



**TEST
EXTRA**

Porsche 928GT

The GT is the enthusiast's 928 — faster than ever and with sharper handling but far from silent or smooth-riding

Price £55,441 **Top speed** 165mph **0-60** 5.6secs **MPG** 14.2
For Tremendous grip, progressive power delivery, cabin
Against Road noise, economy, rear cabin space



WITH PORSCHE 911 TURBO PRICES moving smartly upwards and big-league Ferraris already skimming the stratosphere, the Porsche 928GT — yours for £55,441 — is beginning to look like the only cost-effective way to join the 165mph-plus club. Its fundamental appeal has never been in doubt: it is very much the *practical* supercar, the one with four seats, a hatchback and decent boot.

And in GT form, as tested here, it's faster than ever. We've tested just three current supercars that have the legs of the 928: the Ferrari Testarossa, the Lamborghini Countach and the Aston Martin Vantage. The Italian pair owe as much to racing ideology as they do to road car design. Fine instruments of speed as they are, few would enjoy driving them in London traffic. Even tempered, the 928 doesn't mind going slow. It's a car for all reasons.

At a glance, only the forged light alloy road wheels distinguish the 928GT from its less

powerful stablemate, the 928S Series 4, but where the S4 gets an auto box and the 320bhp 5-litre engine, the GT comes with a manual five-speeder and the big V8 tweaked to release a further 10bhp. The extra power comes courtesy of special camshafts and exhaust system, and a modified engine management system which allows the revs to climb higher — to 6775rpm as opposed to the 6600rpm of the S4. Peak torque of 317lb ft remains the same as the S4's but is pushed higher up the rev range from 3000 to 4100rpm.

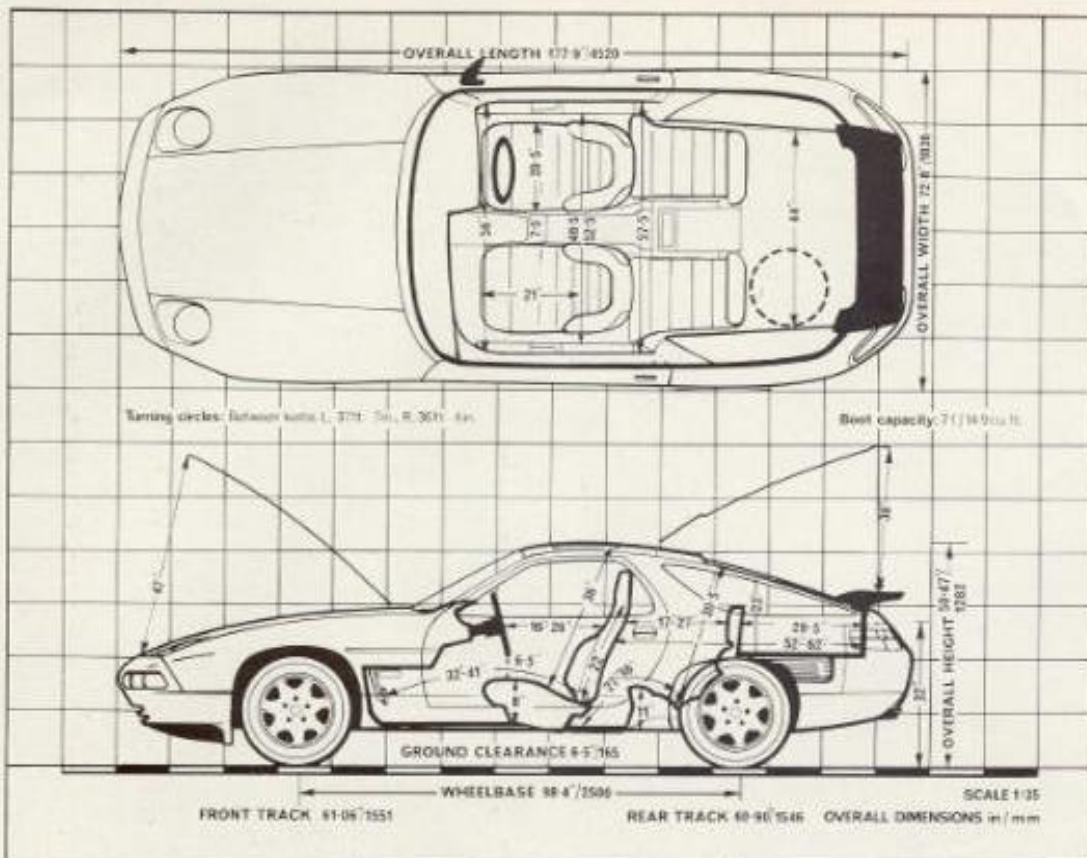
To benefit fully from the extra power, the GT is equipped with an electronically controlled limited slip differential. It also has lower gearing, 'Sport' gas-filled dampers and a marginally wider rear track. The 16ins diameter forged wheels are an inch wider than the S4's at 8ins front and 9ins rear to accommodate Bridgestone ultra low-profile rubber, 225/50 fronts, 245/45 at the rear, Z-speed rated.

The GT's sharper performance profile is obvious as soon as you get behind the wheel. In place of the cosseting upholstery of the S4's seats, a shapely Recaro-style 'Sport' item clamps the driver firmly in place. Electric adjustment is restricted to height only and the memory facility is lost. The extra support is fair exchange. The only other visible deviation from S4 spec is the gear-lever, which is shortened by about an inch.

The second reminder that this is no regular 928 comes when you crank the key. The engine has a deep, even beat that seems to be an octave lower than the S4's. The 800rpm idle is rock steady, irrespective of engine temperature.

Easing through traffic gives no clue to the engine's full potential. The Porsche trickles along at walking pace, clutch fully out, with no trace of transmission snatch or backlash. But flatten the accelerator from low revs and the 928's considerable bulk surges rapidly towards the horizon. ▶

PORSCHE 928GT



PERFORMANCE

MAXIMUM SPEEDS			
Gear	mph	km/h	rpm
Top (Mean)	165	266	6300
(Best)	169	272	6500
4th	127	204	6600
3rd	96	155	6600
2nd	69	111	6600
1st	46	74	6600

ACCELERATION FROM REST		
True mph	Time (secs)	Speeds mph
30	2.3	33
40	3.2	45
50	4.4	56
60	5.6	66
70	7.2	77
80	8.9	87
90	10.8	97
100	13.4	107
110	16.3	117
120	19.5	127
130	24.1	137
140	30.2	148

30-70mph 4.9secs
Standing mile: 13.8secs, 102mph
Standing km: 25.0secs, 131mph

ACCELERATION IN EACH GEAR				
mph	Top	4th	3rd	2nd
10-30	7.6	5.3	3.8	2.6
20-40	6.6	4.7	3.5	2.5
30-50	6.4	4.5	3.3	2.3
40-60	6.5	4.4	3.2	2.4
50-70	6.5	4.2	3.1	—
60-80	6.5	4.2	3.3	—
70-90	6.2	4.3	3.6	—
80-100	6.6	4.6	—	—
90-110	7.3	5.2	—	—
100-120	7.9	5.9	—	—
110-130	8.9	—	—	—
120-140	10.9	—	—	—

FUEL CONSUMPTION
Overall mpg: 34.2 (19.9 litres/100km)
Touring mpg*: 18.6mpg (15.2 litres/100km)
Govt tests mpg: 30.1mpg (urban) 22.8mpg (steady) 56mpg (14.4mpg (steady) 75mpg)

Grade of fuel: 4-star (97RM) or Eurosuper unleaded (95RM)
Tank capacity: 19 galls (86 litres)
Max range*: 353 miles
 * Based on Government fuel economy figures: 30 per cent of urban cycle, 25 per cent each of 56/75mpg consumptions.

BRAKING			
Fade (from 102mph in neutral)			
Pedal load (lb) for 0.5g stops			
start/end			start/end
1	25-20	6	30-25
2	25-20	7	30-28
3	25-25	8	30-25
4	25-30	9	30-30
5	25-25	10	30-30

Response (from 30mph in neutral)		
Load	g	Distance
10lb	0.38	79ft
20lb	0.62	49ft
30lb	0.95	32ft
40lb	1.05	29ft
50lb	1.10	27ft
Parking brake	0.35	86ft

WEIGHT
Kerb 3449lb/1566kg
Distribution % F/R 53/47
Test 3819lb/1734kg
Max payload 969lb/440kg

TEST CONDITIONS
Wind 9mph
Temperature 30deg C (87deg F)
Barometer 998mbar
Surface dry asphalt/concrete
Test distance 977 miles

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE
 Longitudinal, front, rear-wheel drive.
 Capacity 4957cc, 8 cylinders in 90deg V.
Bore 100.0mm, **stroke** 78.9mm.
Compression ratio 10.0 to 1.
Head/block all alloy alloy.
Valve gear dohc, 4 valves per cylinder.
Ignition and fuel breaker-less electronic ignition. Bosch LH-Jetronic multi-point fuel injection.
Max power 330bhp (PS-DIN) (242kW ISO) at 6200rpm. **Max torque** 317lb ft (430 Nm) at 4100rpm.

TRANSMISSION
 5-speed manual.

Gear	Ratio	mph/1000rpm
Top	1.000	26.13
4th	1.354	19.30
3rd	1.790	14.60
2nd	2.512	10.40
1st	3.764	6.94

Final drive 2.73 to 1. Limited slip diff.

SUSPENSION
Front, independent, double wishbones, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar.
Rear, independent, semi-trailing arms, upper transverse links, coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar, self-levelling.

STEERING
 Rack and pinion, power assisted, 3.0 turns lock to lock.

BRAKES
Front 12.6ins (304mm) dia ventilated discs.
Rear 11.8ins (296mm) dia ventilated discs. Four channel Bosch anti-lock.

SOLD IN THE UK BY
 Porsche Cars GB Ltd,
 Bath Road, Calcot, Reading,
 Berks RG3 7SE.

COSTS

Prices
Total (In UK) £55,440.83
Delivery, road tax, plates £130.00
On the road price £55,570.83
Options fitted to test car:
Full feature alarm £581.81
Cellular telephone preparation £480.90
Sunroof £1341.76
Total as tested £57,975.30

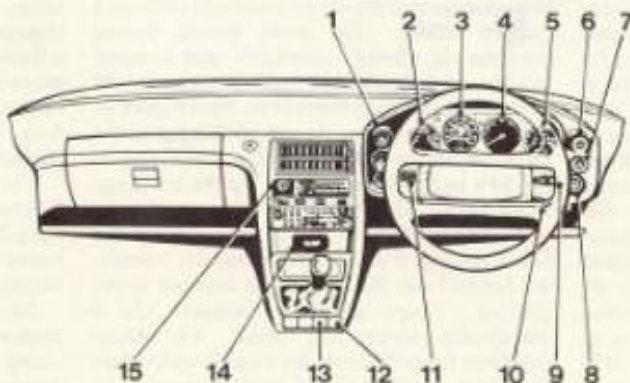
SERVICE
 Major service 12,000 miles — 5.4 hrs.

PARTS COST (inc VAT)
 Oil filter £11.87
 Brake pads (2 wheels) front 193.60
 Exhaust complete £352.71
 Headlamp unit £118.48
 Front wing £477.31

WARRANTY
 24 months/unlimited mileage, 10 years anti-corrosion, 3 years against paint defects, 24 months breakdown recovery.

EQUIPMENT
 Anti-lock brakes
 Self levelling suspension
 Alloy wheels
 Auto gearbox
 Power assisted steering
 Limited slip differential
 Leather trim
 Air conditioning
 Cruise control
 Radio/cassette player
 Front fog lamps
 Driving lamps
 Headlamp wash
 Electric tilt/slide sunroof £1342
 Metallic paint NCO
 ● Standard — Not available NCO No cost option

Figures taken at 7942 miles by our own staff at the Lotus Group proving ground, Millbrook.
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1. Headlamps, front/rear fog lamps. 2. Water temperature, fuel gauge. 3. Speedometer. 4. Revcounter. 5. Oil pressure, battery voltage. 6. Rear screen demist. 7. Hazard warning lights. 8. Ignition switch. 9. Windscreen, headlamp wash-wipe. 10. Cruise control. 11. Indicators, main beam/dip. 12. Electric windows. 13. Rear hatch wipe. 14. Digital clock. 15. Air conditioning, heater/ventilation controls.

◀ Third gear punch is formidable. Overtaking opportunities are created out of thin air. From 2000rpm there's solid torque but, beyond 4000rpm, the 928 really picks up its heels and sprints all the way to the redline.

At the test track the difficulty was getting power down effectively. It either spun away as tyre smoke or the wheels tramped with alarming force. Failing to ease off the power once on the move simply spins the wheels all the way through first gear, resulting in a slower run. This makes the 5.6secs sprint to 60mph — the same as for a 911 Carrera or a Ferrari Testarossa — even more impressive than it sounds. Reaching a three-figure speed takes just 13.4secs from rest and the standing quarter takes a mere 13.8secs. Keep the pedal buried in the plush cream carpet and the big Porsche's acceleration keeps you moulded to the seat until the needle nudges 130mph.

Then you change into top. The process continues, only with less intensity, climbing to 165mph on the banked Millbrook track. On the flat, without power-sapping tyre scrub, the 928GT is certainly capable of 170mph. Our best half-mile sector topped 169mph.

Check through the in-gear figures and the engine's flexibility becomes clear. The 928GT will pull cleanly from as low as 10mph in top. In fourth, 10-30mph takes 5.3 secs; 90-110 in the same gear takes 5.2secs.

Make no mistake, this engine is a gem. It has ferocious acceleration on tap but power is spread over such a prodigious range that it is never unmanageable and always easily accessed. Throttle response is instant, and it is as happy in traffic as it is blasting down a mountain road or at 140mph on the autobahn.

Driven hard and fast, the penalty is an overall fuel consumption of around 15mpg. The best we got was 18.5mpg. The option to use unleaded makes it a little easier on the pocket and the environment. Even with a 19-gallon tank, fuel stops are fairly frequent.

Beneath the GT's seductive curves lies a chassis of immense competence, though it is by no means perfect. Once acclimatised to the low seating position and high scuttle line, the 928GT is as friendly as a hot hatchback. Its bulk and weight become little more than an illusion as confidence in the car's abilities grows. And those abilities are put to best use not on the motorway, but on quieter backroads where it is uncannily easy to maintain outstandingly high average speeds over long distances.

The gutsy engine takes care of getting past slower-moving traffic while the fat Bridgestones play a star role in keeping it all firmly on the tarmac. They are also partly responsible for an over-harsh and noisy ride, every bump transmitted through to the cabin as a thud. Nevertheless, the suspension is surprisingly supple on rough single track roads.

But while seat-of-the-pants feedback is exceptional for such a large car, steering feel isn't all it should be. Direct and accurate most of the time, the helm's responses are corrupted by the effects of cambers, ridges and even lane markings. The four-spoke wheel with its soft leather rim is good to grip but the steering weights up considerably with any side-loading on the tyres. The 928GT is not for the limp-wristed.

The steering is geared high enough to counteract quickly the results of over-enthusiasm with the throttle. Better still, the chassis is forgiving enough to allow the driver to ▶



All-alloy V8 develops 330bhp, 10bhp more than S4. Max torque comes higher up rev range. V8 is smooth and refined with fine flexibility and prodigious acceleration. Instrumentation and controls hard to fault. Leather trimmed cabin is strict two-plus-two; seats hug tight



928GT is sharper than S4 and has stronger grip. It won't bite back unless severely provoked

take such liberties and get away with it.

Some of the credit can go to good weight distribution, but the 928's independent rear suspension arrangement also plays a significant role. This compensates for toe-change under weight transfer, thus having a self-stabilising effect on handling. Unlike the rear-engined, rear-drive 911, the 928's handling is almost foolproof. Go in too hard and the front tends to run wide. Gently ease off and it runs back on line. On slower turns the power can be used to push the rear wheels out and point the nose towards the exit earlier.

Bumpy bends can cause the back end to leap across momentarily, but lateral movement is always arrested before it can precipitate a slide.

Engine braking is good and the massive ventilated discs have fine pedal weighting and haul the 928's bulk down from legal speeds most effectively. But from higher speeds — and remember the 928GT is capable of around 170mph — they lack that initial bite. Anti-lock is standard.

No manual gearbox that can handle well over 300lb ft of torque is going to be slick and light. Considering the great chunks of metal whirling around the inside, the 928's change is lightning quick but the quality of lever movement leaves a lot to be desired. The downchange from fourth to third is the worst offender. Spring assistance is minimal and it is all too easy for the lever to balk in the no-man's-land between third and fifth.

On the motorway, the 928GT loses a great deal of its charm. Here, there is nothing to take your mind off the constant thrum from the tyres or the road vibrations that come unchecked through the steering and seats. It's

as bad at 50mph as at 150mph, though wind roar is never a concern and the powerful beat of the engine is always restrained. At least the hip-hugging seats are supremely comfortable over long periods behind the wheel and the Blaupunkt radio/cassette with 10 speakers has ample power to drown out the road noise.

Outside the UK, the GT is similar in concept to the 911 Club Sport, losing equipment in favour of reduced weight. For the UK, the GT buyer gets the same lavish trim levels as the S4, and that includes air conditioning, leather seats, central locking with alarm, electric windows and mirrors, cruise control, and the Porsche information and diagnostic system. The test car also had a sliding sunroof, which was tiny but allowed improved ventilation, and a cellular telephone set into the centre console in the armrest position. A further refinement was the full alarm system which operates automatically from the remote locking and automatically closes windows and sunroof.

The Porsche appears to be superbly made and the impression when driving is of almost unrivalled integrity. But that's not to say that the 928GT's reputation for durability remained intact in our week with the car. The electric seat height adjustment worked on one side only, the tyre pressure sensors gave out persistent warnings of low pressures when they were actually correct, and the air conditioning system spurted all its fluid over the road following our Millbrook test session.

Despite the inoperative air conditioning, the 928's cabin always proved to be a pleasant environment. It is roomy with all controls and instruments set out almost to perfection. All the dials can be viewed clearly through the

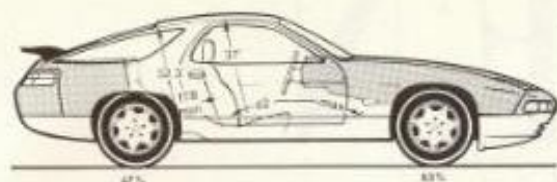
wheel and even the minor switches are easy to find. The contoured fascia is as attractive as it is functional, and there is no lack of oddment space, unlike many cars of this calibre.

The two fairly sizeable rear seats can be reached rather uncomfortably by folding forward the front seat backs, but the lack of headroom and legroom makes them suitable only for children on anything but very short journeys. Rear seats can be folded flat to create more luggage space and a large hatch allows easy access to the load floor. Luggage space is sufficient for the weekend requirements of two people. Add the requirements of one or two small children and the 928's limitations are obvious, but that's only to be expected of a sports coupe.

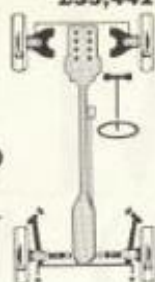
A space-saver spare is carried beneath the luggage floor. Should a puncture occur, it must first be inflated using the compressor also carried in the rear of the car.

The latest interpretation of the 928 theme is a car of towering abilities. It's a devastatingly quick road car and one that is a pleasure to drive — it's almost as easy to drive and as forgiving as any good hot hatch. The tremendous punch and flexibility of the smooth V8 engine are matched by a chassis of outstanding competence. The combination won't bite back unless severely provoked.

But the 928GT is still a compromise. Those fat tyres and firm dampers produce the desired effects but a by-product is excessive road noise and a rough-edged ride that many would find unacceptable. For them, the S4 is a better bet. But there is still a place for the 928GT. Its rawness gives it a sporting appeal that has been lost in the clinical functionalism of the S4. ■

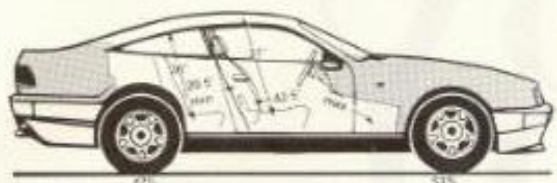
PORSCHE 928 GT

Length 177.9ins. Width 72.8ins. Front track 61.1ins.
Wheelbase 98.4ins. Height 50.5ins. Rear track 60.9ins.

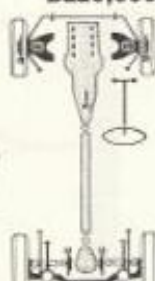
£55,441

GT version of 928 is quicker and more responsive than S4 and has manual gearbox as standard. Handling and grip are superb but big V8 is thirsty. Very spacious and comfortable cabin for two (but a cramped 2+2), excellent driving position and instrumentation, but ride and refinement needs to be better in view of its touring aspirations

Capacity	4957cc
Power	330bhp at 6200rpm
Torque	317lb ft at 4100rpm
Max speed	165mph
0-60mph	5.6secs
30-70 through gears	4.9secs
ss 1/4 mile	13.8secs/102mph
30-50 in fourth	4.5secs
50-70 in fifth	6.5secs
MPG overall/touring	14.2/18.6
MPH/1000rpm in top	26.13
Kerb weight	3449lb
Date tested	23.8.89

ASTON MARTIN VIRAGE

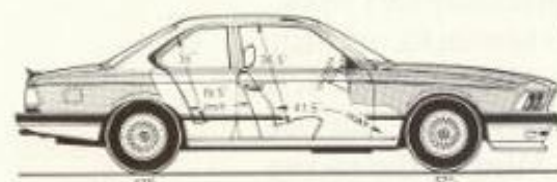
Length 186.5ins. Width 73.9ins. Front track N/A.
Wheelbase 102.7ins. Height 52.0ins. Rear track N/A.

£120,000

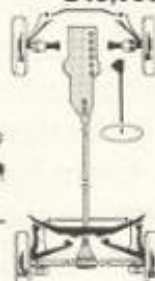
British Virage is a complete contrast to the Italian exotics. We've yet to try one but with the same all-alloy V8 engine as the Vantage, performance is sure to be immense. It's beautifully finished using traditional coachbuilding skills. Latest of an ancient breed of all-British supercars. There's a long waiting list already and it's likely to remain that way

Capacity	5340cc
Power	350bhp
Torque	N/A
Max speed	155mph*
0-60mph	6.0secs*
30-70 through gears	N/A
ss 1/4 mile	N/A
30-50 in fourth	N/A
50-70 in fifth	N/A
MPG overall/touring	N/A
MPH/1000rpm in top	N/A
Kerb weight	3948lb
Date tested	not tested

*Manufacturer's figures

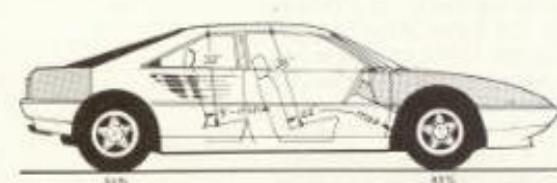
BMW M635 CSI

Length 189.6ins. Width 67.9ins. Front track 56.5ins.
Wheelbase 103.3ins. Height 52.7ins. Rear track 57.7ins.

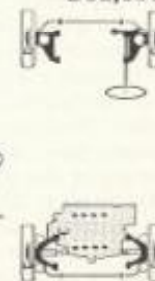
£45,780

Seventies four seat near-supercar is just begining to show its age, but fabulous 24-valve six still delivers lusty performance with good refinement. Handling is enjoyable but tricky in the wet, ride firm but well controlled. Generally well equipped with first class build. About to be replaced by stylish new 8-series V12 coupe

Capacity	3453cc
Power	286bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	251lb ft at 4500rpm
Max speed	150mph
0-60mph	6.0secs
30-70 through gears	5.5secs
ss 1/4 mile	14.6secs/99mph
30-50 in fourth	6.7secs
50-70 in fifth	9.3secs
MPG overall/touring	20.6/22.4
MPH/1000rpm in top	24.0
Kerb weight	3458lb
Date tested	18.1.89

FERRARI MONDIAL 3.2

Length 178.5ins. Width 70.7ins. Front track 59.8ins.
Wheelbase 104.5ins. Height 48.6ins. Rear track 59.4ins.

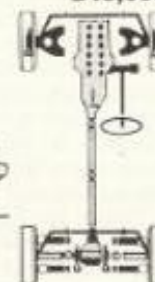
£51,995

Ferrari's 2+2 shares the same wailing V8 that powers the 328GTB. Greater weight blunts performance but the Mondial is still very rapid. Handling is well balanced, brakes are excellent and the ride supple. It's beautifully made and the engine note is unforgettable. A Ferrari you can live with very comfortably from day to day

Capacity	3186cc
Power	270bhp at 7000rpm
Torque	224lb ft at 5500rpm
Max speed	143mph
0-60mph	6.8secs
30-70 through gears	6.3secs
ss 1/4 mile	14.9secs/95mph
30-50 in fourth	5.6secs
50-70 in fifth	8.1secs
MPG overall/touring	16.8/20.1
MPH/1000rpm in top	20.9
Kerb weight	3265lb
Date tested	25.6.86

JAGUAR SPORT XJR-S

Length 186.7ins. Width 70.6ins. Front track 58.6ins.
Wheelbase 100.0ins. Height 58.0ins. Rear track 58.0ins.

£45,000

With capacity enlarged to a full 6 litres, the sporty but refined V12-engined XJR-S is better than ever. Jaguarsport has improved handling and grip with a modest loss in refinement. Spoilers and different, larger wheels identify the XJR-S. By the standards of the opposition the XJR-S is still cheap but it is a strict 2-plus-2

Capacity	5992cc
Power	318bhp at 5250rpm
Torque	362lb ft at 3750rpm
Max speed	150mph
0-60mph	7.1secs
30-70 through gears	6.6secs
ss 1/4 mile	15.5secs/93mph
30-50 in kickdown	2.7secs
50-70 in kickdown	3.9secs
MPG overall/touring	—/15.4
MPH/1000rpm in top	N/A
Kerb weight	N/A
Date tested	23/8/89

MERCEDES-BENZ 560 SEC

Length 203.1ins. Width 79.6ins. Front track 61.2ins.
Wheelbase 120.9ins. Height 56.9ins. Rear track 60.1ins.

£63,200

The 5.5-litre V8-engined S-class coupe delivers effortless performance. Torque is smoothly transmitted via Mercedes' excellent four-speed automatic gearbox and limited slip diff; manual is not available. Ride and handling standards are predictably high, as is the level of luxury and equipment. This is a full four seater opulent cruiser

Capacity	5547cc
Power	300bhp at 5000rpm
Torque	335lb ft at 3750rpm
Max speed	147mph
0-60mph	7.1secs
30-70 through gears	6.2secs
ss 1/4 mile	15.8secs/92mph
30-50 in fourth	N/A
50-70 in fifth	N/A
MPG overall/touring	18.6/19.9
MPH/1000rpm in top	N/A
Kerb weight	3572lb
Date tested	30.7.86