TOYOTA SPRINTER TRUENO

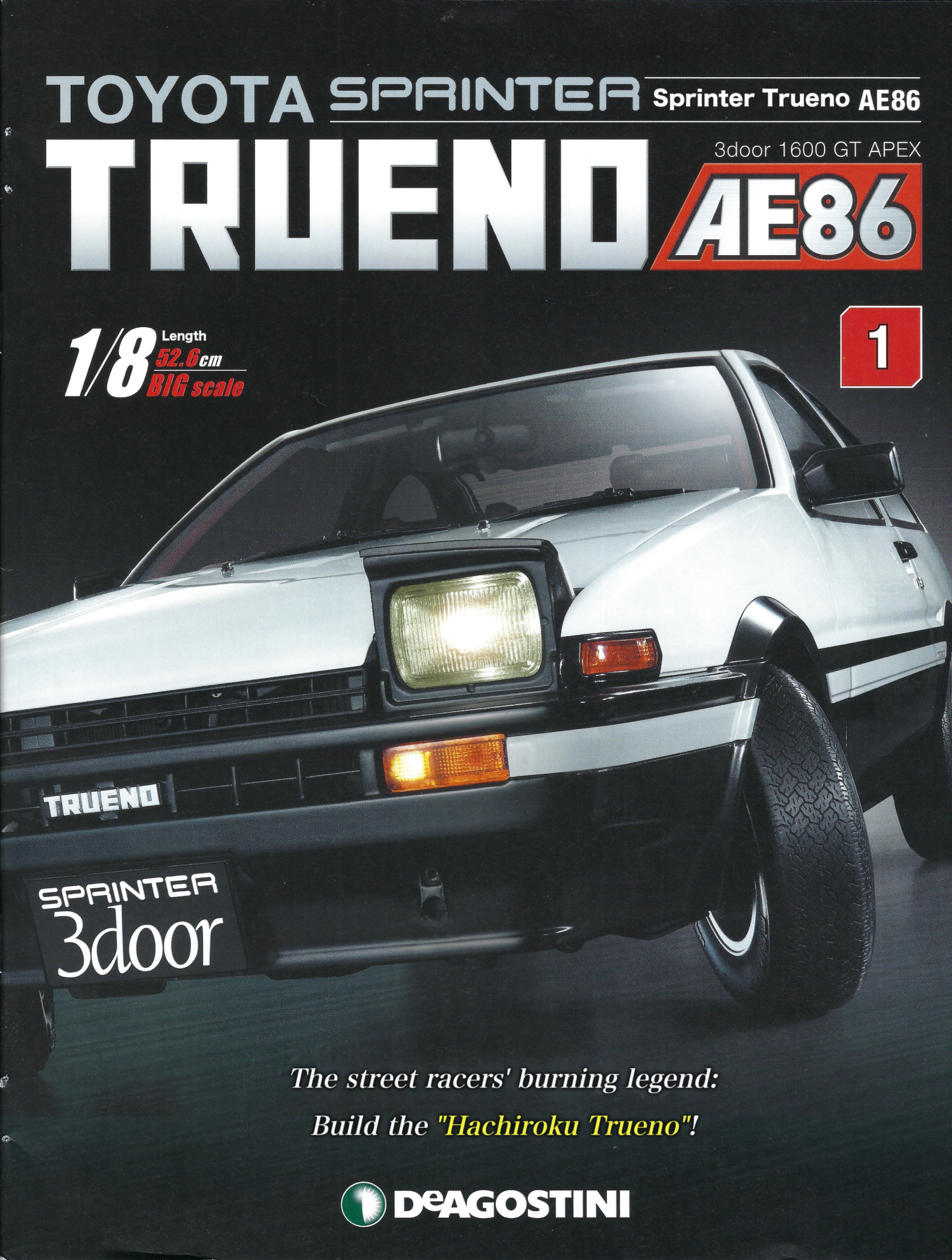
Sprinter Trueno AE86

3door 1600 GT APEX

AE86

1/8 Length 52.6cm BIG scale

1



The street racers' burning legend:

Build the "Hachiroku Trueno"!

DeAGOSTINI

TOYOTA SPRINTER Sprinter Trueno AE86
TRUENO 3door 1600 GT APEX AE86

Weekly Sprinter Trueno AE86 Issue 1

[Published] July 19, 2022
[Published by] DeAgostini Japan Co., Ltd.
〒104-0054 EDGE Kachidoki, 5-2-15 Kachidoki, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
[Publisher] Kenji Tani
[Editor] Ikumi Sato
[Editorial cooperation] Family Magazine Co., Ltd.
[Art direction] Takashi Yasutani, Kenji Imafuku
[Text] Hiromune Sano (P1-5)
[Photos] Toyota Motor, Toyota Automobile Museum, Yukio Yoshimi, Hajime Yasukawa
[Printing] Daimaru Graphics Co., Ltd.
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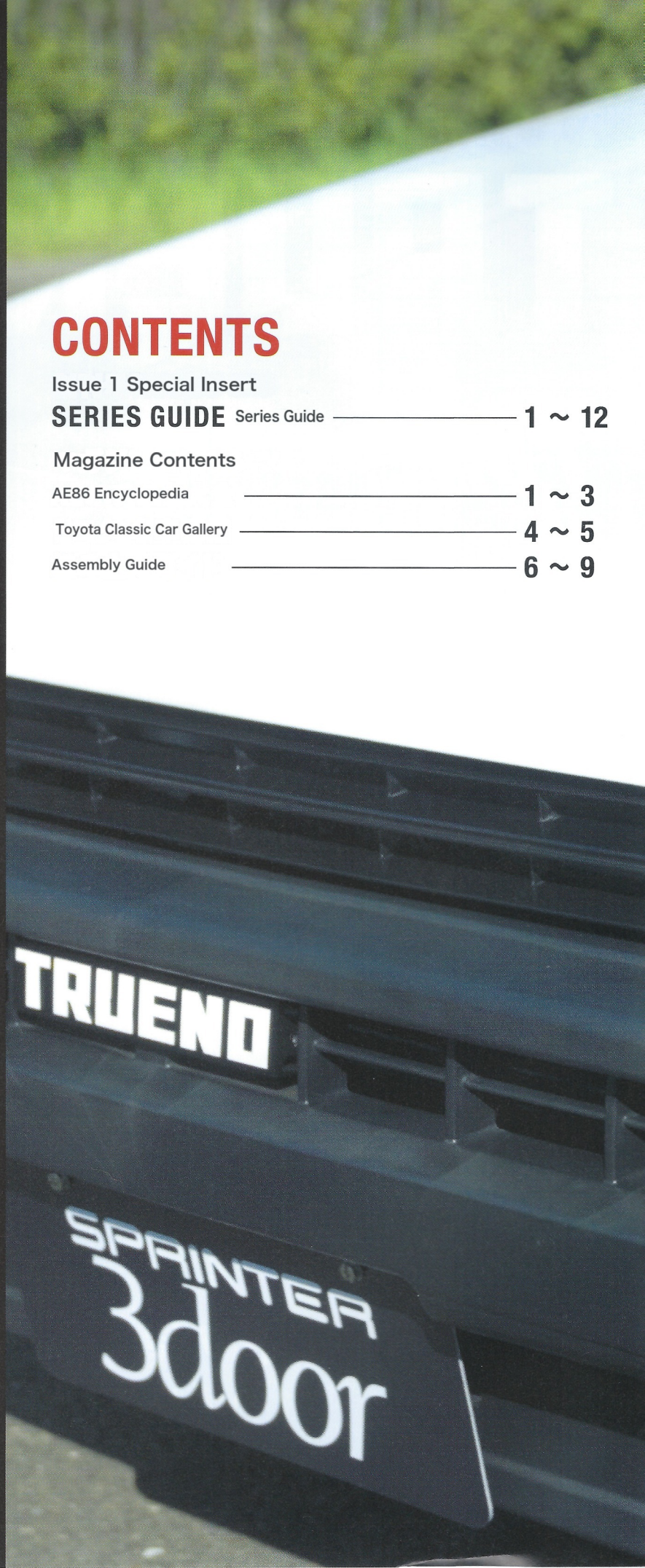
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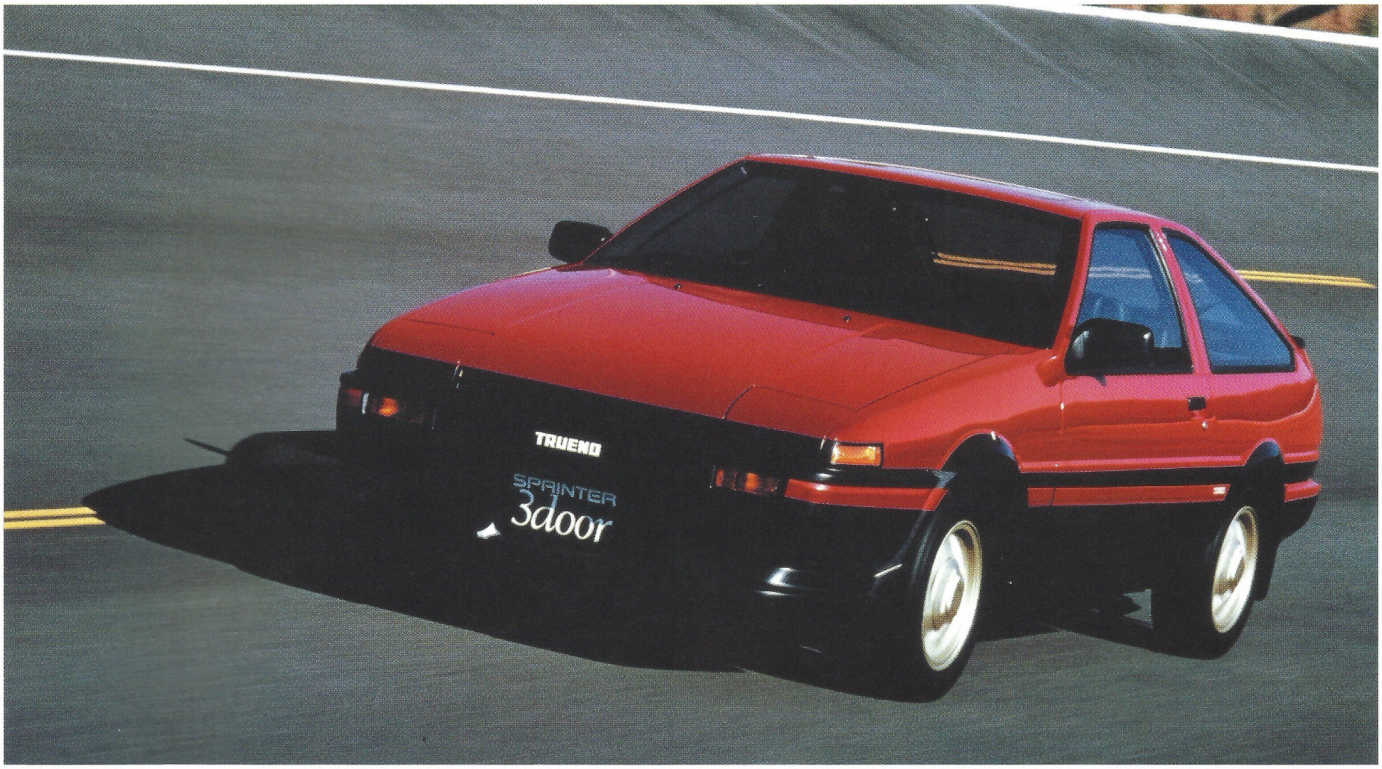
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A catalog photo from the Sprinter Trueno AE86's launch, showing off its high-speed performance on a banked high-speed test track. The catchphrase was "SEXY Trueno." Small coupes of the day favored fastback bodies with a steeply raked rear window, and the Trueno's catalogs, too, mostly featured the 3-door.

Sprinter Trueno Birth of the AE86

The Hachiroku: last of the rear-drive Levins/Truenos

Say "86 = Hachiroku" today and most people think of the name of a sports car sold by Toyota. The first-generation 86 went on sale in 2012, and in summer 2021 it received a full model change to the second generation.

Originally, though, the Toyota car known by the nickname 86 (Hachiroku) was the Sprinter Trueno (hereafter, Trueno) launched in May 1983, the fourth generation of the Trueno. What brought the car, which ended production in 1987, back into the spotlight from the late 1990s on was the famous manga Initial D*. Because the characters in that work called the fourth-generation Trueno, also the hero's beloved car, the 86 (Hachiroku), the nickname became widely known.

That nickname, 86 (Hachiroku), comes from the fourth-generation Trueno's model code, "AE86," given to its most powerful version, the car with the 1.6-liter four-cylinder DOHC engine. Within the same fourth-generation Trueno, the model code of the milder car with the 1.5-liter SOHC engine is "AE85." Model codes like these are, by rights, nothing more than code names, a kind of cipher used only among insiders.



The distinctive electronic display meter was standard at launch on the 3-door GT APEX, but even on the GT APEX it was an option on the 2-door. Equipment choices like these hint at how the 3-door and 2-door were each pictured back then.

* Initial D (by Shuichi Shigeno) is a hit manga serialized in Weekly Young Magazine from 1995 to 2013. The bold exploits of hero Takumi Fujiwara's AE86 Trueno, the Fujiwara Tofu Shop car, set off a worldwide "Hachiroku" revival.

However, among Japanese car enthusiasts it is customary to refer to particular models by their model codes, and not just this AE86 (Hachiroku).

That's because even the Trueno alone, to take one example, went through six full model changes over the 28 years from 1972 to 2000. In other words, broadly divided, there were seven generations of Trueno in all, and each generation also came in several variations. This, of course, is true of almost every car in the world. So if you try to pin down one car, new or used, by its everyday product name alone, you end up needing a roundabout phrase like "the △△ grade of the ○th-generation ××." A model code, however, made up of symbols and numbers that differ by generation, and even by grade and mechanical makeup, can point to one specific car in a single word. Seen that way, in a conversation between enthusiasts who both know the subject, the model code is indeed a very handy way to put it.

Now, the Trueno was one of the variations offered on the Sprinter, a compact passenger car that Toyota once built and sold, and within the Sprinter family it held the position of the sporty coupe. In the 1980s, coupes were nothing less than the go-to car for young people. The Sprinter, for better or worse, had a strong family-car image, and the sub-name "Trueno" was given to set the coupe apart and give it a youthful, stylish flair. The Trueno was first offered on the second-generation Sprinter, launched in 1970 (the Trueno itself was added in 1972).



The fourth-gen Sprinter came not only as the 3-door, whose popularity soared thanks to the manga, but also as the 2-door shown here, more popular when new.

At first, though, not every coupe model was a Trueno. Even among the Sprinter coupes, Trueno was a special name given only to the fastest model, the one with the high-performance DOHC engine. The first model to break sharply with that naming "rule" was none other than the fourth-generation Trueno, which includes the AE86 (Hachiroku).

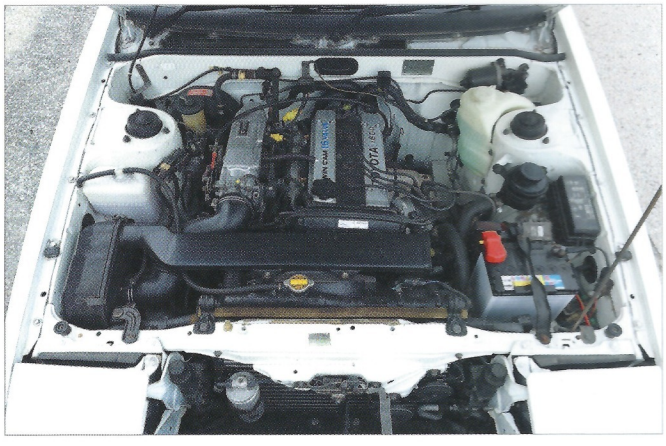
Even as the Sprinter went FF, only the Trueno stayed FR

In short, the early Trueno was a special model, a title bestowed only on the highest-performance version of the Sprinter's sports coupe. Specifically, only the models with the 1.6-liter four-cylinder DOHC engine (2T-G), the 2-door coupe in the first and second generations and the 3-door fastback coupe with its steeply raked tailgate in the third, were the ones that bore the Trueno name.

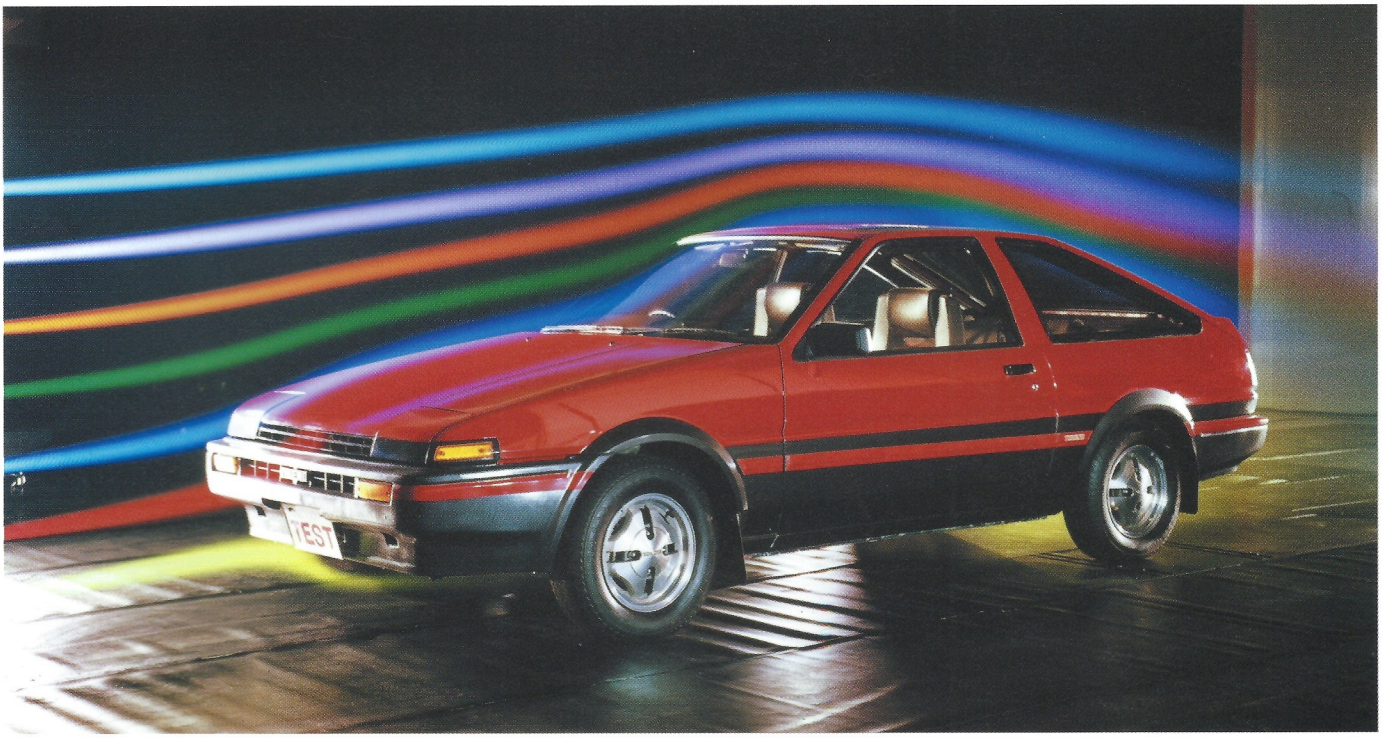
With the fourth generation, however, that old rule was overturned, and every Sprinter with a coupe body was given the Trueno name. What's more, this Trueno came in two body styles, 2-door and 3-door, so at its launch in May 1983 there were no fewer than nine models bearing the Trueno name (more if you count transmission differences). Given that until then the Trueno had basically been a special presence, just one model in the series, this was a historic turning point.

On top of that, while the base Sprinter switched to a new-generation FF (front-wheel drive) layout, the fourth-generation Trueno, though part of the same Sprinter series, kept the traditional FR (rear-wheel drive) layout. That is the other big story of the fourth-generation Trueno.

In the early 1980s, when this car came out, compact passenger cars around the world were switching to FF one after another,


The engine known as the "4A-G," which debuted with the fourth-generation Sprinter Trueno (AE86). Its exact model code is 4A-GEU, and it made 130 ps from 1.6 liters.


Sport seats with a semi-bucket shape that look like they really hold you. This orange seat upholstery was also groundbreaking for its day.



The Sprinter Trueno's biggest difference from its twin, the Corolla Levin, is of course its retractable headlamps. Many pricey supercars of the day used the same kind of lights, which also stirred the hearts of young car fans. Partly for that reason, the fourth-generation Trueno strongly promoted its excellent aerodynamics.

an era you might call the "dawn of FF." Still, while FF clearly had the edge in cabin space and straight-line stability, paired with a high-performance engine its steering feel and control at the limit still fell short of FR... or so FF was judged at the time. Perhaps because Toyota's cautious corporate culture waits for everything to mature, the Trueno alone, as the sports model, deliberately kept the conventional FR layout, which had been refined to its peak. In fact, much of its basic chassis design, such as the wheelbase and the basic form of the front and rear suspension, was shared with the previous Trueno.

The Legendary 4A-G Engine Debuted with the AE86

The last topic is the series' crowning achievement, the 1.6-liter DOHC engine. Replacing the 2T-G series used in the first- through third-generation Truenos, the fourth-generation Trueno got an all-new 1.6-liter DOHC engine, the "4A-G" (its official designation at the time was 4A-GEU). To repeat: even within the same fourth generation, only the Truenos fitted with this 4A-G engine were given the AE86 (Hachiroku) model code.

From then on, the 4A-G went into many models as Toyota's main compact sports engine, and evolved versions with five valves and supercharging appeared. But when its successor, the "2ZZ-GE," arrived in 1999, it took over as the main engine, and the 4A-G left the market around 2000–2002. The seventh-generation Levin, which ended production in 2000, kept a 4A-G-series engine to the very end. The Trueno, which had walked alongside the 4A-G since the AE86 (Hachiroku), vanished together with the 4A-G.

Thanks partly to the manga, of all the many AE86 (Hachiroku) models the Trueno 3-door is by far the most popular today. When new, however, its sibling the Corolla Levin, which shared its basic design, outsold the Trueno. What's more, at the time the stiffer, lighter 2-door was more popular than the 3-door because it drove better. One view is that today's high prices for the Trueno 3-door stem from its originally low sales, which made it all the rarer.

Sprinter Trueno 3-door GT APEX (AE86) Main Specifications

Years sold	1983–1987	Max power	130ps／6600rpm
Length	4205mm	Max torque	15.2kg-m／5200rpm
Width	1625mm	Transmission	5MT／4AT
Height	1335mm	Engine / drive layout	Front longitudinal / RWD
Wheelbase	2400mm	Tires front	185/70HR13
Curb weight	940kg	Tires rear	185/70HR13
Engine	4A-GEU	Seats	5
Displacement	1587cc	Price (at launch)	¥1,563,000



The fourth-generation Corolla Levin with the 1.6-liter DOHC engine: the other "AE86 (Hachiroku)" alongside the Trueno. Shown is the 2-door in top-grade GT APEX trim. The grille panel bearing the LEVIN logo between the left and right headlamps opened automatically once engine coolant temperature passed a set level (it could also be opened and closed by hand).

[Corolla Levin (AE86)]

Almost a Trueno Underneath: Twins from Different Dealers

Many people probably know that the Sprinter Trueno (hereafter "Trueno") has a twin that is nearly identical as a car in mechanicals, performance and features. That twin is the Corolla Levin (hereafter "Levin"). The Levin also came in versions with the 1.6-liter DOHC engine (4A-GEU), and their model code was likewise "AE86," the same as the Trueno's. So when car fans say "A-E-Hachiroku," it is best taken as the collective name for this fourth-generation Levin and the Trueno together.

For many years Toyota succeeded with a sales approach known as the "multi-channel strategy." It deliberately ran several networks selling Toyota cars in the same areas, each selling different models. As a result, among Toyota cars sold in Japan, there were quite a few twins that were essentially the same car underneath, differing only slightly in detail design. The Corolla and Sprinter are a typical example: the Corolla was sold exclusively by "Corolla Stores," the Sprinter by the now-defunct "Auto Stores."

The Levin and Trueno have exactly the same relationship. The two differ only in front-end design, the internal layout of the taillamps (the basic shape is shared), and the name logos applied here and there; in fact they are effectively the same car. In network sales power, though, Corolla Stores had traditionally been stronger than Auto Stores, and the Corolla always outsold the Sprinter. The same goes for the Trueno and Levin: when new, the Levin sold more, just like the Corolla sedan. Because of this history, the Levin is said to far outnumber the Trueno among the used cars that survive today.

Spotting the Levin by Its Face

The Levin's biggest difference from the Trueno is its front-end design. Where the Trueno has distinctive pop-up retractable headlights, the Levin, as the photo shows, has ordinary fixed, rectangular headlamps. Still, since the two were twins at almost the same price, it was decided that "the Levin also needs high tech to rival the Trueno's retractable headlamps," and an "aerodynamic grille" was built in between the Levin's headlamps. This device opened automatically when engine coolant temperature rose above 85°C, and was provided as equipment exclusive to the top-grade GT APEX.

Among fourth-generation Levins, the 1.6-liter DOHC models (= AE86) came in three grades at launch. The top model was the "GT APEX," mentioned several times already, with 13-inch aluminum wheels, the aerodynamic grille



By today's standards it is far from roomy, but there was space for four young people to spend time together in good company.



Naturally, the Levin was also offered as a 3-door, just like the Trueno. Pictured: the GT APEX.

grille, a digital meter and more came as exclusive equipment. In contrast, the affordable grade was the "GT": its wheels were steel, and the sports seats and sports steering wheel were dropped. The most distinctive of all was the "GTV." It got the sports seats and sports steering wheel, plus higher-performance 14-inch low-profile tires than even the GT APEX, while boldly omitting comfort features such as power steering, bronze-tinted glass and the various warning systems. It was a grade built purely for driving.

Today, the two-tone paint that is synonymous with the AE86 Levin/Trueno was exclusive to the top-of-the-line GT APEX. At the time, the bumpers, enlarged to meet new crash-safety standards, were made black on every model so they would not look heavy, but this gave the whole car a cheap look. The GT APEX turned the black bumpers to its advantage, introducing a two-tone scheme with the entire lower half of the body in black.



With fewer openings, the 2-door is stiffer and lighter than the 3-door. Young buyers of the day also cared little for hatchbacks, so the 2-door reportedly sold better new. The front and rear spoilers shown were a 1984 option.

The AE86 Levin of the day (and the AE86 Trueno too) was praised above all for the high-revving performance of its cutting-edge 4A-G engine. Its FR chassis, by contrast, could be called an improved version of the previous generation's, and car magazines of the time often judged that "it has true FR controllability, but its handling limits are no higher than the latest FF cars." Yet it stayed on the market as an affordable FR sports car even as its rivals went FF one after another, and its modest limits, unpopular with the experts, actually made it easier for amateur drivers to throw around... For reasons like these, the AE86 Levin and Trueno kept strong support until production ended in 1987. Since then they have remained prized as rare cars, and are still sought after on the used-car market today.

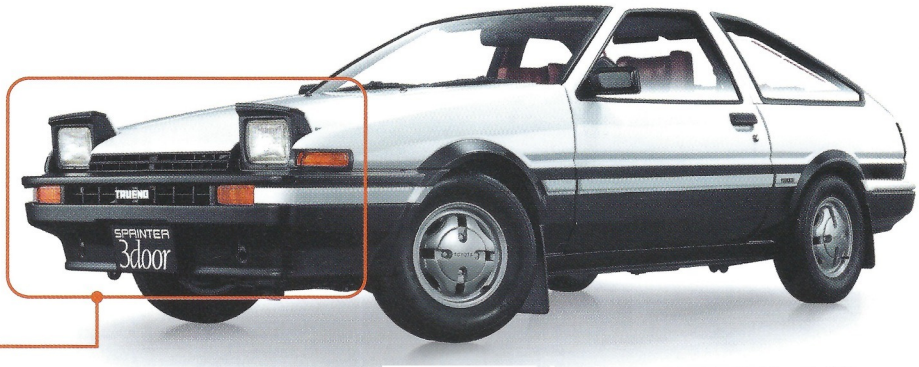
Corolla Levin 2-door GT APEX (AE86) Main Specifications

Years sold	1983 ~ 1987	Max power	130ps / 6600rpm
Length	4180mm	Max torque	15.2kgm / 5200rpm
Width	1625mm	Transmission	5MT / 4AT
Height	1335mm	Engine / drive layout	Front longitudinal / RWD
Wheelbase	2400mm	Tires front	185/70HR13
Curb weight	925kg	Tires rear	185/70HR13
Engine	4A-GEU	Seats	5
Displacement	1587cc	Price (at launch)	¥1,523,000

Issue 1

Building the Front End

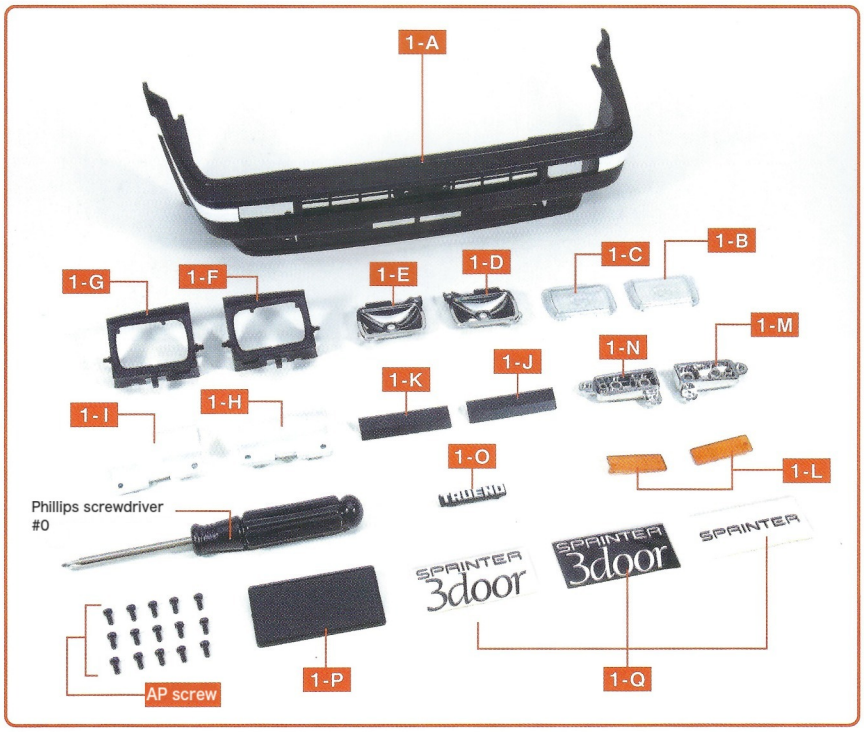
We start with the retractable headlamps that give the Trueno its character! Build carefully, keeping track of which parts are left and right.



*"Left" and "right" in part names and in the Assembly Guide are as seen from the driver's seat: "right (R)" is the driver's side and "left (L)" the passenger's side.

Watch the assembly on video **Check!**

Easy access from your smartphone



1-A	Front bumper
1-B	Headlamp lens (L)
1-C	Headlamp lens (R)
1-D	Headlamp reflector (L)
1-E	Headlamp reflector (R)
1-F	Headlamp housing (L)
1-G	Headlamp housing (R)
1-H	Retractable headlamp cover (L)
1-I	Retractable headlamp cover (R)
1-J	Retractable headlamp garnish (L)
1-K	Retractable headlamp garnish (R)
1-L	Front turn-signal lens ×2
1-M	Front turn-signal housing (L)
1-N	Front turn-signal housing (R)
1-O	TRUENO emblem
1-P	License plate
1-Q	License sticker ×3
AP screw	(1.7×4mm) ×15 (3 spare)
Included	Phillips screwdriver #0

Screw types and storing spare screws

This magazine names its screws with two letters, such as "AP screw," "SP screw" and "BM screw," by the shape of the head and thread and by length. The numbers in brackets in the parts list give the size as screw diameter × length (mm). Every screw has been chosen to suit the part it fixes and the material it holds, so always use the screw specified. Sort spare screws by type into zip-top plastic bags, and they will come in handy if a screw goes missing.



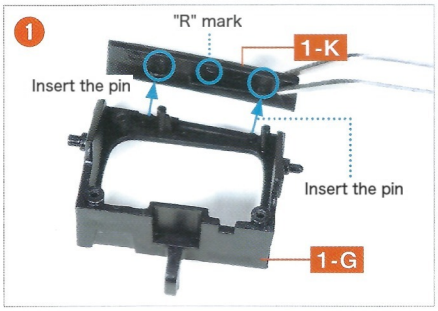
Examples of the screws used in this series. Issue 1 uses only AP screws, but later builds will use screws of many lengths and shapes. Each screw is named with two letters that reflect its head shape, thread pitch, and the material and purpose of what it fixes.

Tweezers for precise work

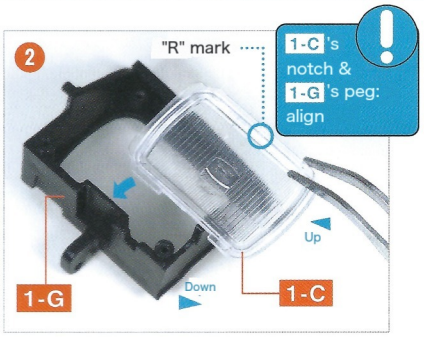
Fine-tipped tweezers not only grip small parts firmly, they also help whenever you want to position something precisely while checking that it is level and square, as when applying this issue's license stickers. It's worth having a pair.



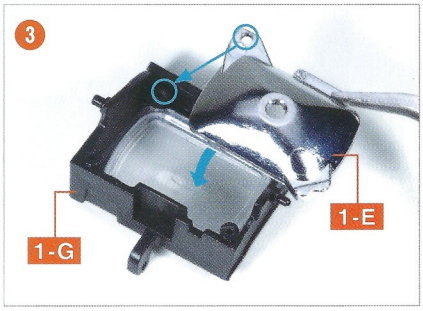
step 1 Assemble the right retractable headlamp



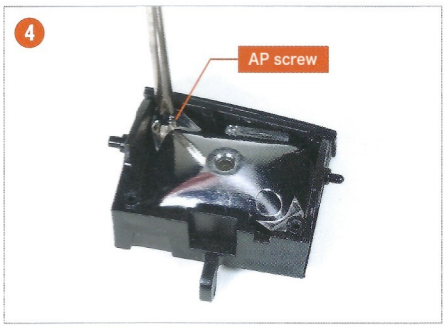
Insert headlamp housing (R) 1-G 's two pins into retractable headlamp garnish (R) 1-K at ○ marked holes.



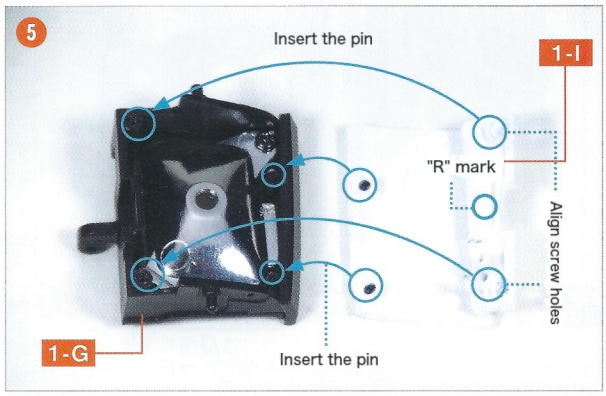
Flip headlamp lens (R) 1-C over and, with the notch down, align it with 1-G 's inner peg and set it in place.



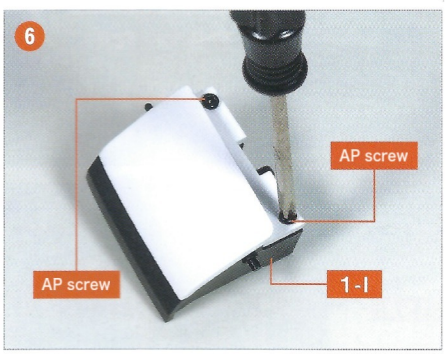
Lay headlamp reflector (R) 1-E in 1-G on the inside.



Line up the screw holes; AP screw fixes it at one point.



4 assembly: over it, fit retractable headlamp cover (R) 1-I and join them together.

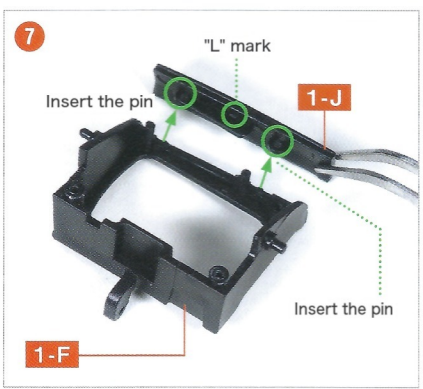


5 assembly: hold it so the parts don't come apart, turn it face up, line up the screw holes and, at the 2 points in the photo, use AP screw to fix it in place.

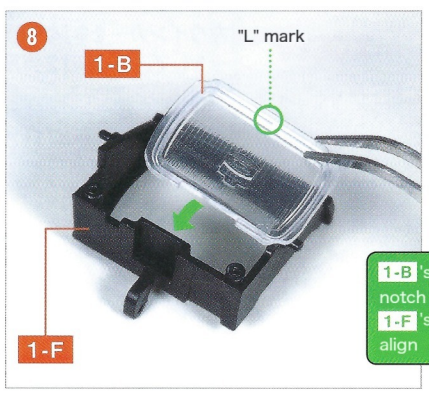
Screw-tightening tip

Hold the screwdriver perpendicular to the screw and think 80% push, 20% turn: the trick is to tighten while pressing straight in. Tightening too hard crushes the slot in the screw head so it can no longer hold, so take care not to overtighten.

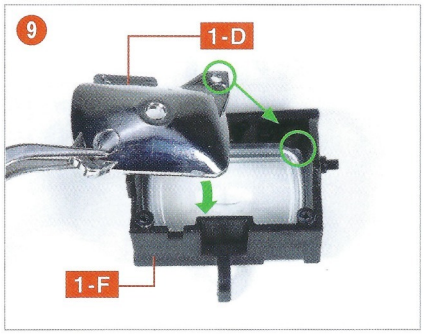
step 2 Assemble the left retractable headlamp



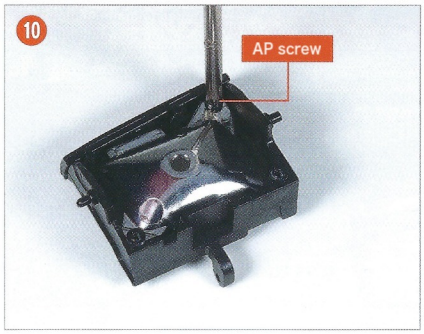
Insert headlamp housing (L) 1-F 's two pins into the retractable headlamp garnish (L) 1-J at ○ marked holes.



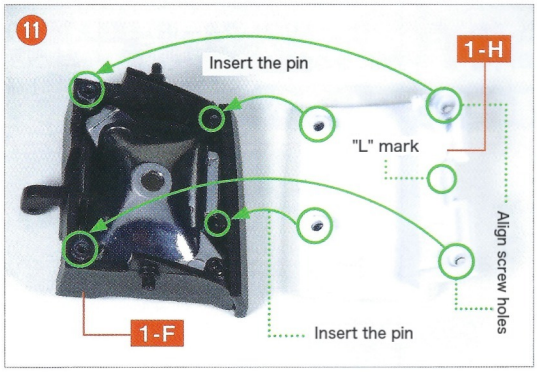
Flip headlamp lens (R) 1-B over and, with the notch facing down, align it with 1-F 's inner peg and set it in place.



Lay headlamp reflector (L) 1-D in 1-F on the inside.



Line up the screw holes; AP screw fixes it at one point.

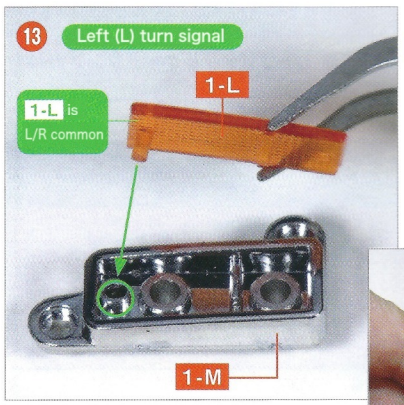


10 assembly: over it, fit the retractable headlamp cover (L) 1-H and join them together.



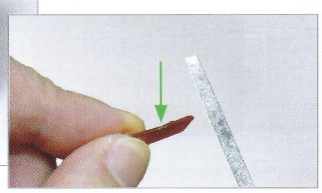
11 assembly: hold it so the parts don't come apart, flip it face up, line up the screw holes and, at the 2 points in the photo, use AP screw to fix it in place.

step 3 Attach the turn signal lenses to the front bumper



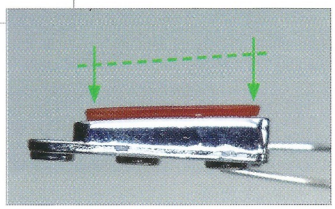
Front turn signal housing (L) 1-M in the photo, ○ marked hole, insert front turn signal lens 1-L 's back pin to secure it.

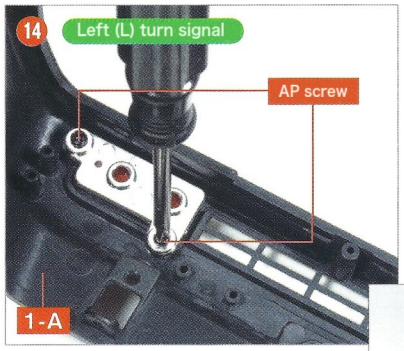
* If a nub remains on the side of the part, file it off with a diamond file.





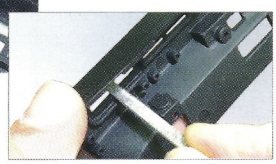
1-M hole & 1-L pin are angled when seen from the side. Match the angle and insert them evenly.

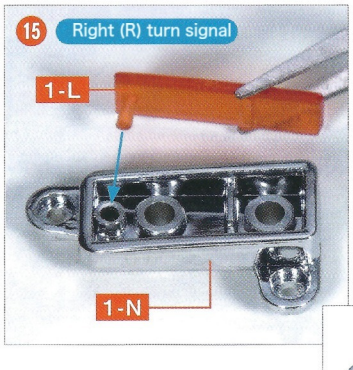




Back of front bumper 1-A 's left side square hole, set the 13 left turn signal with screw holes aligned, then, at the 2 points shown, use AP screw to secure it.

* If the turn signal is hard to fit, lightly file the top and bottom of the bumper hole from the back with a diamond file, rounding off the inner corners.

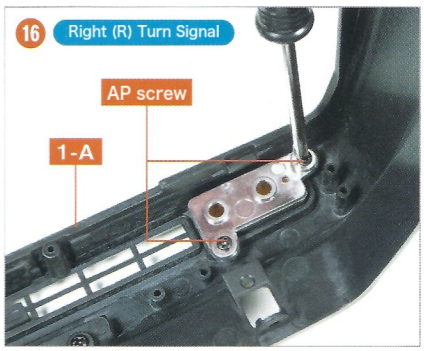




13 likewise, fit the other turn signal lens 1-L into the front turn signal housing (R) 1-N .

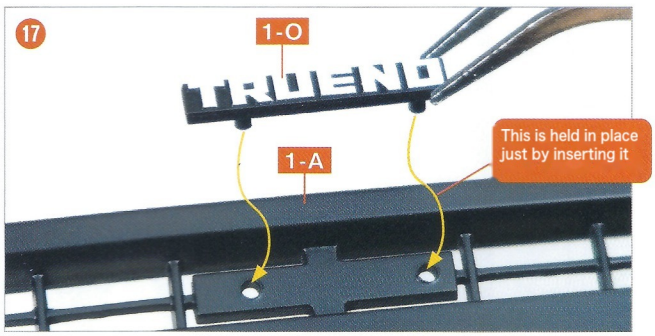


14 again, on the back of front bumper 1-A, in its right square hole, set the 15 right turn signal, its screw holes aligned. At the 2 spots in the photo, tighten AP screw to secure it.

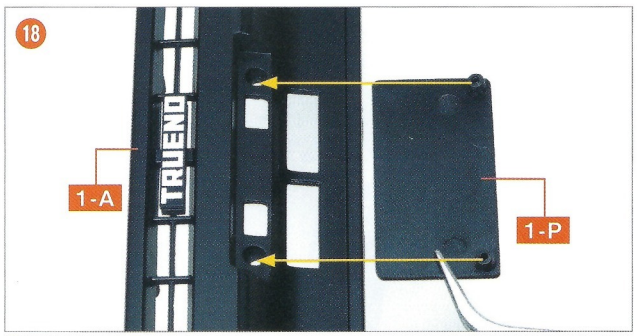




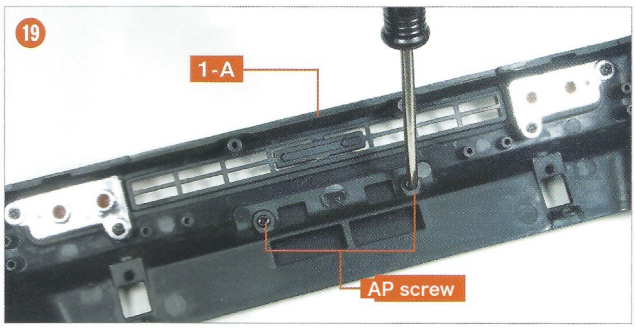
step 4 Attach the TRUENO Emblem and License Plate



Into front bumper 1-A 's grille center hole, press the TRUENO emblem 1-O oriented as in the photo, with the pins aligned.



On front bumper 1-A, into the hole shown, fit license plate 1-P with the screw holes on its back aligned, and press it in.



Holding the license plate so it doesn't come off, turn the front bumper over and tighten AP screw at the 2 spots shown to secure it.



Remove dust and debris from the license plate, then peel license sticker 1-Q 's backing paper off and stick it on the license plate.

This issue's build is complete!

The finished front bumper and retractable headlamps will be attached to the body in a later issue. Until then, store them so they won't get lost. Also, of the 1-Q license stickers, it's a good idea to keep the remaining 2 as spares.



Issue 1

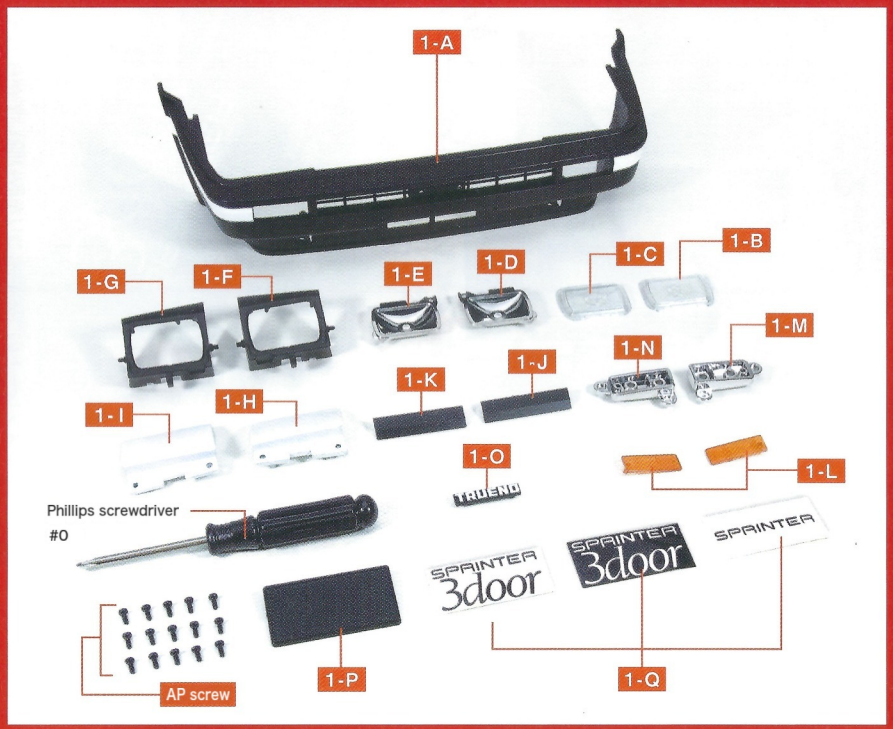
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Sprinter Trueno AE86
3door 1600 GT APEX

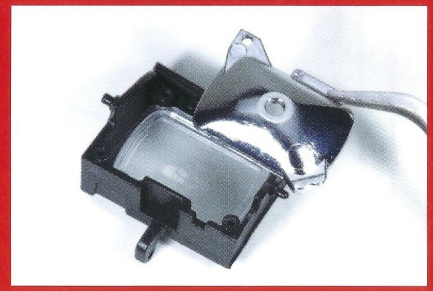
This Issue's Parts

1-A	Front bumper
1-B	Headlamp lens (L)
1-C	Headlamp lens (R)
1-D	Headlamp reflector (L)
1-E	Headlamp reflector (R)
1-F	Headlamp housing (L)
1-G	Headlamp housing (R)
1-H	Retractable headlamp cover (L)
1-I	Retractable headlamp cover (R)
1-J	Retractable headlamp garnish (L)
1-K	Retractable headlamp garnish (R)
1-L	Front turn signal lens ×2
1-M	Front turn signal housing (L)
1-N	Front turn signal housing (R)
1-O	TRUENO emblem
1-P	License plate
1-Q	License sticker ×3
AP screw	(1.7×4mm) ×15 (3 spare)
Included tool	Phillips screwdriver #0

This issue's build

Assembling the Front End - 1





Assemble the retractable headlamps, left and right, that define the Trueno AE86.



Attach the turn signals, emblem, and license plate to the front bumper.

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