

McLAREN F1

COLLECTOR PROTOCOL · FUEL CELL · STRUCTURE · MSO FILE · ORIGINALITY

Compiled from public sources, the McLaren F1, its Model File and specialist review · Personal use only · v2.1

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This checklist gives an enthusiast the context to follow what is being discussed around one of the most valuable collector transactions in the market: inspection reports, provenance files, auction descriptions. It replaces nothing. The McLaren F1 runs entirely outside the normal range — a fleet of 106 cars, transactions through private networks, auction houses and the factory itself, and a service world with one address: McLaren Special Operations. At this level our standing recommendation is absolute: MSO, or an inspection authority the collector market itself recognizes on this exact car. Not a specialist: the specialist. Without that verdict, do not touch the car.

A · PROVENANCE, MSO FILE & PAPERWORK

- ☐ Identity first: Road Car, LM, GT — chassis number against the 106-car record; LM-spec conversions distinguished from the five original LMs.
- ☐ The MSO file: continuous factory service history — the campaign matrix of this car. Gaps identified, dated, priced.
- ☐ FUEL CELL date documented: replacement history, next due date — an out-of-date cell is open work.
- ☐ Carbon structure: accident and repair history complete, with engineering documentation — or the file closes.
- ☐ US cars: Ameritech configuration, re-conversion history, show-or-display paperwork where applicable.
- ☐ Completeness inventory: tools, book pack, luggage set, modem, keys — itemized against delivery specification.
- ☐ Ownership chain and storage conditions: the preservation story is the value story.
- ☐ Clutch adjustment history: the record of how the car was actually driven.
- ☐ Paint and gold-foil documentation: originality of both on record.
- ☐ Tyre and battery ages documented — time doctrine, not kilometres.

B · AT THE CAR · WITH THE SPECIALIST

- ☐ Cold start filmed: the V12 is the robust part — anomalies count double.
- ☐ Fuel system inspected around the cell: age evidence, lines, smell test — no drive on an expired cell.
- ☐ Monocoque and underbody read by carbon-competent eyes: delamination, repairs, grounding.
- ☐ Gold foil sighted: originality, disturbance, previous-work traces.
- ☐ Clutch: adjustment state, take-up, triple-plate behaviour — sensitivity is design, wear is history.
- ☐ Gearbox: synchros, cable precision through the gate.
- ☐ Airbrake cycled: function, end positions, hydraulics.
- ☐ Magnesium wheels walked closely: corrosion, hairlines, runout evidence.
- ☐ Suspension: joint and bearing play — age overhaul status assessed.
- ☐ Brakes: discs, lines, calipers — period performance understood as design.
- ☐ Cabin: central-seat trim, instruments, A/C (average by design), modem present.
- ☐ Every finding photographed for the collector dossier.

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C · SPECIALIST SCOPE (MINIMUM)

- ☐ MSO — or an inspection authority the collector market recognizes on this exact car: nothing less.
- ☐ Fuel-cell status verified against records; replacement scheduled where due.
- ☐ Carbon structure: monocoque, body, underbody — NDT on any doubt.
- ☐ Engine: condition-based audit — compression/leakdown on doubt, fluids analysed.
- ☐ Clutch measured and adjusted per factory procedure; gearbox assessed.
- ☐ Suspension overhaul status itemized: arms, bearings, dampers, ball joints.
- ☐ Magnesium wheels by runout and NDT on doubt; tyres by DOT and specification.
- ☐ Airbrake hydraulics function-tested; brake system aged-checked.
- ☐ Electrics: battery regime, ECUs, instruments; modem function noted.
- ☐ Originality verification against delivery specification; paint report archived.
- ☐ Collector dossier assembled: the file is the deliverable.
- ☐ PPI cost at this level follows the car, not a rate card — budget at collector scale and obtain quotes.

D · PRICE & INVESTIGATION ITEMS

The V12 is the quiet certainty: the money lives in the cell, the structure, the MSO file and completeness.

- ☐ Fuel cell due: >€70,000 — the first negotiation block of the model.
- ☐ MSO-file gaps: priced as authenticity risk, not as paperwork.
- ☐ Clutch due: five figures — adjustment history read before the number.
- ☐ Suspension overhaul on time-expired components: itemized by factory quote.
- ☐ Magnesium wheel findings: replacement, not repair.
- ☐ Completeness gaps (luggage, tools, modem, books): sourced and priced — completeness is value.
- ☐ Any structure finding: engineering quote before purchase, or no purchase.
- ☐ Negotiate from the collector dossier: never from the odometer alone.

E · RED FLAGS · WALK-AWAY OR ESCALATION

- Fuel-cell age unknown, or an expired cell presented as fine.
- Structure repair without engineering documentation.
- Service history outside the MSO world, presented as equivalent.
- Disturbed gold foil with no story on record.
- An LM-spec conversion offered as an original LM.
- Historic tyres presented as usable.
- Completeness claims without the inventory.
- A seller who resists the factory-level inspection.
- A car whose findings cannot be named, quantified and priced.

F · FIRST WEEK OF OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Collector dossier archived: structure report, fuel-cell schedule, clutch measurement, paint map, inventory.
- ☐ MSO relationship established; maintenance calendar set by time doctrine.
- ☐ Storage, battery regime and insurance arranged — the F1 is owned through its file.

“The S70/2 will outlive us all. Buy the fuel-cell date, the carbon, the MSO file and the completeness — that is the McLaren F1.”

Deep dive: Supercar Models Paper 49 · Model File 49 · Owner's Intelligence series.