

NEW DESIGN IDEAS!

Reviving the Morgan idea of a purely sporting three-wheeler, the Bond Bug was the first new model to appear under the Bond name following the 1969 takeover of the company by Reliant. They closed the Preston, Lancs, factory, dropped the existing Bond range, and adopted this sporty coupé with single front wheel and swing-up cockpit canopy as the sole representative of the marque. It was powered by Reliant's own 700cc die cast ohv four, upped to 750cc by the time this 1973 example appeared — the model's penultimate year. The Bug replaced earlier Bonds powered by the rear-engined Hillman Imp 875cc unit.

From the "new cars" file this month comes a real off-beat trio — one for the impecunious sportsmen, one for the landed gentry or their menials, and one for . . . er . . . for, er . . . hell, I suppose *someone* must want a thing which looks like a slice of cake on a roller skate!

We'll take the cake-and-roller-skate effort first, pictured top right mit dolly bird. This is called the Bond Bug, and is made, funnily enough, by Bond Cars Ltd. It can be driven on a motorcycle licence, and it uses Bond's trad 700 cc alloy in-line engine.

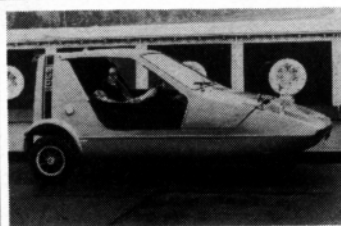
It has leading arm front suspension with a motor bike-type coil spring and damper unit, and an independent back end. The engine lives in front of you, and the car has a pressed steel chassis and glass-fibre body.

Bond, not surprisingly, have taken the view that the Bug is likely to appeal to the young in heart and pocket — so they are flogging the things on a sort of package deal basis which gives you two years' insurance and two years' tax as part of the deal.

The cars — there are three in the range, with small differences like weathershields, compression ratios, tyres, etc — cost £548, £579, and £628, with HP deposits of £209, £220, and £236 respectively. You pay the man off over two years, by which time it is assumed you can afford your next insurance.

One way and another, not a bad wheeze. It's like, *original*, anyway. When one of our sister magazines tested it a wee while back it certainly proved the hit of the century around London.

TECH TOPICS



BOND BUG

1970-74, 2str, F/R 700cc 4cyl OHV
A brave attempt to make a three-wheeled sports car — that never caught on! The result, if not fast, was certainly different and fun. The glassfibre body doesn't rust and, although not common, they are very cheap. Capture this piece of 1970s culture while you still can.
Prices from £500 to £1000
Investment rating ★★
Rarity rating ★★



BOND MINICAR MARK A-B

1948-52, DHC, F/F 125cc/197cc
1cyl 2 stroke
The work of innovator Laurie Bond, the Minicar broke all the rules. It had no steel chassis and was built around an aluminium tub. The engine was hung on the front wheel and turned with it allowing the car to turn in its own length; handy, as there was no reverse.
Prices from £400 to £1200
Investment rating ★★
Rarity rating ★★



BOND MINICAR MARK C-D

1952-58, DHC, F/F 197cc 1cyl 2 stroke
Similar to the earlier model, but fitted with fake wings to make it look more like a "normal" car. The steering was by gears in place of the older cable and bobbin. But the big advance was reverse gear, by switching off and then restarting the engine backwards!
Prices from £500 to £1400
Investment rating ★★
Rarity rating ★★



BOND EQUIPE GT4/GT4S

The latest Bond three-wheeler, pictured above, is the Bond 875. Said to combine 50 m.p.g. economy with Mini-Cooper performance, it uses a rear-mounted Imp engine which on 8:1 compression uses the cheapest petrol, and drives the independently-sprung rear wheels through the standard Imp transaxle unit. Imp dashboard controls and instruments are also used. A compact 9ft. 8in.-long glass-fibre body seats four people, although back seat room is cramped, while — an optional extra — a luggage container is available to clip on to the roof. The price of the new Bond 875 is £496 19s. 7d., including Purchase tax

1963-70, 4str, F/R 1147cc/1296cc 4cyl OHV
The combination of the Triumph Herald chassis, Spitfire engine and a glassfibre coupé bodyshell resulted in a very well-made and finished car. Also, no rust problems in the body, but watch out for the doors, scuttle and floorpan, which are steel. Still very cheap.
Prices from £400 to £1000
Investment rating ★★
Rarity rating ★★



BOND 875

1965-70, Sal, R/R 875cc 4cyl OHC
Still on the three-wheeler theme, but with a totally different approach. An all-new glassfibre bodyshell used the Hillman Imp engine, transmission and rear suspension mounted in the rear. The result worked well and was very economical but could not save the company, bought by competitor Reliant.
Prices from £400 to £2000
Investment rating ★
Rarity rating ★★



BOND EQUIPE 2 LITRE

1967-71, 4str, F/R 1998cc 6cyl OHV
The same formula as the GT4S, only this time based on a Vitesse chassis and available as a coupé or convertible. Again well finished, and even won a prize for the quality of its coachwork. Convertibles are appreciating fast but the coupés are still ridiculously cheap.
Prices from £500 to £2000
Investment rating ★★
Rarity rating ★★