pretend that you live in Corsica (2A or 2B) with its somewhat sinister Moors Head (Pirate) logo. Alternatively, you can choose an overseas Département, for example French Guiana (973), or Réunion Island (974). Numberplates must be rivetted on in France, you can buy a kit with coloured rivets at the numberplate store.

Having received your Carte Grise you should then complete and post the "Permanently Exported" slip on your V5C to DVLA.

V8 conversions

If you own a V8 conversion, or something really out of the ordinary, there is a very active English language Facebook group entitled "Registering Vehicles in France" complete with their own Group Expert – they should be able to assist.

Footnote: Insurance

Some, but not all, French insurance companies will insure a UK registered car, but only for a limited period, say 6 months. You may have to shop around. When you get your Carte Grise you should advise your insurers and they will reissue the documents. Currently you must display a small green sticker on your windscreen confirming your insurance, but this will shortly be phased out. In France your car is effectively insured, not the driver.



French Registration Numbers

There is no such thing as a personalised registration number, or age-appropriate registration in France. Nor is it possible to retain

MGBGTV8 relaxing in front of the Château De Nieuil, which is an hotel in Charente