

# Buying Secondhand

## Volvo 144 and 164

**I**T WOULD be fair to say that Volvo have never been rushed into doing anything, and as a result they have managed to produce only six new body shapes since the end of the War. The original PV544 "hunchback" was never imported into Britain, although a few found their way into the country following the outstanding rally successes of Tom Trana and Ewy Rosqvist. This car was supplemented back in 1956 by the 120-series, which continued in production right up until 1970, in two- and four-door forms, and as an estate.

But four years earlier, in August 1966, the factory unveiled their new car – the 140 series. Under the skin, the engine, transmission and running gear were very much the same, and the body showed that a great deal of time and money

had been spent on building in safety. As on the 120 cars, seat belts were standard, and the rather heavy, conservative body had built in roll-over bars, a very rigid passenger compartment, recessed switches and a two-part collapsible steering column.

The first cars had the B18 1,778 c.c. engine, with a single carburettor standard version, which developed 75 bhp (net), and the S version, with twin H6 SUs, which developed 100 bhp at 5,600 rpm. The engines themselves were very conventional, being four-cylinder units, with a side camshaft and push rod and rocker overhead valve gear. But in their earlier days, these Volvo engines were regarded as having a very high specific output compared with their British competitors.

In January 1967 the first 140s

came to Britain, in the shape of the 144S; two months later, the standard models came to the country. Initially, the S was available only with manual transmission, with overdrive an option. The standard car was available with manual or Borg-Warner automatic transmission, but without the overdrive option.

In September 1967, the two-door 142 range in single and twin carburettor forms were brought into Britain, but today these will be very hard to find. At the same time, the B18-engined 145 estate car was announced in Sweden, and they started to come into this country in the following May.

Then, in time for the 1968 London Motor Show, came the 1,986 c.c. B20 series engine, developing 90 bhp in single carburettor form and 118 bhp with

twin SUs. At this time automatic transmission was also made available on the 145 estates. Although importation of the 142 range went on, the cars stopped coming into the country in the late summer of the following year.

August 1970 saw the second major change in the 140-series history. The carburettor cars became known as De Luxe; the wheelbase was extended by 0.5in., to 8ft 7in., and wider-rimmed wheels were fitted, going up from 4.5 to 5in. At the same time, overdrive was dropped as an option. Until now, all Volvos had had carburettors, but with the introduction of the GL, in manual and automatic forms, came Bosch electronic petrol injection. The GL specification included leather upholstery and a sliding steel sunroof. Initially only



The original 140-series cars had a full-width grille and small, separate indicator lamps at the front



Later cars can be distinguished by the diagonal bar across the narrower grille; head restraints were standard on the front seats



Early 145 estate cars had opening rear quarter vents, but no built-in through flow ventilation panels; these are beneath the rear window on later cars



It was not long after the introduction of the 164 that a pair of fog lamps replaced the additional air intakes either side of the radiator grille

saloons were imported, and customers had to wait until October 1971 for the 145GL. At the same time, the whole range was slightly altered, with recessed door handles, and a wood finish on the facia. Overdrive became standard on GL saloons.

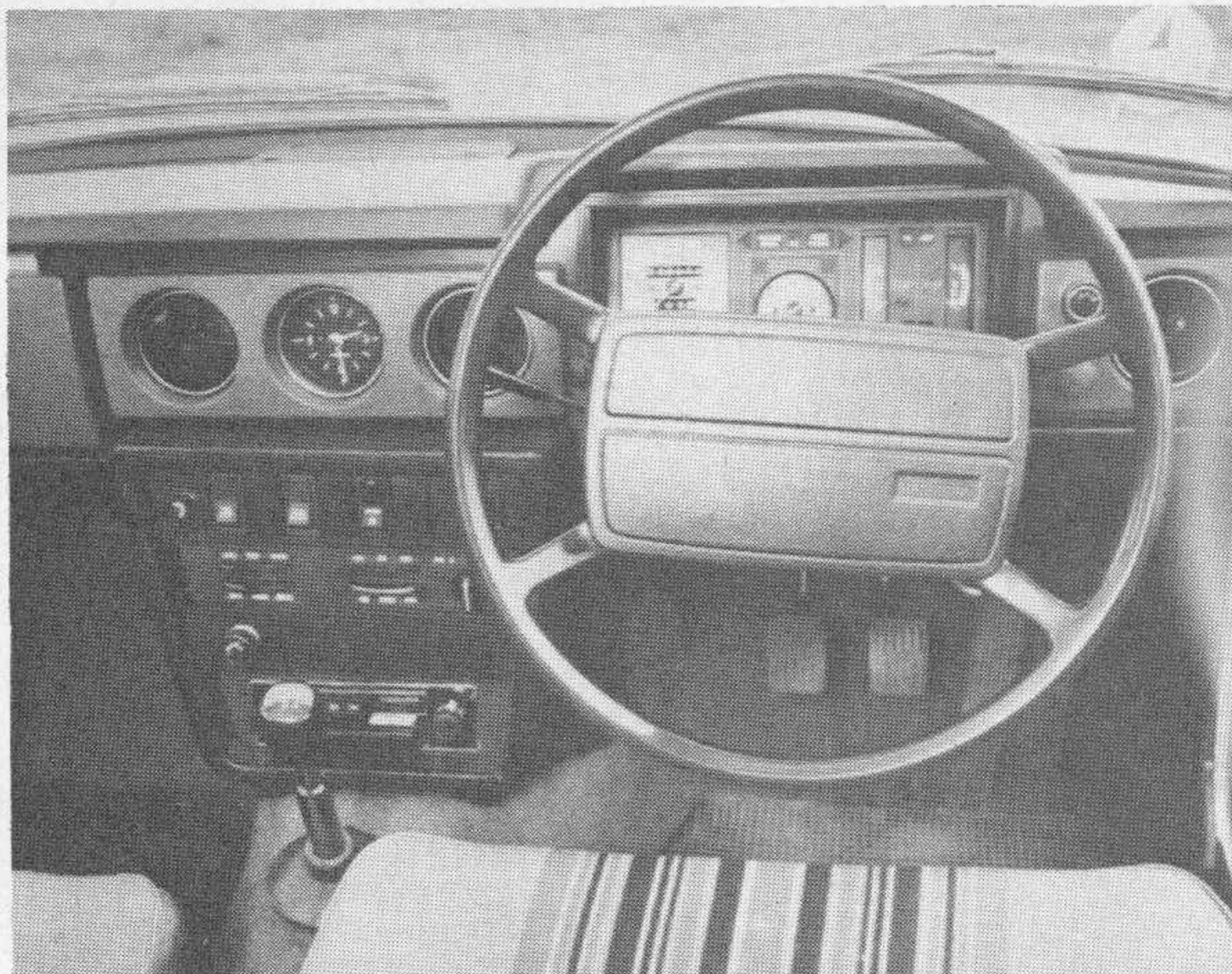
At the London Show in 1972, the "Mk II" 140 range was seen for the first time. Outside, the grille was slightly narrower, with larger wrap-round front sidelamps and indicators. The interior was considerably altered, with circular instruments replacing the horizontal rectangular panel of the older cars. The heater controls were also repositioned, and now had horizontal rather than vertical controls.

The final change in the 140-series came just a year later, when all the cars got the massive 5 mph-type bumpers, and seat belt warning lamps. The bumpers are not to the US Federal specification, as they do not have the hydraulic rams behind them. With the coming of the Bosch K-Jetronic petrol injection system on the GL and E models, the older type was dropped, and at the same time other modifications were made to the engine. The compression ratio was lowered from 10.2 to 1 down to 8.7 to 1, allowing 2-star fuel to be used. Power output too was down, from 124 bhp (DIN) to 115 bhp on the GL and E, and there was no change to the power output of 82 bhp (DIN) of the DL model either in saloon or estate forms.

On the 160 series, there have been far fewer changes. The original car, with its six-cylinder 2,978 c.c. engine, was announced in August 1968, and first came to this country the following January. In its twin carburettor form, this engine developed 130 bhp (net) at 5,000 rpm. In September 1969, a pair of driving lamps replaced the small air intakes either side of the radiator grille. Head restraints were fitted to the front seats and the ventilation was improved. In the following summer, the wheel rim width was increased to 5in.

The 164E, with Bosch electronic petrol injection and 160 bhp, came to Britain in the autumn of 1971, and the following year, these cars, like the 140 series, were fitted with narrow front grilles, and modified interiors. In the summer of 1973, the carburettor cars were finally dropped, leaving for a couple of months just the 164E. However, the range was expanded again with the launch in October of the 164TE; both this and the E were fitted with the Bosch K-Jetronic injection. The TE included automatic transmission, power steering, air conditioning and a headlamp wash-wiper system.

Right: Latest models 140-series cars had the revised facia, with the heater controls set lower on the central console



Below: The original 140 facia, with vertical heater controls, strip speedometer and long, slope-back gear lever

Below right: The last of the 140-series cars and the 160-series models were fitted with these massive 5 mph-type bumpers; the indicators were also much larger



### Performance data

Road Tested in Autocar of:	144S 6 July 1967	144S 20 Feb 1969	144GL 26 Aug 1971	144DL 7 June 1973	144E 20 July 1974	145S 27 June 1968	145E 9 Dec 1971	164 (A) 9 April 1970	164E 6 Sept 1973
<b>Mean maximum speed (mph)</b>	101	99	105	90	100	98	102	107	118
<b>Acceleration (sec)</b>									
0-30 mph	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.4	3.9	5.0	3.1
0-40 mph	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.7	6.1	7.0	6.0	7.1	4.9
0-50 mph	9.0	9.0	8.7	9.8	8.5	10.0	8.4	9.6	6.9
0-60 mph	12.6	12.9	11.6	13.9	12.5	14.5	11.5	12.8	10.0
0-70 mph	17.0	18.0	17.0	20.1	17.1	19.6	15.7	17.3	13.4
0-80 mph	23.7	24.8	23.4	29.9	23.4	27.8	21.7	23.0	17.2
0-90 mph	37.6	38.7	38.8	—	37.0	42.2	31.4	35.6	22.2
0-100 mph	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30.7
0-110 mph	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	44.5
<b>Standing ¼-mile (sec)</b>	18.6	18.8	18.3	19.8	18.5	19.6	18.1	19.0	17.5
<b>Top gear or top range (sec)</b>									
10-30 mph	11.8	—	—	—	—	13.6	—	—	—
20-40 mph	11.4	10.7	11.2	9.2	12.4	12.3	11.5	—	12.9
30-50 mph	10.8	9.8	11.1	8.9	11.8	11.3	10.2	—	12.2
40-60 mph	10.1	10.2	12.8	10.7	11.9	11.7	10.4	—	12.1
50-70 mph	9.7	11.8	14.2	13.9	12.1	13.1	11.6	—	14.0
60-80 mph	14.3	14.4	16.7	19.6	13.8	15.6	14.1	—	16.4
70-90 mph	21.8	21.7	24.3	—	22.0	22.2	19.6	20.4	19.5
80-100 mph	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25.9
<b>Overall fuel consumption (mpg)</b>	22.7	22.3	23.8	23.5	22.5	20.7	18.9	17.9	17.5
<b>Typical fuel consumption (mpg)</b>	25.0	25.0	26.0	25.0	27.0	24.0	21.0	19.0	18
<b>Dimensions:</b>									
<b>Length</b>	15ft 3in.			15ft 8in.			15ft 3in.		15ft 6in.
<b>Width</b>				5ft 8in.					5ft 8.1in.
<b>Height</b>				4ft 9in.					4ft 8.7in.
<b>Kerb weight (cwt)</b>	22.6	22.7	23.6	24.1	24.3	23.9	25.2	26.7	28.3

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Earlier this year, the 140 and 160 series cars were replaced by the 240 and 260 series cars, the former using single overhead camshaft engine (although the older B20 engine is still used in the basic model). The 260 is fitted with the "European" V6 3-litre engine, developed jointly by Volvo, Peugeot and Renault.

### What to look for

There is no getting away from the fact that the 140 and 160 series Volvos are rather heavy, ponderous cars to drive. But on the credit side, they have built up a reputation for ruggedness and longevity which is now almost a legend in the motor trade.

With the harsh climate and high proportion of gravel-surfaced roads in Scandinavia, the Swedes have gone to great lengths to ensure that the body-works will last. On all the cars, the sills are galvanized, and

ventilated by a cold air bleed from the heater intake plenum chamber, so serious rusting along this area is almost unheard of. On very early cars, there may be some corrosion on the front cross member, and in the area just ahead of the rear wings. On the 145 range, there is evidence that if the tail gate is used a lot, some rusting can develop round the hinges. Much of the bright trim is stainless steel, so there should be no problems here.

The engines are extremely rugged, and apart from timing chain rattle and tappet noise, they have exhibited few recurrent troubles. The early petrol injection cars are not as good as the later ones; the Bosch electronic control unit is located under the driving seat (heavy drivers can even "bottom out" on the casing), and this should only be adjusted or repaired by a qualified mechanic. The K-Jetronic system is much better

— and these cars of course can run on 2-star fuel. A point to notice is that if the thermostat fails on the petrol injection cars, and the engine runs too cold, fuel consumption will tend to be excessive, as the system will run on the cold-start rich settings. On the early injection cars, the persistent whine from the fuel pump is annoying, but little can be done to alleviate this. Later cars had revised mountings and insulation.

The foot controls — clutch, brake and accelerator — all tend to be on the heavy side. There is nothing much which can be done about the clutch, but Rudds of Worthing have a modification for the brakes, using the servo from the 164. They also have a modification for the throttle linkage on the earlier injection 140 series cars.

For those who want a really large estate car, the 145 seems to satisfy every need. The two additional rear-facing seats are ideal for children, and do not interfere at all with the total load space when stowed. Volvo dealers now stock a special levelling kit for the rear sus-

pension. Which eliminates "tail sag" when very heavy loads are being carried, or a caravan is being towed. This either runs off its own little compressor, or is pressurized from a garage air line. We saw very few scruffy 145s, yet many appeared to have had quite a tough life. Again, Volvo dealers stock a special two-part dog guard and a specially long roof rack for the 145 range.

The 144 saloons run on 165 x 14in. tyres, which at current discount prices run out at around £22 each; the 145s use a size larger (175 x 14) and these cost about £25 each. On the 164, the tyres are 175HR15s, which will set you back nearly £30 each. None of the cars are hard on tyres, but it will pay to swap them front-to-rear, to minimize the effects of outer shoulder wear on the fronts.

Although the Volvos are inherently fairly straightforward cars, it would be best to select one from a specialist dealer — and ensure that it has been maintained by a Volvo dealer, especially in the case of a petrol injection model. □

## Cost of spares — ex-concessionaires

Component or sub-assembly	144	145	164
Engine assembly (exchange)	£367.37		
Carburettor model	£367.37	£367.37	£475.43
Fuel injection model	£367.37	£367.37	£475.43
Manual gearbox (exchange)	£102.60	£102.60	£145.80
Automatic gearbox (exchange)	£118.80	£118.80	£129.60
Clutch assembly	£28.05	£28.05	£34.62
Differential assembly	£58.88	£58.88	£58.88
Drive-shaft assembly	£36.80	£36.80	£36.80
Front suspension damper	£8.21	£8.21	£8.21
Rear suspension damper	£8.31	£8.31	£8.31
Exhaust system	£38.64	£38.64	£47.02
Front brake pads (set of four)	£6.63	£6.63	£6.63
Rear brake shoes (set of four)	£6.63	£6.63	£6.63
Radiator	£69.36	£69.36	£87.12
Starter motor (exchange)	£32.40	£32.40	£37.81
Alternator (exchange)	£33.48	£33.48	£33.48
Fuel injection pump	£52.91	£52.91	£52.91
Fuel injection control unit (exchange)	£59.40	£59.40	£59.40
Headlamp unit	£3.20	£3.20	£3.20
Front wing panel	£39.04	£39.04	£42.58
Front door shell (complete)	£34.08	£34.08	£34.08
Door sill panel	£12.71	£12.71	£12.71
Windscreen (laminated)	£42.42	£42.42	£61.69
Front bumper (old type)	£39.69	£39.69	£62.18
Front bumper (5 mph type)	£51.87	£51.87	£49.52
Rear bumper (old type)	£39.94	£39.94	£39.94
Rear bumper (5 mph type)	£47.15	£47.15	£47.15

All the above prices include VAT at 8 per cent.

## Approximate selling prices

Price range	144S	144DL	144GL	145S	145GL/E	164	164E
£500-£600	1967						
£600-£700				1968			1969
£700-£800	1968			1969			
£800-£900		1971		1970			1970
£1,000-£1,200	1971						1971
£1,200-£1,400		1972	1971		1972		1972
£1,400-£1,600			1972				1972
£1,600-£1,800	1973					1973	
£1,800-£2,000		1973	1973				1973
£2,000-£2,400		1974		1973			
£2,400-£2,800			1974				1974
£2,800-£3,000				1974			

## Milestones

**August 1966:** 140 (142 two-door, 144 four-door) series launched in Sweden to supplement 120 series, with B18 1,778 c.c. engine in standard (85 bhp) and S forms (115 bhp). Independent wishbone front suspension, live rear axle, with coil springs. Seat belts standard.

**January 1967:** S model 144S first imported into UK.

**September 1967:** Two-door 142 models imported to UK, in standard and S forms.

**May 1968:** Estate cars (145) come to Britain, again in standard and S forms.

**October 1968:** Whole range fitted with B20 series engines; 1,986 c.c.; standard 90 bhp, S 118 bhp. These engines fitted with exhaust emission equipment. Automatic transmission available on 145.

**September 1969:** All models now fitted with head restraints and improved ventilation. Wash/wipe on rear window of 145.

**August 1970:** DL models replace standard and S versions. Wider rim wheels (4.5 to 5in.); overdrive dropped. GL first imported, with Bosch electronic petrol injection, leather trim and sun roof.

**October 1971:** All models get recessed door handles, wood finish on facia. Overdrive standard on GL. 145GL brought into UK.

**September 1972:** New facia on all models, with circular instruments, new heater controls, padded steering wheel.

**October 1973:** Deeper 5 mph-type bumpers across whole range. Petrol injection cars now have Bosch K-Jetronic system. 145E announced.

### 160 Series

**January 1969:** Introduced into UK. Six-cylinder 2,978 c.c. engine, with twin SU carburettors; 130 bhp, with manual or automatic transmission, and power steering standard.

**September 1969:** Fog lamps replace air intakes by grille; integral head restraints and tinted glass standard.

**October 1971:** 164E first imported. All models now with recessed door handles and wood trim on facia.

**October 1973:** E model gets K-Jetronic injection; TS introduced with E engine air conditioning, and headlamp wash/wipe.

## Chassis identification

Date and modification (140 series)	Model	Chassis No.
<b>January 1967:</b> 144S imported into UK with B18 engine	144S	82
<b>March 1967:</b> 144 manual and automatic to UK	144	5934
<b>September 1967:</b> 2-door 142 and 142S models	142	1501
<b>May 1968:</b> First estate cars into UK, in standard and S forms	145	2335
<b>October 1968:</b> B20 engines throughout range;	142	52900
automatic on 145	144	89800
	145	9200
<b>August 1969:</b> 142 ceases importation	142	112399
<b>August 1970:</b> DL replaces standard and S range	144	194140
	145	61600
<b>September 1972:</b> New facia and heater controls	144	340100
	145	153730
<b>October 1973:</b> 5 mph type bumpers; 144E imported	144	428001
	145	210051
<b>160 series</b>		
<b>January 1969:</b> Introduced into UK	164	2870
<b>October 1971:</b> 164E to UK	164	52798
<b>August 1973:</b> 164 Carburettor-engined cars ceased import; final no.	164	102950
<b>October 1973:</b> 164TE introduced	164	102951