

“Getting Started”

A brief guide for the “first-time” Opel owner

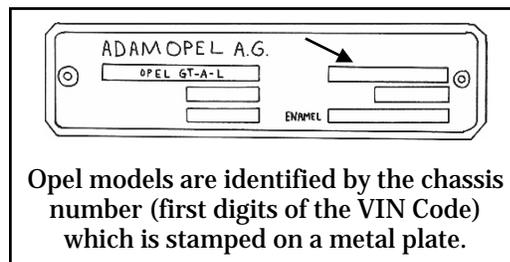
Here at Opel GT Source, we hear many common questions from first-time Opel owners, so we have compiled answers based on our experiences as a guide for your reference.



(1) Identify the Model and Year

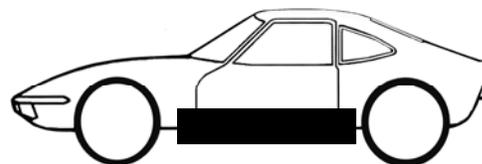
The best place to start with any Opel is to identify and verify the actual model type and model year of the car.

This is best done by checking the chassis VIN plate, which is located on Opels under the hood (and sometimes also on a plate on the dashtop or on a sticker visible on the driver’s side door), then comparing its serial number to data found in the original service books from General Motors (or alternately from online sources). Legally, you also need to verify this number matches the vehicle title.



(2) Chassis Inspection

A critical step is determining if the chassis is acceptable for the vehicle to be a restoration candidate, or if it is better used as a “parts car” donor for another body. Use a magnet to locate hidden body damage and note minor issues often present in these 40-year-old steel cars. Beyond that, check critical chassis and frame areas to make sure that rust has not compromised them.



Critical Opel GT Rust Area

Check the Rocker Panels beneath the doors on a GT.

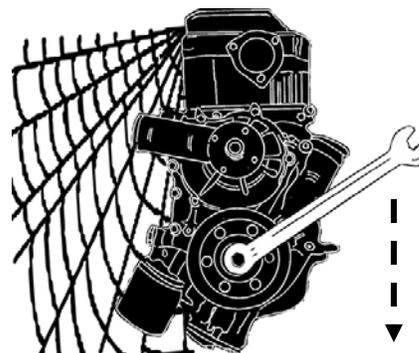
On a GT you should scrutinize the “rocker panels” (horizontal areas below the doors) as significant rust present there indicates a car that will be difficult and potentially expensive to restore. On the Manta/Ascona series, check the front frame rail on the driver’s side of the car to verify battery acid has not rusted it out.

(3) Drivetrain Issues

Particularly on a vehicle that has been parked or stored for a long time, you can expect to find a few common issues.

Plan to rock and roll the car back and forth a few times if the brakes, tires, or clutch parts are sticking. Use only moderate pressure on the pedals at first if necessary to move the car, and only use a rubber mallet (not a hammer) to strike the brake drums if required to get the rear shoes to retract.

A critical area is the engine. First squirt some engine oil (or a 2-second spray of WD-40) into each cylinder, to help lubricate any s piston rings that may be sticking to the cylinder bores. Then place a 19mm wrench on the front crankshaft pulley bolt and see if it will turn by hand. Repeat this process for hours or even days as needed, before using the starter to turn the engine, so that you don’t cause any internal engine damage to the thin rings.



Engine Evaluation

Always turn by hand with a 19mm wrench, to avoid damage

(4) First Steps

Plan to drain and to replace all the fluids in the car.
This includes fuel, coolant, brake fluid, gear oil and/or auto trans fluid.

Additionally, plan to:

- Clean out the gas tank using B-12 Chemtool, or take it to a local shop.
- Rebuild or replace the carburetor, preferably with a new model.
- Back-flush the cooling system, including the heater core and engine block
- Replace brake system parts as needed including rubber components, then add new Dot 3 or Dot 4 fluid and bleed all air from the system.
- Re-gasket and/or reseal drivetrain components, including transmission or rear axle as needed, and consider engine re-assembly later if warranted.
- Replace the battery cables and fuses, then make a list when engaging the electrical system for the first time, noting areas of non-operation .

(5) Critical Components

Classic Opel GT's in particular have some trouble areas, which need to be inspected before a vehicle is brought into operation. Check out the "tips" section of the Opel GT Source website for information regarding:

-Headlight Wire replacement

(Consult instructions available online on how to rewire your harness with common wires, electrical tape and solder, for about \$10-\$12)

-Fuel Tank Vent Hose/Seal replacement

(Consult our part guides for available replacement parts)

-Ignition Switch operation and replacement

(We offer a new ignition switch as part #5060N)

-Replacement Keys and Blanks

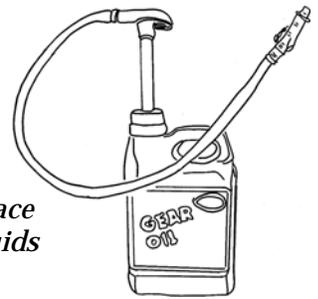
(We offer new replacement key blanks for the GT, which can be used by a local locksmith to make an "impression cut" to fit your existing locks).

(6) Access Reliable Technical Information

Start by getting your copy of the Opel GT Source "Part List/Project Guide" for technical information you can rely on, including the many critical year-to-year part variations which may affect your vehicle.

Then consider obtaining copies of the available Opel service manuals, but be aware that none of these are 100% accurate for classic vehicle operation in modern times. These are best used for general information, particularly when referenced in combination with technical notes that are supplied by Opel GT Source with many of the parts we sell.

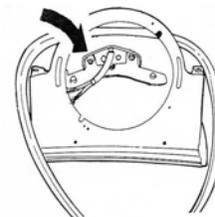
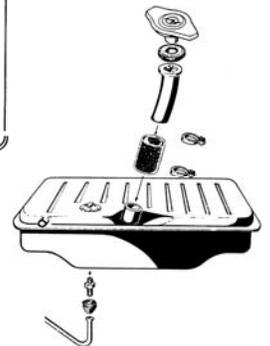
There are other sources of information, but all should be consulted with caution. Factory illustration guides include errors and omissions, and restoration shops may try to up-sell you pricey parts and services. While venues such as social media are ideal for networking, many discussions there also include un-disclosed marketing-based messages, under-informed technical opinions and "personality" based comments. When in doubt, consider sending an email to Opel GT Source and we'll do our best to clarify some of the issues that are often confusing.



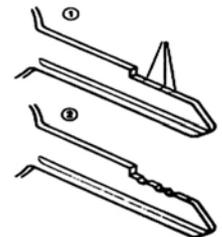
Replace all fluids



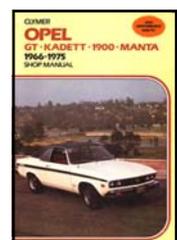
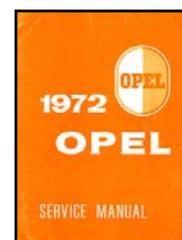
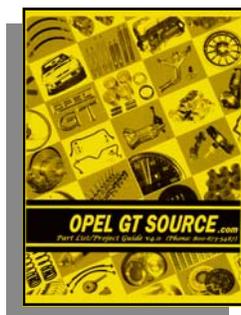
Clean and evaluate all fuel system parts



Check Safety Items & Areas



Have Keys Cut if needed



(7) Stay Local

Limit your first drives to just going down the block or maybe at most to a local store. Often times repeated short trips will reveal problem areas that you can deal with when you return home. Make notes of necessary repairs and consult our part lists and other instructions for additional guidance. Plan on being surprised at least once or twice, so that your initial excitement will extend to performing unanticipated repairs (rather than frustration), and don't take any sort of a road trip until your vehicle operation has proven to be reliable.

Daily and Seasonal operation will also involve:

- Taking measurements and making notes during maintenance checks
- Consulting our tune-up notes and specifications to make adjustments
- Place a clean cardboard sheet under the car overnight, to spot any fluid leaks.
- Considering upgrading components for your cooling system and heater
- Planning for refurbishment of drivetrain, suspension or braking systems
- Planning on some component service by hired professionals

(8) Money-Saving approaches

There are a few smart moves you can take to maximize the Opel dollars that can go into repairing and upgrading your vehicle, rather than elsewhere.

-Classic Car Insurance

(Consult your agent or firms like Hagerty, Grundy, Heacock or others to see if you are eligible for this reduced-cost coverage, which sometimes is less than \$100 per year! When applicable, "non-op" registration in some states can also save you money.)

-Do It Yourself Repairs

(Most Opel owners use their own time and tools to get the most from their car).

-Hire Professional Services cautiously

(Evaluate firms by their reputation with prior clients and how they communicate with you.. Verify their mechanics will actually read any Opel-specific instructions that are provided. Always get estimates in writing in advance—including completion dates, and consider getting a second opinion. Walk away if you feel pressured to make large unplanned purchases)

-Make Smart Purchases

(Combining multiple small part buys into single orders with us can avoid higher shipment costs. Consider savings from buying higher-quality parts, so you don't have to repair an item twice. Consider buying a second "parts car" if one is for sale locally, to save on used part purchases. Carry metric tools and critical parts, like belts, pumps and gaskets, as spares on road trips).

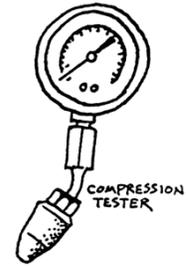
Plan Your Upgrades, for Even More Fun !

Once you have a reliable classic Opel, then the real fun begins!

Have a closer look at available upgrades, including Opel GT Source's selection of engine, suspension, braking, and other higher-performance parts, and make your plans for additional projects that will enhance your enjoyment of your vehicle. Make notes of specific identification marks and styles of your drivetrain components, so you can verify fitment of critical required parts when you place orders with us.

Also have a look at other classic Opels, including online or at specialty car shows, to get ideas on how you would like any interior or body/paint upgrades to appear.

See our other "tips" on the Opel GT Source website for additional information.



Use of a few basic diagnostic tools, will save you time and money during the life of your classic car



Exercise caution if hiring mechanics



Doing your own repairs will help you build confidence with yourself, as well as with your vehicle.