

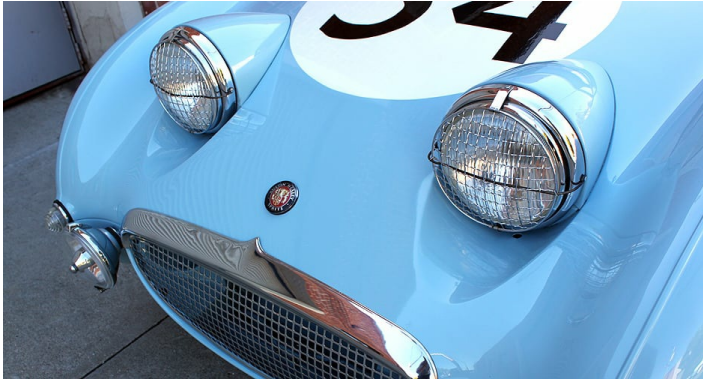
CLASSIC DRIVER

[Eye-openers: The most dazzling headlight designs in history](#)

Lead

Headlights not only illuminate the road ahead; they are also a focal point, the 'face' of the car, so they're one of the most important aspects of its design. Here are some of the most unusual headlights in history...

Permanent smile: Austin-Healey 'Frogeye' Sprite



Arriving in the late 50s, the dinky Sprite was sporty and cheap – but for many, its biggest draw was the cute grin formed by its grille and bonnet-mounted headlights. Mounted further inboard than is usual, the lights which gave the Sprite its popular nickname were originally intended to pop up from the bonnet (much like the later Porsche 928), but the bean-counters eventually had their way.

Vision of a Goddess: Citroën DS



Citroën couldn't have hoped for a better reception for the DS at its launch in 1955. But the praise wasn't only for its sleek styling; it also had a raft of revolutionary features. After 12 years on sale, the 'Goddess' was given quad headlamps with a self-levelling function and – more importantly – the ability to swivel up to 80deg to follow the car's steering arc.

Shutter flutter: Alfa Romeo Montreal



In the age of some of the most striking concept cars, Marcello Gandini penned an Alfa Romeo design study on behalf of his employer, Bertone. Displaying a number of features which became signature Gandini flourishes, the concept also had grilles partly covering each headlight. These were so well received that they were carried over to the Montreal production cars of 1970 - albeit now retractable, but no less characterful.



Double trouble: Cizeta-Moroder V16T



The V16T represented what the Diablo might have become, had its original lead designer Marcello Gandini got his way. Among the highlights of its appropriately extrovert appearance are the pair of double-stacked pop-up headlights, perhaps a perfect example of 80s excess (much like the V16 engine perched behind the occupants).

Top of the Pop-ups: Porsche 928



The 928 might not have become the 911 replacement Porsche intended it to be, but the styling could hardly have summed up the 80s any better. The near-hexagonal doors and rounded rear were simply unmistakable; though, for us, its pièce de résistance was the pair of pop-up headlights which looked skyward when dormant, and rose to reveal their bullet-shaped nacelles when in use.



Photos: Chris Kelley/Fantasy Junction (Austin-Healey), Marc Vorgers (Citroën), Alfa Romeo (Alfa), Cizeta, Axel Schmies (Porsche)

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