

What's your points? By Graham Reid

Contacting your favorite Mini parts supplier (hopefully Heritage Garage) and asking for "a set of points for my 70 whatever Mini" is like calling your local hardware store looking for faucet washer and only telling them your house was built in the 70's.

With so many Minis having received engine swaps or upgrades over the last 50 plus years there is mass confusion when trying to get the correct parts for your Mini. Even the most knowledgeable parts staff needs your help in identifying what is correct for your car. Last week seemed to be distributor week and prompted me to come up with the following pictures showing the differences in distributors, points and caps.

Our parts books define the different options by year and distributor model number but as I said engine swaps etc make that no longer accurate. The easiest option is to give your supplier the model number located on the distributor body. Failing that, I will outline the basic differences in Lucas distributors as follows:



Above: 23D (no vacuum advance)



Above: 45D (with vacuum advance)

Early engines up to 1974 used the 23D (no vacuum advance) and 25D (with vacuum advance). They can be easily recognized by the way the coil wire connects to the distributor body. The plastic insulator has the lower half in the alloy body and the top half is notched into the cap. All the later 45D and 59D units have a wire that passes through a rubber grommet in a round hole lower down in the alloy body as pictured.



There are 3 basic designs of points for the Lucas range of A series distributors. The early 23-25d type has a threaded stud where the condenser and primary wire attaches. The later

choices are typically described as red points for 45D or blue points for the 59D based on the color of the operating cam although the color cannot always be the final factor in deciding what you have.



The visual difference in the two is that the "blue points" have an added white plastic horseshoe protruding from the base of the pivot point. This engages into a pin sticking up from the distributor base and is part of a designed in self cleaning action.

Maybe now you can understand why asking for "a set of points for my Mini" is followed by 20 questions from your parts supplier.