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020 3890 3890

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[www.evo.co.uk](http://www.evo.co.uk)

evo, Dennis Publishing, 31-32 Alfred Place,  
London WC1E 7DP, United Kingdom

### EDITOR

Stuart Gallagher

### MANAGING EDITOR

Ian Eveleigh

### DEPUTY EDITOR

Adam Towler

### ART EDITOR

Rich Browne

### DIGITAL NEWS EDITOR

Jordan Katsianis

### SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Aston Parrott

### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Sam Jenkins

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John Barker  
Jethro Bovingdon  
Henry Catchpole  
Richard Meaden  
Richard Porter  
Steve Sutcliffe

### GROUP WEB EDITOR

Steve Walker

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### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Colin Goodwin  
Antony Ingram

### CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jakob Ebrey  
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# Ed speak



## DESPITE EVERYTHING 2020 THREW AT US IT STILL

managed to deliver a bumper crop of new driver's cars, as eCoty 2020 demonstrated with one of the toughest years of judging and the closest voting we've experienced in the past 22 years. We said it at the time, and we stand by it today, any of our eight finalists could have claimed the title and not a single judge would begrudge the result.

Such a stellar year is traditionally followed by a fallow period as everyone catches their breath, takes stock and prepares for the next chapter. Looking through the 2021 product plans there

doesn't appear to be any downtime and this year looks to be as strong as the last.

Two of 2021's new stars have been revealed this month. Porsche's next GT3 is arriving with the weight of past glories resting on its broad shoulders, not that this should present any issues, as Porsche's GT department is not prone to taking its eye off what matters. The finishing positions of the 911 Turbo S and Cayman GTS 4.0 in eCoty might have raised a few eyebrows, but both demonstrated once again that Stuttgart's ability to continually perform at the highest level in the sports car arena remains unrivalled.

Although McLaren would like to have something to say about that. In the Artura it starts the second chapter of its story. Its first decade wasn't the smoothest. Poor reliability and questionable build quality was too big an issue for many to see beyond, but building a car company from scratch takes time and support. It's not as if today's class leaders have been immune to teething problems as they built the reputations they trade on so successfully today.

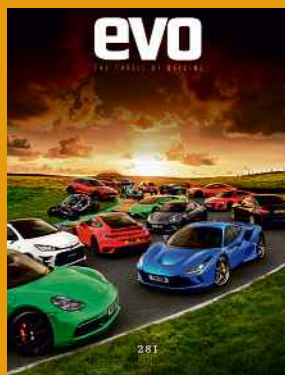
Sadly we have also lost four great driver's cars this month. Lotus has confirmed the Elise, Evora and Exige will cease production 'in 2021' and Toyota GB has sold its last GT86. Many of us cut our teeth on these great sports cars and to see them disappearing from the showrooms, while inevitable, is still regrettable. But of course they still remain available as used cars and are as relevant to our world today as they were when new. We may have lost four new sports cars, but we've gained a cracking group of icons.

*Stuart Gallagher, Editor* @stuartg917

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## ADVERTISING

020 3890 3890

ads.evo@dennis.co.uk

31-32 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP

#### CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER

Julian Lloyd-Evans

#### GROUP ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Steve Machin

#### CLIENT SALES MANAGER

Pierre Clements

pierre\_clements@dennis.co.uk

020 3890 3902

#### ACCOUNT MANAGER

Miles Taylor

miles\_taylor@dennis.co.uk

020 3890 3989

#### DIRECT MARKETING MANAGER

Hannah Manning-Swallow

#### PRODUCTION MANAGER

Mike Hills

#### COMMERCIAL PUBLISHER

Sarah Perks

#### ADVERTISING DIRECTOR - AUTOMOTIVE

Ciaran Scarry

#### CLIENT SALES MANAGER

Neale Salt

neale\_salt@dennis.co.uk

020 3890 3849

#### ACCOUNT MANAGER

Demi Davies

demi\_davies@dennis.co.uk

020 3890 3731

#### NEWSTRADE DIRECTOR

David Barker

## CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

HEAD OF COMMERCIAL DESIGN Rob Callaghan

GROUP PROJECT MANAGER Avril Donnelly

## LICENSING & SYNDICATION

LICENSING MANAGER Carlotta Serantoni

LICENSING & SYNDICATION EXECUTIVE Nicole Adams

## PUBLISHING

PUBLISHING MANAGER Holly Jerram

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# Driven

by JETHRO BOVINGDON

## Porsche Taycan

With rear-wheel drive and up to 469bhp, is this new entry-level Taycan our kind of EV? Well, it's complicated...







**N**OT A TURBOCHARGER IN SIGHT. REAR... erm, rear-motored. Rear-wheel drive. Up to 469bhp with overboost and 90kg or more lighter than the four-wheel-drive versions. This is it. Porsche's take on a purist EV. Or at least a purist EV supersaloon. It's called, simply, the Porsche Taycan. Prices start at £70,690, a £12,890 saving over the 4S and almost half the price of the headline-grabbing Turbo S, and it still rips along at quite a pace in all its spooky silence. Or accompanied by an haunting sci-fi plasma-y warp-drive soundtrack should you switch on the (optional) Electric Sport sound.

Driving EVs is a very simple business. Explaining their performance potential and various battery options is not. So here goes... That 469bhp figure is largely misleading. In fact, the Taycan produces 322bhp, has a range of 268 miles and can charge at a rate of 225kW. That allows the battery to charge from 5 per cent to 80 per cent capacity in just 22.5 minutes. Cool in theory, but no such chargers actually exist in the UK and the vast majority of public networks are made up of the ironically named 'fast chargers', capable of just 7-22kW. This is a rapidly evolving scene but it's worth bearing in mind. Anyway, back to the



performance. Select Launch Control and an 'overboost' facility ups power to 402bhp. So, 99.9 percent of the time the Taycan has 322bhp to push 2050kg.

Underwhelmed? Do not fear, because here are some more numbers. (Wow, writing about EVs is fun. Hang on... just grabbing a coffee, my eyes are soooooo tired. Right, that's better.) Select the Performance Battery Plus option for £4049 and you get a two-deck 93.4kWh battery (up from the standard Performance Battery car's single-deck 79.2kWh). This adds 80kg in weight, but power increases to 375bhp, the range jumps to 301 miles and you can charge at a rate of up to 270kW. Well, you can't. But you could. If you see what I mean. And so configured the Taycan produces 469bhp when Launch Control is selected. A 469bhp, rear-drive Porsche that seats four at a price of £74,739 sounds highly tempting, doesn't it? Even if that statement is only half true.

## 'The Taycan, initially at least, feels as much Porsche as it does EV'

It looks tempting, too. Maybe not in Coffee Beige Metallic, admittedly. But there's no denying the Taycan is a striking design and manages to look futuristic without going too far down the science fiction route. Next to a Panamera, or indeed any other ICE saloon that could be deemed a rival, it's a clean, lithe and exciting-looking four-door. Does an EV architecture free-up designers to let their imaginations run wild or simply expose how safe and evolutionary car design has become? It's hard to be certain and a philosophical debate

makes no difference to customers. Simply put, the Taycan is genuinely desirable and the sales results bear this out. In 2020 it was Porsche's second best-selling model after the Macan here in the UK.

Just think about that for a second. Porsche reached more people with its new EV than it did with the Boxster, Cayman and 911. We once rued the day that Porsche had become an SUV company that happened to sell sports cars. Maybe soon it'll be an EV powerhouse that builds the odd flat-six. Of course, much of this is down to the rush to have the Very Latest Thing amongst Porsche buyers in particular (I haven't yet met a Taycan owner who doesn't own several other cars, a situation which rather betrays its environmental credentials), but it's a trend that's even caught Porsche by surprise. The UK is the second biggest market behind the US, beating even the domestic market and EV-centric China. The new entry-level car







could further swing the sales balance in the Taycan's favour.

Okay, let's cut to the chase. Is it any good? Judged not just as an EV but as a powerful, sporting saloon and as a Porsche. The answer is a resounding yes. And a devastating no. With a few grey areas in between. There's no question it's deeply impressive, handles with a composure that belies its size and weight, that it has enough performance to entertain and is a stunningly complete and capable car considering it's Porsche's first full EV. And the loss of two driven wheels does nothing to detract from that and, in the right circumstances, might even add to its appeal.

Yet it's the Porscheness that's the problem. Efficiency and capability are important parts of the Porsche formula that has always chimed so precisely with this magazine, but character, feel, charisma and creating a sweet spot where the driver feels fully immersed in the act of driving are the attributes that have formed the true basis of our special bond. Replicating that level of involvement is a tough ask for any

**Above:** Coffee Beige Metallic (yes, that's its actual name) is a £774 extra; there are 16 other colours to choose from, but only black and white are no-cost

heavyweight saloon car, even tougher when there isn't a barrel-chested V8 or similar to inject some natural acoustic character. The Taycan, brutally speaking, doesn't make the cut.

Familiar Porsche qualities are a part of the mix, however. The Taycan's damping has a fabulously oiled precision to it, the steering responds very quickly, yet the body control and the relationship between all four corners of the car ensure that you immediately feel absolutely on top of driving this car quickly and with a measured smoothness. There's a really broad operating window, too. In many cars the steps between various drive modes are subtle to the point of invisibility, but the Taycan notably sharpens up as you up the ante to Sport and Sport Plus modes. So much of the EV experience still feels all new, but the Taycan, initially at least, feels as much Porsche as it does EV.

It's not fast, though. Our test car is equipped

with Performance Battery Plus but even so the acceleration feels swift and sustained rather than the sort of blow-your-mind stuff that has become an EV specialty. I couldn't care less for sub 3-second potential usually, but when you take away that one party trick the EV experience is even less engaging. I'm surprised to write this but I actually found the strange Electric Sound feature added a bit of fun to an otherwise smooth but deeply forgettable power delivery.

So what about this rear-wheel-drive purity? Well... this is where those shades of grey come in. It's hard to be fully conclusive because the Taycan can be equipped with a number of chassis upgrades and our test car didn't feature perhaps the crucial ingredient. So what we have here is a Taycan with standard 19-inch wheels and plump sidewalls, the Performance Battery Plus, Adaptive Air Suspension including PASM dampers (£1527), and rear-axle steering with variable-assistance Power Steering Plus (£1650), but not including the Torque Vectoring Differential (£1052). So we have the most responsive chassis set-up but perhaps lack the



**Driven**



**'Porsche's entry-level EV feels brilliantly honed and relaxing. It's not exciting, though'**







**Far left:** standard 'Aero' wheels are 19s; 20s and 21s are on the options list. **Left:** 14-way electrically adjustable Comfort seats (pictured) add £1170; 18-way adjustable Sports seats are £1440

final bit of control when you start to try to test the Taycan at its limits. It's a 375bhp rear-drive saloon with an open differential...

No question, the Taycan turns in beautifully and the body remains spookily flat. You can really feel that the mass is centred way down low and the rear-steering is typically Porsche. Meaning your brain tells you that this car shouldn't feel so nimble and that it must at least in part be to the rear wheels pivoting, but you can't actually sense them doing anything funky. Front and rear are perfectly synced and in tune. Such is the control that the idea you can really feel this thing is rear-drive and revel in that balance is a bit of a nonsense. It's hooked-up and assured but probably feels more neutral than, say, a BMW M5 in its obviously rear-biased 4WD Sport setting.

Push really hard and the rear will slip, but without a differential it feels slightly clumsy doing so and somehow the weight all starts to tell, too. The deep polish to the way the Taycan moves and breathes and flows is interrupted and it feels a little scrabbly. This is hardly a killer flaw in a sporting saloon – which is how the Taycan feels, rather than a slightly-down-on-power supersaloon – but when you're used to Porsches only getting better the harder you push them, it remains a slight disappointment. As too is the braking feel as it tries to balance regenerative force and the mechanical bite of pads on discs with patchy results. It is also very odd to make such silent, seemingly effortless progress

and then have the strong smell of brakes percolating through the cabin. The inside of the car sometimes smells like Silverstone pitlane on a busy trackday.

Overall, the Taycan is an enjoyable experience and it's fun mastering the effects of the regenerative braking (you can opt for stronger regen off throttle, but it's never truly 'one pedal' driving). When you want to quietly and fluidly float along an A-road, Porsche's entry-level EV feels brilliantly honed and relaxing. It's not exciting, though. And if we're going to judge this car as a Porsche first and foremost, there's little in the way of steering feel and even the '4D chassis control' system's very particular roll-resistant traits feel strangely cold. Easy to admire but hard to love. The dream of a revolutionary EV driving experience with four-wheel torque vectoring and an entirely new dynamic skill set is yet to materialise. And removing two driven wheels from the Taycan doesn't replicate the thrills of old, either. ❌

**Motor** 350kW (with Performance Battery Plus option)

**Power** 375bhp (469bhp with Launch Control)

**Torque** n/a (263lb ft with Launch Control) **Weight** 2130kg (179bhp/ton)

**0-62mph** 5.4sec **Top speed** 143mph **Basic price** £74,739

➕ Half the price of the Taycan Turbo S

➖ Less is less

**evo rating** ★★★★★



by JOHN BARKER PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT AND ANDY MORGAN

## Toyota GR Supra 2.0

Lighter and better riding than the 3-litre, but not short of punch, is the 2.0 the sweeter Supra?



HIS LATEST VERSION OF THE SUPRA IS QUITE THE departure, being the first four-cylinder version in the model's five-generation, five-decade life. But, of course, the GR Supra is already like no Supra that has come before, with significant chunks sourced from BMW, including the turbocharged 3-litre straight-six and now the turbocharged 2-litre four.

There's a hefty cost saving by dropping two cylinders and one litre: almost £8500, for a list price of £45,995. The main things you expect to sacrifice are a charismatic soundtrack and lots of ready torque. The 3-litre Supra is more subtle than you might expect but its straight-six suffuses the snug cockpit with a quietly confident burr, and even a modest throttle squeeze delivers a rich swell of torque. As it turns out, the 2.0 is missing less of these elements than expected and in some respects delivers an enhanced driving experience.

It doesn't look as good, though. The key visual identifier of the 2-litre Supra – the only one, in fact – is its 18in alloys. They're only an inch smaller, but with plumper sidewalled tyres for the same rolling radius and gearing, they look a bit weedy, the curvy bodywork sitting heavy on their taller shoulders. They are, however, an important contributor to the 2.0's dynamic character, and so too is the weight saving of 100kg that comes mostly off the front axle and improves the weight distribution to the sought-after 50:50.

You'd be hard pressed to spot any difference on the inside apart from manual instead of electric seat adjustment, but the driver's seat welcomes you with the same satisfying embrace. Prod the starter button and the engine note that follows isn't obviously a four-cylinder. This Supra uses the car's speakers to augment the engine note and it muddies the audible waters, confecting an





ambiguous, muffled sound that's neither four nor six cylinders, and that ambiguity continues as the engine climbs through the revs on a light throttle. It's no exaggeration to say that a Ferrari flat-plane-crank V8 sounds more like a four-cylinder than the Supra's 2-litre.

There's plenty of pick-up when you put your foot down and a look at the stats reveals why. The 1998cc 'four' might be a whole litre smaller in capacity and develop 254bhp and 295lb ft versus the six's 335bhp and 369lb ft, but the gap is not so big when the weight difference is factored in and, anyhow, 295lb ft is a good amount. In short, it's responsive enough to feel sporty, helped along by the quick-reacting eight-speed auto gearbox that shuffles the gears smoothly. In terms of performance, Toyota's figures say the 2-litre Supra is almost a second slower to 62mph – 5.2 versus 4.3sec – but makes the same limited 155mph top speed.

The big difference, though, is the feel. The 3-litre Supra takes a bit of getting to know, a bit of warming to; its ride can be a bit sharp edged at low speed, especially at the rear axle, which you feel you're almost sitting on top of, and in the wet or cold it can seem rather traction limited and a bit snappy. Add in steering that's very quick, very alert off centre, and you have a coupe that feels like it might be a bit of a handful. However, pick up the pace and the ride gets more rounded and the traction seems to improve too. Quite against expectation, on a demanding B-road with a slick surface, when you turn off stability control you find that the fat rear Michelins break away very smoothly and that the steering feels well weighted and just as fast as you need it to be to catch and play out a slide with the consistent response of the turbocharged six.

The 2-litre Supra has retuned springs and dampers to match





the new weight and distribution, but what's immediately apparent is that all the low-speed edginess and sharpness of the 3-litre is gone. It rolls over broken surfaces much more sweetly, which must be partly thanks to the cushioning of to the taller-sidewalled 18-inch tyres. They probably also help to slow down the steering response – another positive – though there's still not much feel coming through the wheel.

The smaller-engined Supra picks up pace well, the in-line four's peak torque spread from 1550 to 4400rpm, and the engine only starts to run out of puff as the 6500rpm red line approaches. All the while it sounds muffled, slightly distant, so any harshness is filtered. There's no ambiguity about which wheels are driven though, the four-cylinder Supra's rear tyres being just as bothered by its torque as the six-cylinder's are, only the breakaway is less snappy. It flows along a B-road with a useful suppleness but it's not especially sharp, a sensation heightened by the lack of meaningful feedback through the wheel.

Help is at hand. The Sport button on the centre console doesn't seem to do much on the 3-litre but in the 2-litre its influence can be felt in all quarters. It peeps up the engine sound







and its response, sharpens the gearshifts, firms up the steering and tightens the damping too. Altogether, this makes for a more positive car, bringing some bite to the steering and keeping the body in tighter check, so the car stays flatter to the road and you feel more confident about leaning on the front grip on turn-in. Best of all, you can pick from a pop-up menu which of these elements shift from Normal to Sport when you press the button.

The extra steering weight doesn't bring any more feel and this makes the Supra less positive in the wet than it could be. You don't know how hard you're leaning on the grip, but you quickly learn that if you think the torque might be a bit too much for the modest rear grip, you're probably right. If you fancy testing your opposite-lock moves, the stability control switches off in two stages, a single push backing it off enough for you to have to intervene with a twist of counter-steer in an inviting wet corner. You could treat this as the training mode.

A longer press turns off VSC and leaves you, the active rear differential and the 275-section Michelins totally in charge. Like the 3-litre, when you're carrying a bit of pace the 2-litre is a well-balanced, well-poised rear-drive coupe,

**Above:** 2.0 is available only with 18-inch wheels unless you spend a further £1400 on the Fuji Speedway Edition, which is equipped with 19s. **Top:** wheels aside, the 2.0 is visually identical to the 3-litre GR Supra

the tail slipping wide under power progressively, the steering fast and accurate and the engine responsive enough to allow modulation to hold or play the angle. With the auto 'box in Sport the shifts are quick and intuitive, but for complete control you need to use the 'manual' options and nudge the lever or use the small paddles.

The smaller-engined Supra has smaller brakes, and while they work just fine in general driving there's a suggestion they might struggle with a trackday. They didn't fade on us at any point but they don't start with the most solid pedal and once you start properly stretching and exploring the dynamics the whole car can feel rather elastic. In feel, it's rather like an MX-5. The gains it makes over the 3-litre model at low speed thanks mostly to its softer-riding tyres come with a price at higher speed, when you'd appreciate a bit more bite and control. Maybe the 2.0 with 19-inch wheels is the sweet spot?

However, the question probably isn't this or the six-cylinder Supra. Really, it's this or the

Alpine A110 (£48k, similar horsepower) or the base Porsche Cayman 718 (£44k and almost 300bhp). These are two formidable rivals: the Alpine is still something very special and unique, dynamically, while the Porsche is something of a dynamic over-achiever, though at this entry level it comes with the widely unloved flat-four.

There is another coupe that is Japanese, has six cylinders, almost as much power as the Supra 3.0 and will cost you around £30k if you snap up one of the few remaining examples with delivery miles. It's the Nissan 370Z, something of a throwback these days, with a manual gearbox, naturally aspirated V6 and a gruff, rough-hewn character. The new Supra 2.0 is nothing like the steel-jawed Nissan; it's refined, undemanding, fast and quite frugal too. But sometimes you do find yourself hankering after a bit more grit, a bit more feel and raw character. ✕

**Engine** In-line 4-cyl, 1998cc, turbo  
**Power** 254bhp @ 5000-6500rpm **Torque** 295lb ft @ 1550-4400rpm **Weight** 1395kg (185bhp/ton) **0-62mph** 5.2sec  
**Top speed** 155mph (limited) **Basic price** £45,995  
 + Performance, refinement  
 - Lacks feel, feedback and bite  
**evo rating** ★★★★★

by STUART GALLAGHER

## Bentley Flying Spur V8

New V8-powered variant solidifies the Flying Spur's reputation as the best limo you can drive

**T**HERE WAS A CHARM TO BENTLEY'S flagship Mulsanne that far outweighed its attributes, which by rights should have placed it firmly in the 'not an **evo** car' category. At well over 5 metres in length it wasn't a car you'd fling around on a whim. And as it weighed over 2.5 tons you didn't really want to, because that's a whole lot of real estate to try and keep on one continent should it go a bit Brexit and want to leave.

Its six-and-three-quarter-litre V8 wasn't especially advanced, relying on more traditional, tried and tested technology to deliver its thumping performance rather than leading the advancement of the internal combustion engine. But it was a magical motor to experience. It was the heart and soul of the big Bentley until its final days, and every one of the 630 minutes it took to be hand assembled was a minute well spent.

And boy was it always special to travel in a Mulsanne. From the driver's seat it charmed, seduced and comforted, and supported you like an old friend, while if you found yourself in one of the rear chairs the world's troubles simply drifted away.

More often than not there was no finer place to be than in a Mulsanne.

'Was' because the Mulsanne is no more (see issue 279) and the Flying Spur now takes on the dual role of replacing both its own predecessor and Bentley's glorious icon. The former task is a relatively straightforward one, requiring improvements across the board, which it has and then some. From the way it looks, to how it is put together and how it feels to be driven in or to drive is such a leap on from the original Spur that the only comparable part the two generations share is their name. As with the transformation between the previous and the current Continental GT, the new Flying Spur is on a different level to the original in every conceivable way.

To date that's been a view held after only driving the W12 version, and now, after spending time with the new V8 model, feelings that the Flying Spur is the best super-limo you can buy are stronger than ever. I'd go as far as to say it's the best of its kind full stop, regardless of whether the competition is built in Stuttgart or Goodwood.

**'It makes you want to drive a stupidly long distance for the sake of it'**

The 4-litre twin-turbocharged V8 is shared with the Conti GT and weighs 65 kilos less than the 6-litre W12 (the Flying Spur V8 is 107 kilos lighter than the W12 overall). It doesn't have that deep, almost silent tone of the twelve when you press the knurled starter button; there is a subtle bark when the fuel ignites, a chest-clearing rumble from the tailpipes during the cold-start cycle, but soon it settles to a subtle idle, not whisper quiet but with just enough decibels to keep you interested. A passer-by would barely notice it running, but someone who seeks out a V Power pump will pick up on the tone before glancing down to the lower





**Above:** optional 'Blackline Specification' replaces exterior brightwork with gloss black; 20-inch wheels are standard, but 21s and 22s are also available.

**Left:** interior is as luxurious and refined as you'd hope

front wing to confirm their theory it's a bent-eight they can hear beneath the illuminated Flying B.

With its high shoulder-line and relatively slim glasshouse you feel snug in the Flying Spur, connected to it as much as an RR Ghost leaves you feeling perched on its driver's seat, looking down on everyone and everything. The Spur V8's interior is also no less grand and is equally exquisitely appointed as its 12-cylinder big brother's. As per the Conti GT it delivers the quality of finish and cohesion of design that the Bentayga struggles with. From the get-go it makes you want to drive a stupidly long distance for the sake of it, just so you can spend as much time as possible enjoying being in it. When the outside world is doing its worst, this is a pretty good place to escape it.

Having a twin-turbocharged V8 helps you escape most things, too, even when there's the





wrong side of 2000kg to haul. More eager to react to throttle inputs, the V8 revs quicker and is more responsive than the W12. Where the latter builds pace at near imperceptible rate and almost in silence, the eight adds just the right amount of theatre to proceedings. If the W12 is a perfectly mixed studio album, the eight is akin to a private gig: not as raucous and unleashed as a full-blown concert, but the right side of engaging and enthralling to make you feel part of an event.

As with all big-capacity turbocharged engines it's the mid-range that delivers the biggest punch and it's where the V8 needs to raise its voice to deliver its maximum; peak torque arrives at 2000rpm but with peak power arriving 4000rpm later there's some graft to be done. The eight-speed auto has no issues delivering the ratios as and when required and it's one of the few autos that you feel no need to use the paddles with, due to the calibration between transmission and engine being so well matched. Each higher gear arrives as quickly as you require, with downshifts equally well timed; you have to try especially hard to arrive at a corner with the 'box undecided as to which gear would be best.

It's a similar story with the driver modes, of which there are four: Comfort, Sport, Individual and Bentley, the last of those configuring the



**Above:** Flying B mascot is electrically deployable and has illuminated wings; or you can have a winged 'B' badge

engine, gearbox, air-suspension and steering as the engineers feel is best for all situations. No amount of diving into the settings will better their choices.

Clearly the Flying Spur V8 is not going to excite on a track, and neither is a sodden British B-road its natural habit, but while the former will expose the weak points you'd expect of a car of this size and weight, the latter struggles to faze the big Bentley. It has a flow and a natural pedigree to its chassis that results in it never feeling out of its depth, and when

## 'The natural pedigree to its chassis means that it never feels out of its depth'

there is more space between the white lines or one lane turns into many, the V8 Flying Spur exudes a confidence and capability that has you thinking it could possibly be a better GT car than its GT relative.

A car such as the Flying Spur V8 shouldn't really fit into an **evo** world, but somehow it just does. Just as the Mulsanne was a firm favourite for its unique approach to opulence and performance, this latest addition to the Flying Spur family is more than up to the task of continuing this unique tradition. ☒

**Engine** V8, 3996cc, twin-turbo **Power** 542bhp @ 6000rpm  
**Torque** 568lb @ 2000-4500rpm **Weight** 2330kg (236bhp/ton)  
**0-62mph** 4.1sec **Top speed** 198mph **Basic price** £153,900

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# IGNITION

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# Meet the new boss

The 992-gen GT3 eschews big power gains for improvements where it *really* matters. Here's everything you need to know

by HENRY CATCHPOLE



WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT A LAP TIME. BUT before we get heavy with the numbers, I think it's worth taking a moment to appreciate the aesthetics, because this new GT3 feels like a much bigger transformation than with previous generations. Devoid of its disguises, it looks startlingly more trim and taut than a standard 992. It's as though, in order to match the kerb weight of its forebear, it didn't just need a strict diet but full-on surgery. The way the standard car's bulbous bottom has been sliced into. The way the lower front looks as though it has been pulled open and a jaw removed. The deeply sunken nostrils... it's almost brutal.

It has to be the most aggressive GT3 to date. The most RS non-RS. Just look at the rear wing. Even regardless of the swan-neck design, the pierced black supports are so much more Rennsport than any other GT3. Below it, the prominently jutting vanes of the new rear diffuser ratchet up the aero ante even further. The wheels are now 20in diameter at the front and 21in at the rear, matching the previous

RS and filling the arches like a glass left unattended under a running tap. It's serious stuff.

The colour looks a little bit Miami and a little bit Riviera, but is in fact Shark Blue (code D5C). And while it's striking, there's a no-nonsense air about its non-metallic flatness. It means business.

Having said all that, a quick glance at the spec sheet might make you wonder if it's all for show. Power is up by only 10bhp (in the past it has been a 30-40bhp jump between generations), the 0-62mph time is exactly the same at 3.4sec (with PDK) and the top speed of the manual car has increased by a single mph to 199mph. Hardly earth-shattering gains. But the reason is the retention of the 991's glorious, naturally aspirated, 4-litre flat-six. It's an engine derived from the one in the GT3 R and almost identical to that found in a GT3 Cup. Leaps in power and straight-line performance have been eschewed in favour of preserving pin-sharp throttle response and a 9000rpm soundtrack to make your spine tingle. Sacrifices worth making, in our book.



But before you start to think this GT3 is simply an exercise in maintaining the status quo, it's worth considering its ability against a stopwatch around a track. A very particular track. You know the one.

If you want to know just how much of a step-on the new 911 GT3 is, then consider its lap time around the Nürburgring Nordschleife. A full lap of the famous 20.8km circuit took Lars Kern 6min 59.9sec, making this the first GT3 to drop under the seven-minute mark. But that's not the extraordinary bit.

It's the lap time around the 20.6km section of the circuit (cutting out the 200m alongside the pits at T13 for logistical reasons) that is really interesting. This is the time that we can compare directly with previous 911s. The new 911 GT3 took 6min 55.2sec to complete this portion. The previous-gen 911 GT3 RS took 6min 56.4sec. And the reason for picking the RS and not the standard GT3 (which took 7min 12.7sec) for this comparison is that both cars were wearing Michelin Cup 2 Rs when they set their times, albeit the RS's were 10mm wider. Putting out 503bhp, the new GT3 was also 10bhp down on the old RS.

So, despite the same but narrower tyres and less power, the 992 GT3 still managed to go quicker. That's how much of a difference is made by the GT3's new platform, new aero and its adoption of double-wishbone suspension at the front.

The last of those is really the biggest new piece of the jigsaw puzzle with this latest car. It's a set-up that is swiped directly from Porsche's 911 race cars, but one that has never been seen in a road-going 911 before. It was by all accounts a hugely difficult task to package double wishbones where once there were MacPherson struts yet retain the front luggage space, but the engineers have managed it. The rear suspension remains the same in broad concept, but is totally new in terms of parts and there are almost exclusively ball-joints in the GT3.

The reason for the switch to double wishbones at the front is that it allows better control of camber during cornering and therefore increased contact between the tyre and road. The overall increase in stiffness of the 992 platform has also opened up opportunities in how the suspension can be tuned.

When I rode in the prototype, it was noticeable even from the passenger seat that there was greater lateral grip but also increased vertical compliance.

Significant parts of this equation are, of course, the wheels and brakes, as they are unsprung mass. The standard iron discs are larger in diameter, up to 408mm on the front and 380mm on the rear. However, despite the increase in size, the weight penalty is apparently negligible thanks to the way they have been built. Even lighter Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes (PCCB) will be an option. The wheels are forged alloys with centre locks. The spokes look almost impossibly spindly and, in keeping with the rest of the car, the design is more angular than those of previous GT3 wheels. A body-colour pinstripe around the black rims is also available, and the tyres are 255/35 at the front, 315/30 at the rear.

Other lightweight parts include the exhaust system, which saves 10kg, the engine cover and the carbonfibre bonnet. The rear screen is the same lightweight Gorilla Glass first seen in the 991.2 GT3 RS, while more sound-insulating material has been

**'IT'S THE FIRST  
GT3 TO DROP  
UNDER THE  
7MIN MARK  
AROUND THE  
NORDSCHLEIFE'**







stripped out of the interior compared to the previous GT3. If you want to go further still, then a lightweight carbon roof will be an option. Spec the Clubsport pack, however, and you will add a bit of weight back in, because the half cage adds about 15kg.

If you want to attach a bit of weight to your wrist, then you could of course choose to buy a new chronograph to go with the car (and you can't buy the former if you don't have the latter). Its case is made of the same titanium as the con rods in the GT3's engine, the winding rotor is shaped like a GT3 wheel and the dial can be painted to match the car.

Anyway, retreating from the horological to the automotive, if you're not so fussed about the more than 50 per cent increase in downforce achieved

**Above:** PDK-equipped cars see the return of a proper gearshift lever, redesigned to look like a manual gearstick

by the new GT3 then you may be interested in one without a wing. A Touring has been confirmed, but it won't be unveiled until later in the year. Even with the deletion of the rear wing, it will be interesting to see how this more aggressive GT3's looks adapt to the subtler character of a Touring version.

One area of the car that will easily fit in with a Touring, though, is the interior. That's not to say the standard GT3 won't be at home on a track, it's just that the fundamentals of the 992 cabin are noticeably more luxurious than previous generations. The central touch-screen and mostly

digital dials lend a tech-heavy ambience. In order to scale-back the distractions, there is a new Track Mode for the instruments, which just leaves the central, 10,000rpm rev-counter with the minimum of necessary information either side, such as tyre pressure, oil pressure, oil temperature, water temperature and fuel level. Further reducing the need to take your eyes off the tarmac ahead are the new shift lights, which progressively encircle the rev-counter in yellow and then flash blue just before the limiter cuts in. The lights are said to be easily visible in your peripheral vision, just like in a race car.

And if you're someone who enjoys pretending that you've got a race sequential, then you'll be delighted to see the return of a proper shift lever in a PDK 992. This has been possible because the 'box is the old (significantly lighter) seven-speed PDK rather than the new eight-speed. The lever itself has been redesigned to look just like a manual gearstick at first glance, which is a nice touch. Of course a real, six-speed manual is also available should you so wish.

The price for all of this? In the UK the new GT3 will start at £123,100. If we were to draw up a group test right now, then we would probably be looking at cars like a Lamborghini Huracán Evo RWD, which starts at £164,400, a McLaren Artura, which will be around £180,000, and Aston Martin's Vantage AMR, which comes in at £149,995. If we included a Ferrari, then it would have to be the £200k F8 Tributo. In other words, the new GT3, just like its ancestors, still looks like a relative performance car bargain. The king is dead. Long live the king. ✕



## SPECIFICATION

Engine	Flat-six, 3996cc
Power	503bhp
Torque	n/a
Weight	1435kg (PDK)
Power-to-weight	356bhp/ton
0-62mph	3.4sec (PDK)
Top speed	199mph
Basic price	£123,100



## The Long Ranger

Lotus's concept racer for 2030 promises to go the Le Mans distance on electric power alone

**B**Y 2030 WE COULD BE WATCHING all-electric racers like this competing in endurance races such as Le Mans, Daytona and Spa, says Lotus Engineering. Its design study, titled E-R9, is what it imagines such a long-distance racer could look like and combines not only pure electric power and adaptive suspension geometry, but also 'morphing' surfaces for adaptive aerodynamics and jet fighter-style 'aero vectoring' for high-speed cornering.

It's a great-looking sports racer, with its delta-wing upper body and jet-fighter canopy, and Lotus has deployed its free-thinking, competition-honed expertise to imagine what technology it might embody. But is it really possible that we could have electric endurance racers in just nine years' time? The current

pinnacle of electric racing, Formula E, features single-seaters with a top speed of 174mph racing on street circuits for just 45 minutes. The idea that an electric sportscar could deliver similar lap times to the current LMP1 cars for three hours – let alone six, 12 or 24 – on classic circuits seems a stretch.

It's not, reckons Louis Kerr, principal platform engineer on the Evija, Lotus's electric hypercar. 'If you look at the trend in terms of battery technology, you'll see that energy density and power density are increasing in multiples year on year,' Kerr explains. 'By 2030, we'll have mixed cell chemistry batteries that give the best of both worlds: power from power dense cells, and range from energy dense cells.'

Battery packs will be tailored to each racetrack, he says, delivering the right blend of

power and range, while pit stops for recharging will take no longer than pit stops for fuel did in Formula 1: around 12 seconds. 'We can fully charge the Evija battery pack in less than nine minutes on current technology, and that's with a very big battery; you wouldn't have one that big for a race car.'

It's worth noting the advances in Formula E. In its inaugural 2014-15 season, the racers had 190kW (255bhp). For the 2022-23 season, the cars will have 350kW (469bhp) for qualifying and the races will include pit stops too; not to change cars as they did in the championship's first four seasons, but simply to 'flash charge' the battery pack.

Energy preservation and recuperation are key to the performance and range of the E-R9. A race car can recoup more energy than a





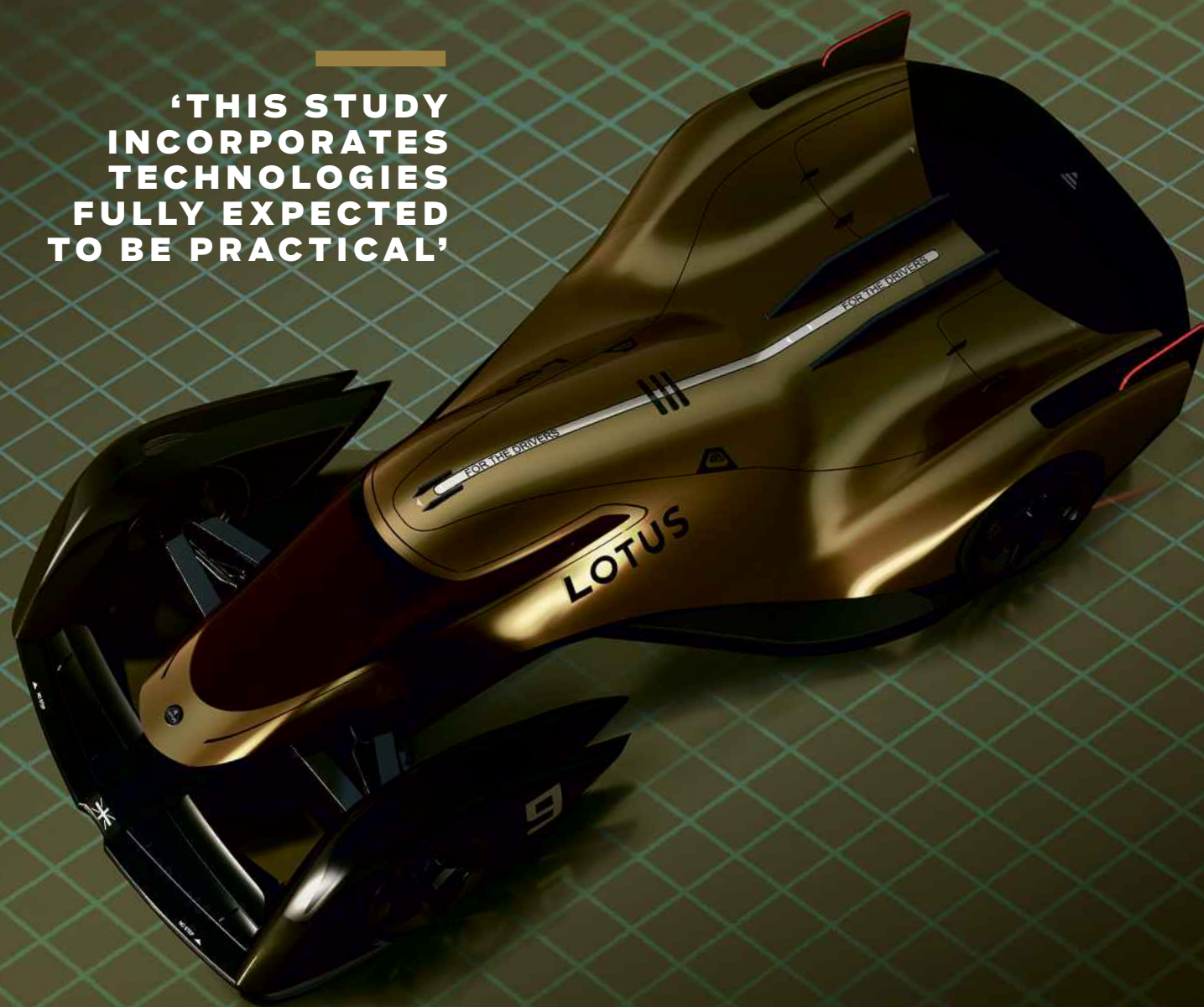
road car because it brakes at 2 or 3G, says Kerr, while improvements in motor technology that allow energy to be dispersed faster for greater acceleration can harvest energy faster too: 'We can recover more of what would normally be wasted energy.'

A motor for each wheel gives four-wheel drive, as on the Evija road car, allowing torque vectoring that is much finer and more effective than it could ever be on an internal combustion engine racer. Because each wheel has its own independent motor, the time to react and apply different torques – positive or negative – is near instantaneous, says Kerr: 'I wouldn't go as far as saying we have finite control but it is very fast. We can get much closer to the theoretical fastest lap of an electrified car than that of an internal combustion car.' This direct, near-instant control of each driven wheel, and thus traction control and stability control functions too, allows electric cars like the Evija and E-R9 to creep right up to the limit of grip and stay there.

'Torque vectoring would be fully driver adjustable,' says Kerr. 'We don't want software taking over a driver's input.' It's an honourable



**'THIS STUDY  
INCORPORATES  
TECHNOLOGIES  
FULLY EXPECTED  
TO BE PRACTICAL'**



ambition and one you'd expect from a car maker that runs with the strapline 'For the Drivers'. However, the other concepts proposed for Lotus's endurance racer study take it into another realm.

One is adaptive suspension geometry. 'To have a nicely balanced, nice handling car, you need an amount of toe-in and camber,' says Kerr, but it's not needed in a straight line because it creates rolling resistance and eats into the car's range. The solution is automatic control of the geometry to have zero toe in a straight line but then add toe and camber when the brakes or steering are applied to deliver the desired dynamic response and balance.

More radical still are the aerodynamic concepts, which are again driven by energy preservation and performance. E-R9's adaptive, active aerodynamics are of a type not seen on a race car before, using morphing surfaces – body panels that can change their size and attitude – to suit the needs of the moment. It also has wings that increase cornering

force not in the conventional way but by generating turning force like on an aeroplane.

'This endurance racer is, if you like, a fighter aircraft that just happens to be in very close proximity to the ground. It's a combination of car and plane,' says Richard Hill, chief aerodynamicist at Lotus. 'Whole surfaces will be able to morph, will be able to expand and grow and change attitude to the airflow locally, according to monitored pressures. The concept that you need to think about is that nothing is fixed.'

The aero of Formula 1 and LMP cars is mostly fixed and thus a compromise, but on the E-R9 the body surface will be changing to deliver high downforce for cornering, low drag for the straights and maximum drag under braking. In addition, E-R9 also features 'aero vectoring'.

Wings on competition cars tend to generate downforce to push the car down onto its tyres to get more grip. 'You can generate forces to make you go around the corner quicker that don't rely on the tyre

contact patch,' says Hill, pointing out that fighter planes change direction using fins and rudders to generate aerodynamic forces. 'The fins at the back of our endurance racer would be very much like that.'

These ideas are no flight of fancy, says Hill: 'We've extrapolated a little into the future but this study incorporates technologies which we fully expect to develop and be practical. It's about reimagining what you can do if limitations aren't there. Nothing that we're talking about is unachievable. This is not fiction,' says Hill. 'In some respects, we might not even be envisaging far enough.'

Electric sports racers that can match the range and pace of current LMP cars may well be a reality by 2030, but any fan of endurance racing will tell you that would still leave one aspect to solve. A major part of the atmosphere and appeal of 24 hour racing is hearing the distinct cry of various race cars howling along the Mulsanne Straight or up through Eau Rouge...



# Electric avenue

And away from the racetrack, Lotus's sports car range prepares to go fully BEV in a joint venture with Alpine

**I**TS LE MANS ASPIRATIONS MAY BE some years away from becoming reality, but Lotus has confirmed that in the meantime it will not only replace its entire current sports car range, and work with Alpine on the project, but the process will start later this year with the Type 131 (see [evo 278](#)) beginning prototype production.

This show of strength will be delivered by a new managing director, Matt Windle, who has moved from his role as executive director of Lotus Engineering to take over from current Lotus Cars MD Phil Popham as the company continues to expand under its Vision80 strategy.

Even for Lotus, with the backing afforded it by parent company Geely, this is no small undertaking. Under the terms of its agreement with Alpine, Lotus will develop a new scaleable platform that both companies will use to build electric sports cars, with the French manufacturer replacing its A110 and the British firm launching two new models to replace its current Elise, Exige and Evora line-up, which will cease production in 2021 and be marked with five special editions (two Elises, and three Exige models). While Lotus will lead the design, development

and engineering of the platform, Alpine will provide the project with scale as the French firm embarks on its own transformation to an electric sports car brand under CEO Luca de Meo's plans.

Both parties will also work together on electric powertrains, with Lotus drawing on its learnings from the Evija hypercar project (pictured) and Alpine tapping into the resource of Renault's electrification experience in small, compact vehicles.

The two new electric Lotus models will cost between £60,000 and £85,000. Before these arrive, the Type 131, a mid-engined hybrid V6 supercar aimed at undercutting the 911 and following on where the Esprit left off in 2004, and built on a modified Evija platform, is expected to be the last internal combustion engine Lotus.

**'TWO ELECTRIC MODELS WILL REPLACE THE CURRENT ELISE, EXIGE AND EVORA LINE-UP'**



## WATCHES



**TAG Heuer Carrera Porsche Chronograph**

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**Zenith Chronomaster Sport**

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Bringing, as its name suggests, a more overtly sporty option to the firm's long-running Chronomaster range, this new Zenith is available with its dial in either black or the more traditional white.



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# DOA: Lamborghini P140

A V10-engined 'Baby Lamborghini' was in development more than a decade before the Gallardo was launched in 2003. This is the story of why it never saw the light of day

**I**N 1988 LAMBORGHINI STOPPED MAKING the V8-powered Jalpa, ending an 18-year run of 'entry-level' models that started with the Urraco. Forever in the shadow of their V12-engined big brothers, these cars were never very popular, yet Lamborghini didn't give up on the idea of a more affordable model in its line-up. To this end, a year before the Jalpa was retired, the company began work on a new project codenamed P140, which would eventually step into the shoes of the forgotten Ferrari 308/328 rival. Better yet, it would feature something offered by neither the Jalpa nor any Ferrari: a V10.

To wrap this brand-new, in-house engine and bespoke chassis, Lamborghini called upon favoured designer Marcello Gandini, who came up with a stubby wedge shape most notable for a pair of glass buttresses either side of the rear window and the designer's trademark kicked-up wheelarches. As a result, the P140 wasn't a classically pretty car, but this wasn't its biggest problem. A greater issue was money, or lack of it.

Lamborghini at the time was not a big company, nor did it sell many cars, and its owner, Chrysler, was not sending over blank cheques from Detroit. This meant there wasn't much cash to develop brand new models. The tiny engineering department also had its hands full already working on another

project, P132, which would become the Diablo, and since this would be the company's flagship, replacing the sainted Countach, it had to take priority. Only once it was launched in 1990 could attention turn to its baby sister, but even then some engineering effort had to be given to Diablo variants, which were more attractive profit-wise. The P140 project was on the back foot, and when the world started to sink into the recession of the early '90s it was laid to rest after just three prototypes (including the one pictured here) had been completed.

P140 didn't entirely go away, however, because in 1994 Chrysler sold Lamborghini to Megatech of Indonesia and the 'entry level' project was restarted under the codename L140. Not everyone in the company was a fan, though. Chief test driver Valentino Balboni, for example, used to delight in

deliberately spinning the prototype on the roads around the factory to highlight its fundamental handling issues. These issues came about because the V10 sat on top of the gearbox, a flawed layout that stemmed from the decision to define the distance between the wheels by dividing a Diablo wheelbase by 12 and then multiplying by 10.

The height of the drivetrain might explain why Giugiaro's rejected proposal for L140 looked somewhat ungainly and ill-proportioned when it was revealed to the world in 1995 as the ItalDesign Calà concept. In the same year, realising that it could never afford to develop a second model line with a bespoke V10, Lamborghini came up with a new plan, informally called 'Baby Diablo', which would use a bought-in engine instead.

An approach was made to Audi to discuss buying its 4.2-litre V8 engine and four-wheel-drive hardware, and though this project didn't make it to production, it opened the lines of communication that led to Audi buying Lamborghini in 1998, the result of which was a bump in cash and resources that allowed the Italians to dust off that old in-house V10 engine design so that project L140 could be rebooted and seen through to production at last. We know it today as the Gallardo. It took 15 years, but in 2003 Lamborghini finally got its V10-powered junior supercar.

**'BALBONI USED TO DELIGHT IN DELIBERATELY SPINNING THE PROTOTYPE'**





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# Max Girardo

Founder, Girardo & Co

From an early Testarossa encounter, via teenage aspirations of being a rally star, Max Girardo recalls the road that led to him becoming a collectable car specialist

by ANTONY INGRAM

**I** GREW UP IN SOUTH EAST ASIA BUT my family is Italian, from Turin, and I remember when I was a little kid my granddad had an Autobianchi A112 Abarth. He always had the spicy version of the cheap city cars, which were always fun to travel in. My dad always liked cars too, so I guess I was influenced or indoctrinated right from the beginning.

Dad did some rallying when he was a young guy, and I heard all the stories growing up: rallying in a Fiat 500, and then an 850 Coupe, and then he had a big upgrade to a Renault 8 Gordini. So my dad always had cool cars around.

We'd go back to Italy for summer holidays and stuff, and he'd keep some kind of fun car there that we'd use each summer, so it was always exciting going back. We were living in Thailand, but in Italy we had a Fiat Ritmo Abarth, with 130 horsepower!

Then there was a real defining moment: I was probably 12 or 14 years old, around 1988, and my dad brought home a Ferrari Testarossa. It wasn't ours, he borrowed it, or had it on a test drive or something, but I was like, wow, how about that? We had a Ferrari at home! I remember the first ever Ferrari he bought was a 355. That's not something you forget, going to collect a brand new Ferrari from the dealership.

I had a slew of little motorcycles, such as the 48cc Hondas and Suzukis, and as I grew up I got bigger and bigger off-road trials bikes. I'd do

some driving around the courtyard and stuff, but never did any racing before I was 18, never any real driving until I got my driving licence, and then all hell broke loose.

My first car was a white Fiat Cinquecento; remember the boxy one? The deal was that whatever money I could put in, my dad would match it. So I worked to get some money together and I had this great plan: in Italy, in Europe, they had the Cinquecento Trofeo, which was a kit you could buy and you could go rallying. So I bought the car and my plan was then to buy the kit and go rallying. I was super excited, bought the car brand new – how stupid was that? – and I had to save more money as my dad would only match what I had.

But before I bought the kit, I rolled it. I was late to meet somebody and I thought I was going to make up some time. I was coming onto a motorway on the slip road, lost the back end and went up the bank. The car stopped on the bank and I thought, "Jesus, that was lucky." And then it went *dun-dun-dun-dun* and rolled down the hill! [Laughs] That was the end of my Fiat Cinquecento.

Then I had a Lancia, an Ypsilon. From the age of 18 I was in Switzerland and I bought a terrible light green Ypsilon. But my dad had the 355 at the time, so we used to do meets. We bought a Renault 8 Gordini, so we did things like the Historic Monte Carlo Rally together. We had some









great memories, really good fun, real father and son bonding time. But my dreams of becoming a World Rally Champion ended when I rolled my Fiat Cinquecento.

While I was living and studying in Switzerland I was working in a pub, which was great. All my friends were at university and not working, so in comparison I had loads of money. Go out to dinner? No problem, I've got cash! In Switzerland pubs close at 2am, so as you can imagine I wasn't going to class very much in the mornings at all. While I was working in the pub there was a job at a petrol station, but then I realised that if I worked at both I could make even more money! So I did that, which meant I went to class even less. I was just working and living at home, so I had extra cash to go buy bits for my cars. It was great.

Anyway, I was working in the pub and an ex-girlfriend came in and said to me, "Nice to

## **'MY DREAMS OF BEING A RALLY CHAMPION ENDED WHEN I ROLLED MY FIAT'**

see you," blah blah blah, "I'm pregnant. Don't worry, it's not you." Close call! But then she said: "I saw an ad in the paper, something you might like. It's something to do with cars. You should really reply." Anyway, she brought in the ad the next time she was in the pub, and one Sunday morning I woke up and I thought I should apply. It was actually what's now known as Bonhams, but at the time it was called Brooks, so I went

for a job interview with Simon Kidston and I started work on the 1st of July. I was 19 years old and my birthday is on the 2nd so I turned 20 the next day.

Basically I was just getting the sandwiches, but it was in the car world, working at an auction house, doing classic cars. I was still living at home – as a good Italian boy you try to live at home for as long as you possibly can. You don't wanna move out; what's the point? You've gotta pay rent, gotta buy your own food and do your own washing. So us Italians, we're trained to stay at home as much as you can. So I went home and said, "Mum, great news: I've got a job offer in a real company. I'm gonna stop working in the pub, stop working in the petrol station, do this 9-to-5 job in cars over summer, and at the end of the summer I'll stop working completely and I'm going to go to university and get my degree." And she's like,





thank god, because I was never going to class. And then I started working there and I never went back to university. My mother still complains that I never got my degree, still thinks it's a disaster, but I think it turned out okay!

I did six or seven years at Bonhams in Geneva. Simon was great and taught me a lot, but I wanted to make more money and I got offered a job to go and work in a shipping company that was specialising in moving high-value cars. So I moved to Monaco, worked there four or five years, which was an amazing experience, opening a new office by myself, accounting, all that. But it was transport, it wasn't buying, selling, consigning, researching cars, not my passion.

**Top left:** the first car Girardo consigned to an auction was the Alfa Romeo SZ owned from new by his father.

**Above right:** plan to build a Cinquecento Trofeo was curtailed. **Top right:** Lancia Ypsilon was 'terrible'

Then RM Sotheby's contacted me and asked if I would open their European operation in 2006, so I left Monaco, moved to London, and opened the European office for RM Sotheby's. I became the head auctioneer and had an amazing 11 years of auctioneering for Sotheby's. It was phenomenal, but I just wanted to do something for us, start something new. So six years ago I started the new business called Girardo & Co, and now I'm just looking after our clients, buying cars, consigning cars, just doing cool stuff with cars – just cars cars cars!

With Girardo & Co I wanted to take all the things we learned from RM Sotheby's, but do it on a slightly smaller scale, with more attention to detail – instead of selling 100 cars per auction we sell maybe 100 cars in a whole year. You can dedicate more time and effort to each of the cars, each of the clients. Less is more. And this is in no way a criticism of RM as it gets great

results and I learned so much, but we wanted to do it on a smaller scale, to serve fewer clients to a higher level.

Also, when you work in a really big company that's such a finely tuned machine, you don't have as much opportunity to follow passions, you know? So the rally car things that we do, of course it's a business but we love the cars and they're fun, and we're lucky that we can have the hobby turned into part of the work. Financially it doesn't make sense to do the "McRae vs McRae" video we did [with Jimmy and Alister], bringing them over from Australia and Scotland, bringing the WRC car [Colin McRae's 1997 Safari Rally-winning Impreza] over to Walter's Arena, and a team of people. It makes zero financial sense. But it's just passion. You've gotta do some stuff because you just love it, right? We're in the lucky position that we can do that cool stuff, because it's not a big machine.

My personal collection now is a spillover of that





rally disease. So I've got plenty of Italian rally cars, a Stratos Group 4 car, a Lancia 037 that was driven by Toivonen, and we've got Lancia Delta Integrale Group A cars, the Impreza WRC, so quite a bias towards rally cars.

I definitely make a point of taking a cool car out when I have somewhere to drive. It's never as often as I'd like to, but I'm in a lucky position that there are always cars around. I've got so many clients that offer me cars to drive, so I really do try and avoid taking the boring car to go somewhere. Life's too short to drive boring cars.

One of my cars, an Alfa Romeo SZ, has a cool story. My dad bought it brand new. I still remember going to the Alfa dealership, during the bubble in 1989, and the Alfa dealer charged him an extra ten grand to have the opportunity to buy it, because they were all sold out. My dad must have done like 3000

## 'I TRY TO AVOID TAKING A BORING CAR. LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO DRIVE BORING CARS'

miles in it in all the years he had it. Then when I started working at Bonhams, I needed to find some cars. Well that Alfa SZ, my dad was thinking of selling it, so I said great, let me consign it to the auction, and it'll be my first ever consignment at any auction. Friends and family first, right? We sold it at the Nürburgring auction. I drove it there for the sale, it got sold to a guy in Germany, and it eventually sold for about half of what we paid for it!

Anyway, coming back from a race one day, one

of my really good friends was asking what he could get for my birthday. We were talking and he said, "I know what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna find your dad's Alfa SZ." I was like, ah, whatever... There's 900, 1000 of them, how are you going to do that? Anyway, a year later, the bugger tracked it down! He sent me the car and the contact details of the guy that owned it, and I thought, now I've got to buy it. It's the most expensive birthday present anyone has ever given me!

So not only do I remember going to buy it brand new, it was also the first car I ever consigned, and sold, and tracked down and bought back. Now I'm on a mission. My dad had that 355, so I'm going to track that down as well. I don't want to rush into it, though, because when I find it I'm gonna have to buy it...! ✕

**Above and top:** rally cars are a real passion for Girardo, and led to him bringing together Jimmy and Alister McRae for a shoot-out in one of Colin McRae's WRC Imprezas





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## Hard to handle

When young whippersnappers like Jethro Bovingdon start complaining about ride quality, we really are in trouble.

The fault lies squarely in the court of our Teutonic friends I'm afraid. Now, I don't know about the quality of German B-roads, but ours are truly shocking, and have highlighted the appalling ride quality of a number of cars I've owned, sadly all German.

Even winter gritting makes my wife's Golf GTD feel like it's being driven on a poorly maintained Roman cobbled track, with wince-inducing results. I don't know what the cost of chiropractors or dentists is in Germany, but they're clearly in cahoots with their car makers.

The Germans make fabulous cars, don't get me wrong, but Jethro's piece took me back to my first experience of an Audi A6 Avant, which I'd specced as an S-line to get the tastiest alloys and 'sporty' options. Style over substance, the perennial battle.

My children got to the point where the daily fight to get in the front seat of the Audi wasn't to prove superiority, it was more a refusal to be subjected to the bone-shattering ride in the back. What the dog in the very back thought I shudder to think.

A subsequent 5-series in M-sport spec (see, I never learn) was only marginally better, but no magic carpet either.

But our lot are not without blame. Jaguar was for decades one of the few manufacturers that appeared to have found the magic formula of good handling without compromising ride quality, but if reports of the F-type are to be



believed, even it has replaced pliant suspension components with solid items in the quest for the ultimate lap time.

How many people take an A6, Golf GTD, etc on track, where the nth degree of handling is exposed? With most cars having a myriad of set-up options nowadays, can it really be that hard to make the Comfort setting truly that?

Anyway, I'm off for a lie down with a Horlicks and a Werther's Original – my bad back is playing up.

**Euan Gibson, St Abbs**

## Sorry, Dean

Whilst reading *evo* 282 and gawping in awe at Dean Smith's photographs in 'Life Through a Lens', I felt it only right to email in my congratulations on such a superb portfolio. But then I turned to page 121 and... wait! What? The perfect capture of a Mk2 MX-5.

No sunsets, no dramatic scenery, no exotic metal, just the pure essence of the thrill of driving summed up by capturing that tiny trace of opposite lock and the slight squat of the rear, in an unassuming but affordable (albeit heavily fettled) roadster.

I could almost hear the V6 singing.

**Michael J Richardson**

## Lasting Imprezion

Richard Meaden's column about his Colin McRae encounter (*evo* 282) was brilliant, evoking so many fond memories of my childhood/teenage years and underscoring why rallying has always been my favourite form of motorsport. The early starts, standing for hours in the freezing cold due to an inevitable stage delay, hot drinks to keep you going – it all just added to the anticipation.



## LETTER OF THE MONTH

# The soft option

### READING JETHRO BOVINGDON'S LATEST COLUMN

(*evo* 282), I was pleased to discover I'm not the only one who's in favour of increased ride heights and chubby sidewalls to improve our performance cars.

Back in 1997 I sketched what I thought the still-secret Cayenne was going to be: a Boxster Concept Coupe Safari, naturally. Here we are 24 years later and my dream of a lifted sports car is here, with a Porsche shape – and a Singer price tag.

When I drive my own ND2 Miata (MX-5) RF, I vacillate wildly between 'fixing' the suspension, which would have the unwelcome effect of making it less useful on bad roads or accessing some driveways, or leaving it stock. But a third option really could exist: a Miata set-up akin to an Ariel Nomad. A Safari Targa perhaps?

While Jethro's idea of an Audi A1 citycarver turned gravel hero would likely find more buyers, a rear-wheel-drive rally coupe like an Escort 1600 (or perhaps, more deliciously, an 037) as a road car makes a ton of sense to me. Bring on the Alpine A110 Sports X, and an Abarth 124 Rally... and a Miata RF Safari.

Just take my money now!

**Jonathan Eziquiel-Shriro, St Louis, USA**

## The Letter of the Month wins a Straton watch

The writer of this month's star letter receives a Straton Daily Driver watch worth £205.

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## **INBOX**



There is something about the smell of the air and the echoes of anti-lag in the valleys that still sends shivers down my spine.

I grew up close to Kielder Forest, with the Pirelli Rally and/or the Border Counties Rally being the highlight of the year for me, and I still return home from down south to spectate.

And to enjoy the roads. The routes used for the 2020 eCoty test are within five miles of my parents' house, and shortly after passing my test I spent many hours driving the sections from Bonchester Bridge to Newcastleton in a Yaris (a 997cc 53-plate that was seriously underpowered, but the brilliant corners made up for it).

I am now considering buying a GR Yaris, which I hope to drive on those very same roads when I go home and visit... if I don't end up buying (you guessed it) an Impreza, which has always been a dream car of mine due to the associations outlined above.

**David Hemming, Bath**

### 22B, or not 22B

Great read (and pictures) on the battle between the Audi Sport Quattro, Subaru Impreza 22B and Toyota GR Yaris (**evo** 282). The differences and similarities between these rally road rockets swirls the senses and gets me looking at the classifieds far more than maybe I should.

For some reason, maybe because it's from my 'era', I can't help but lust over the 22B more than the other two. Even sitting idle those gold wheels and the spoiler just look the part, and then comes the history of those who piloted the competition versions (even though this wasn't one). To know it drives as good as it looks is even more satisfying.

I've just emptied a side of my

garage to fit a nice car, and this would be the perfect addition... if only the budget allowed. Guess I will have to live that dream through your very lucky experiences. Jealous? You bet!

**Gary Paddock**

### An alternative view

In **evo** 282 you compared two Audis to their competitors and on both occasions chose the latter. However, if I were a clever Audi marketing man I believe I could turn your opinions into an advantage.

Take the Mercedes-AMG C63 S Estate v Audi RS4 Avant test. You say that whilst the C63 is the better track car, the RS4's smoother ride and more sophisticated dynamic personality is far more suited to the road, with the C63's skateboard ride letting it down badly. Well, who buys a heavy estate car for the track?

The same goes for the Audi TT RS v Toyota GR Supra. You say the Audi is faster, more capable, better built, has a fabulous interior and a superb engine. Yet you prefer the Supra, with its snappy handling being a challenge – in a self-sabotaging sort of way. Personally I would prefer to stay on the road, as hedgerows do the paintwork no good at all.

I am of the opinion that in both these comparisons you have confirmed that the Audis are far better road cars to live with every day. OK, I appreciate you were just indulging yourselves because you can, but people like me have to buy cars on their overall ability and not just for trackdays and sliding about on damp, twisty roads. So come on, Audi's marketing department: show what you are made of, as **evo** has almost done your job for you.

**D Smith, South Wales**

PS: I do not drive an Audi.





## EV-free zone

Last month's Inbox really struck a chord. To echo a couple of your readers, please keep **evo** an EV-free zone. As Julian Spender comments, they're appliances, and as such they belong in *Which?* magazine, not **evo**.

There's an old respected weekly trying so obviously hard to be positive about them and make us like them. Please don't go down that road.

Thanks for great content.

**Tony Carey**

## Excess all areas

The refrain in the excellent eCoty issue (**evo** 281) that a given car had too much power to deploy on the road made me chuckle. We know this, and also that it is fairly easy to extract 25 per cent more power from modern turbocharged engines just by rewiring their brains.

Too many of us get fixated by power and absolute performance. Why? Perhaps the insidious effect of Top Trumps. Yet those things don't really matter in the real world. My RS4 was only really fun when the crankshaft was rotating at more than 6000 times a minute, which is frowned upon when driving to the shops (which is pretty much all we're allowed to do right now).

The things that really matter are aesthetics, tactility and amusement. This is why petrolheads love the Toyota GR Yaris (the Civic fails the aesthetics test for me) and the Alpine A110 (the S less so, for being more brutish, harder and serious).

Very few of us use their chosen road car on track, which leaves so much untapped performance for the socially responsible. That said, don't get me wrong – I still like to read about the excess...

**Damien Cann**

## New order

You are a UK magazine giving your assessment of cars that will be on UK roads, in a climate which is cold and slippery for many months of the year. Do you not read what you write?

Comments written relating to the BMW M2 CS: 'It's a slippery surface not playing into the hands of the M2.' 'I can see Jethro is struggling to keep up in the M2.' 'The engine gives more than the tyres can handle.' 'You need to be ready to catch the tail.' 'Cold tyres on the BMW make it feel very nervous.'

All your words. Does that sound like a Car of the Year? I don't think so!

The CS also doesn't look like a £75,000 car, just a tarted up M2.

Now for the Cayman GTS 4.0. Its naturally aspirated (your favourite) flat-six is 'rich and mellifluous'. 'The damping has a masterful capacity to shine.' 'It's so capable and so polished.' 'The quality of this GTS is staggering.' It seems the only small flaw is that the gearing of the 'excellent manual gearbox' is a bit too long.

Therefore order it with PDK: faultless, fast gearshifts at your fingertips, perfect on road or track.

Oh, but that omits the good 'old' interaction you must have in your cars. Like winding down the window with a rotating handle so you can put your arm out to indicate you are going to turn. Or that stick to pull on for a parking brake. Or going around to each door to lock it. Or maybe a handle on the front to crank the engine. Good old interaction between man and machine!

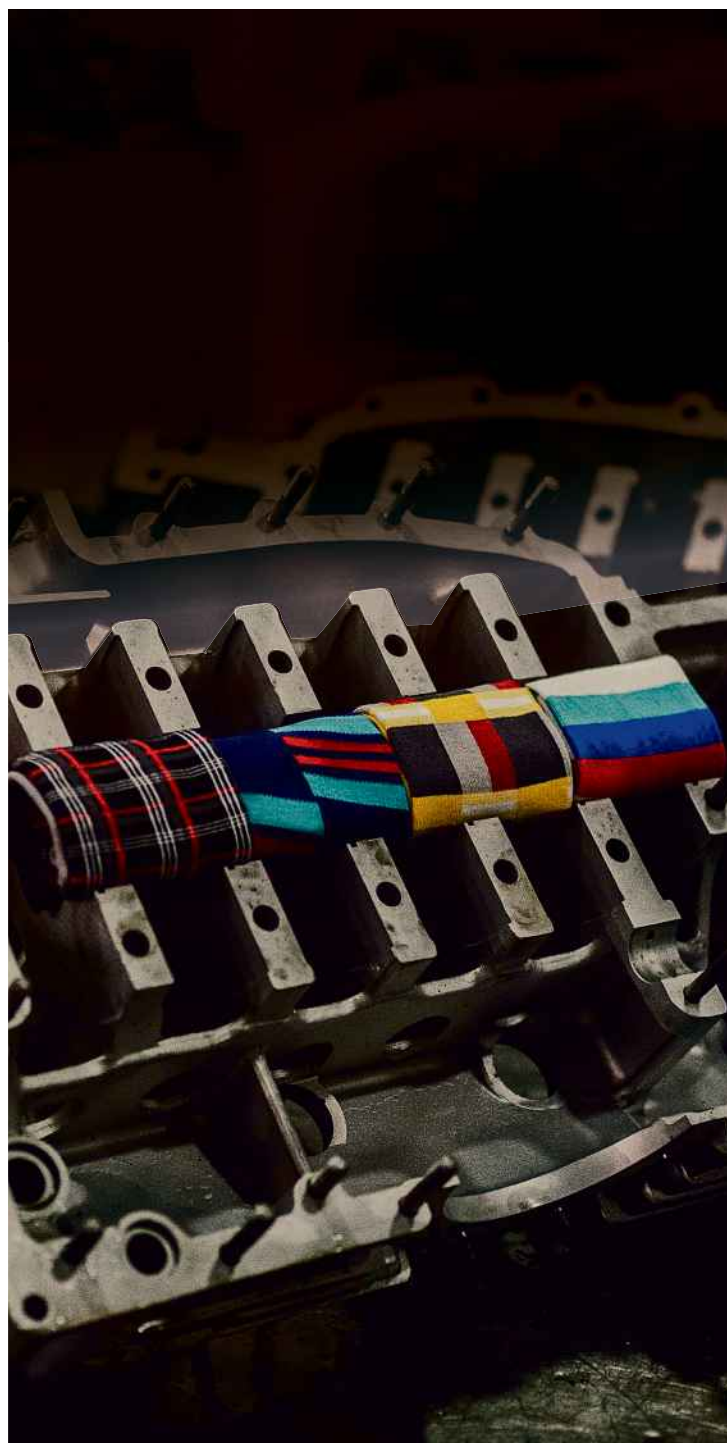
The McLaren should have won, and the BMW M2 should have been below the GTS, no question.

**Alan Ogden**

## Short but sweet

Patrik Askert (Inbox **evo** 282). Shut up.

**Matt Hill, Somerset**



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# RICHARD MEADEN

Treating cars as investments comes with a price of its own, reckons Meaden

**P**ERHAPS BECAUSE WE'VE ALL FOUND ourselves kicking around with time on our hands and looking for any excuse to escape the here and now, I've noticed that conversations have turned to ruefully reflecting upon the cars we should have bought, or worse, never have sold.

Ah yes, the ones that got away. A game best played with the benefit of hindsight and a pint of beer to cry into, the painful litany of golden opportunities missed is a reliable and bottomless source of sob stories. So far as I can tell the only solace to be drawn from this trend is that we're all in the same boat. Anyone who has owned a few interesting cars over the years – or simply spends their time trawling the online classifieds – has the same feelings of regret gnawing away inside them.

Largely because I'm able to scratch many four-wheeled itches in the name of work, I've not owned a string of cars. Even so, I could make a strong case for wishing I hadn't sold most of them, whether it was the souped-up Mini I spent all my cash on in my youth, the ultra-lightweight Fireblade-engined Caterham I commissioned as a reward to myself when Dennis Publishing bought its stake in *evo*, the Krypton Green S2 Lotus Exige I bought as a 'sensible' car to replace it, or the gorgeous '67 stepnose Alfa Giulia Sprint GT I sold to pay for architect fees. The less said about the L322 Range Rover the better...

With the exception of the Alfa, none have appreciated in value, so it's not a case of wishing I'd kept them because I'd now be sitting on a small fortune. It's simply because I loved them then and I'd love them now.

If I'm honest, I don't like the way attitudes have shifted from 'enthusiast' cars being things you buy to enjoy and expect to lose money on when the time comes to sell, to being 'collector' cars you buy with the expectation of making money. I can't recall when this became the norm, but now this mindset is well established, engaging in the formerly innocent activity of browsing *Car & Classic* or *Bring a Trailer* now feels like we're stock traders prowling the FTSE 100.

This probably sounds rich coming from someone who bought a 964 RS for £30k, but believe me when I say that its transition from plaything to pension plan comes with its own – admittedly

First World – problems. If it hadn't been something I'd yearned to own for years I'd never have stretched myself to afford to buy it. The satisfaction of finally getting the only 911 RS I could remotely afford – even though it was the least loved at the time – was more than enough to justify the years of monthly loan repayments.

I think the thing I dislike the most about our collective attitudinal shift is that in focusing on so-called 'investment' cars, we're blinding ourselves to the quirky, characterful or simply overlooked cars that are genuinely affordable. What's more, because they are also likely to be good to drive and very much of their time, if you keep them long enough they will almost certainly look after you. Not in a sell-up and retire kind of way, but enough to make you feel a little better about your long-term ownership costs.

One example of this I can offer is my S2 106 Rallye. £2750 was strong money back in the winter of 2008 when I bought it (yes, I'm crap at haggling), but they're going for considerably more than that now, assuming you can find one for sale. At the time I felt a certain peer pressure to look for an S1, but they were more money and usually riddled with rust. Because the S2 was a less desirable outlier it was cheaper, but it's now just beginning to enjoy its day in the sun.

So what would I buy today if I had a modest amount of spare cash? Given that I'm always drawn towards Alfas, I'm pretty sure I'd end up

with a 3.0 GTV, which would doubtless test my patience, but offers plenty of Italian exoticism for £10k. Similarly I'm often drawn towards something cool, comfy and French, so seeing decent C6s for circa £5-10k is horribly tempting.

Feeling more sporty? An S1 Elise would be heavenly, but instead of fantasising about sinking £20k you don't have into one, why not spend £3-5k on a noughties Toyota MR2 that shares a great deal of the Lotus's ethos and abilities? Or if you're one of those who constantly bleats about ridiculous air-cooled 911 values, try removing the blinkers and look to an A310 or A610 Alpine for a rarer and arguably cooler rear-engined icon for a fraction of the money.

I suppose what I'm saying is it's about time we rediscovered our innocence and engaged with buying interesting, entertaining and individual cars because they're our passion, not because we think they're poised to skyrocket in price. Follow your heart and you're sure to have some fun. Anything more is just a welcome bonus.

**'We're blinding ourselves to quirky or characterful cars that are genuinely affordable'**

@DickieMeaden

Richard is a contributing editor to *evo* and one of the magazine's founding team



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# RICHARD PORTER

The twists and turns of a new Netflix drama have got Porter gripped



HERE'S A LOT OF GREAT TV OUT THERE AT the moment but one of my recent favourites has to be *Stellantis* (Netflix, as of 16 January). From the first few seconds, once its needlessly long title sequence has finished, *Stellantis* will have you gripped as you try to understand how they will make this work.

The series is based around a rag-tag cast of characters forced into a crazy struggle for survival, one of the most compelling of which is Fiat, a proud Italian still acting like a major player with an important empire, though this empire is palpably crumbling. The scene in which Fiat is asked why once-favoured son Punto isn't around and has to admit that Punto has been killed is the most powerful I've seen on screen since the awful prolonged death scene in 2011's acclaimed Scandinavian drama *Är SAAB Okej? (Is SAAB Okay?)*.

Fiat is of course surrounded by a family of cohorts in Italy, including the tragic Lancia, a once beautiful and successful household name, now reduced to a shadow of former glories and clearly waiting for death. Almost as sad are the characters of Alfa Romeo and Maserati, both struggling by on past successes that, it gradually becomes clear, probably weren't successes at all. The compelling tragedy is that both continue to claim a big break is on its way, yet, as ever, it remains just around the corner. For me, the only character that doesn't work in the Italian scenes is Abarth, Fiat's near-identical brother who seemed at one point to be assuming a larger role but now appears sidelined and ultimately pointless. Sometimes you see Abarth on screen and have to look hard to see it's not Fiat, save for the increase in noise.

Speaking of identity crises, *Stellantis* also features plenty of action in France starring Peugeot and Citroën, two characters familiar to anyone who watched the long-running French series *PSA*. Back in the '90s fans of this show felt it had lost its way as the lead characters became almost interchangeable, but when we find them in *Stellantis* much seems to have changed. Peugeot has been working hard to win back the looks and dynamism that once brought great acclaim, while Citroën, once a very quirky character, seems to have rediscovered some of the old freewheeling spirit, or is it all just put on? The French scenes are very enjoyable, though you do begin to question why this seemingly successful pair have got involved with the rest of the characters, who will surely drag

them down. Mind you, it seems Citroën isn't perfect in this respect either, maintaining loyalty to a wayward offspring called DS, easily the most pointless character in *Stellantis*.

A far more compelling plotline concerns a pair of orphan brothers, Vauxhall and Opel. This slightly underwhelming duo are actually identical twins, though for some reason they try to pretend they're from different places, and their story is a sad one. Having been abandoned by a parent and rescued by Peugeot, they now struggle to find a place for themselves in the world, but it's clear they want to occupy the same space as Peugeot and that's bound to lead to fireworks.

Speaking of fireworks, there's always something brewing with the American scenes in *Stellantis*, which revolve around Chrysler, a

character some might remember as Mercedes' partner in the ill-fated late '90s drama *Daimler*. Chrysler is an interesting one, once a highly respected member of the Detroit scene but now conspicuously failing to come up with any new material and covering for this by getting louder and faster and hoping no one will notice. It's pretty obvious that Chrysler has picked up some bad habits from its ally Fiat, particularly trying to sell people out-of-date ideas dressed up as something new, but the predicament is made worse because Chrysler has a more successful friend, Jeep, who seems able to look forward and come up with new things and has

little in common with Chrysler or Chrysler's moronic half-brother, Dodge. These twists and turns are made even more complicated by the presence of Ram, an all-American character who is aware of the Fiat family and those former *PSA* guys, but has no interest in going to Europe and nothing to offer those far-flung associates anyway.

The tensions are obvious and tension is surely what *Stellantis* thrives upon. Peugeot is after the same thing as Vauxhall and Opel but ironically the latter pair can only survive with the support of the former. At what point does Peugeot tire of this situation and deal with the troublesome twins by killing them? For how long will Fiat keep funding hangers-on when its empire has been allowed to wither? When do Chrysler and Dodge admit to themselves that they can't keep trotting out the same well-worn party tricks year after year?

*Stellantis* is a fascinating show and I won't be able to stop watching for however long it lasts. In this respect, and many others, it reminds me of that classic 1970s BBC drama, *British Leyland*.

**'The series is based around a rag-tag cast of characters forced into a crazy struggle for survival'**

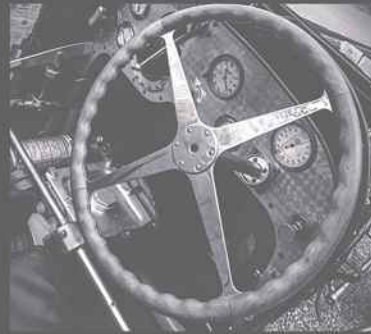
@sniffpetrol

Richard is an author, broadcaster and award-winning writer of short autobiographies

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WATCHES



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# JETHRO BOVINGDON

The issue with VW's ID.3 isn't that it's an EV, says Jethro. It's something else

**I**T'S VERY DIFFICULT TO REVIEW AN EV IN THE pages of **evo**. The assumption is that we have too much baggage and are clinging on so intently to things such as naturally aspirated engines and manual gearboxes that we could never, ever say positive things about an EV. Never mind that my colleague Adam Towler really enjoyed the Tesla Model 3 Performance and we've enjoyed the Porsche Taycan, too.

Anyway, it was with my many years of glorious internal-combustion-engine baggage that today I greeted the arrival of a Volkswagen ID.3 for a short loan. It looks okay. Wheel at each corner; nice detailing and Makena Turquoise finish hiding a relatively generic hatchback shape. The spec and packaging is intriguing, too: low centre of gravity, electric motor at the rear driving the rear wheels through a direct-drive single-speed gearbox, plus multi-link rear suspension and, of course, lots of lovely and instantly available torque.

'My' ID.3 is a pretty fancy one. An Edition Pro Power 58kWh 204PS, it has a WLTP range of 260 miles. It costs from £38,190. That's nearly £5000 more than the new Golf GTI. It also weighs 1730kg. That's 376kg heavier than the new Golf GTI. Oh god, that baggage isn't so easily ejected. Deep breath. Let's put these things to one side and just drive...

It's cold. Really cold. And despite a fully charged battery the range reads 170 miles. Hmmm. The interior feels either modern and fresh or like a mini version of the inside of one of those annoying digital marketing companies where everyone rollerskates between break-out areas, depending on your point of view. I quite like it but the materials feel very budget for a VW.

But all of this means nothing, for there is a bigger issue, one that makes the ID.3 impossible to recommend. Ladies and gents, I give you the Discover Pro Navigation system with 10-inch touchscreen, App-Connect, Natural Voice Control and loads of other stuff **THAT DOESN'T WORK**.

The frustration starts immediately. It's cold, like I said. So I hit the touchscreen icon for the heated seats. Nothing. Tap again and the menu opens up but the next tap doesn't fire up the heaters. So I hit it again. And then again. Ugh. Nada. And then, suddenly, the system wakes up and actions my increasingly forceful finger jabs. The lag means I've inadvertently cycled through from the

maximum setting to the minimum. I start the process again whilst selecting reverse – which opens the rear-view camera on the central screen, meaning I can no longer see my heated seat setting. Nor turn up the heater or change the radio station or anything else that might be useful before I reverse out of the driveway.

Once on the move these concerns start to melt away and I can begin to experience the ID.3 as, y'know, an actual car. But wait, what's this? Oh no. Lane Assist. Must. Turn. Off. Lane. Assist. But how? I'm doing 30mph and the ID.3 has 19-inch wheels. The road isn't particularly bad, but diverting my eyes to find the Assist menu, then opening the required submenu whilst trying to keep my hand steady enough to accurately operate the touchscreen, is trickier than nailing the right line through the Craner Curves in heavy fog.

You will never need Lane Assist more than when trying to deactivate Lane Assist in an ID.3.

If the touchscreen functioned as perfectly as an iPhone, perhaps things would be better. It doesn't. Not even close. However, even if it was that good, the simple act of changing the temperature or bringing up a map would still require an unacceptable amount of attention and dexterity. We know this because you're not allowed to operate your phone whilst driving. Too dangerous. Buttons and dials work. You can operate them without even glancing away from the road. That's why F1 steering wheels feature buttons and rotary switches. Manufacturers are

selling us the dream of the future whilst actively making their cars more complex to use and, in my opinion, more dangerous to drive.

Of course, this isn't unique to the ID.3 and it's unfair to single it out. The entire VW empire is getting a version of this touchscreen system and other manufacturers are rushing down the same path. It's funny, the mainstream motoring media has always said, 'Just wait until real manufacturers start building EVs. They'll show Tesla. They know how to make cars that actually work.' As it turns out, that was bullshit. Much of that accrued knowledge is being gleefully abandoned.

The car itself? Pretty good and loads of potential. With the rear-drive arrangement an ID.3 GTI could be a barrel of laughs. But you can't turn off the ESP. Or maybe you can but by the time you've been through 37 submenus to do so you'll have already crashed. This is **evo**. We're old fashioned. We want to crash gloriously, not because we can't find the bloody heated rear screen control.

**'You will never need Lane Assist more than when trying to deactivate Lane Assist in an ID.3'**

@JethroBovingdon

Jethro has been writing for **evo** for nearly two decades and is a host on *Top Gear America*

McLAREN ARTURA

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by HENRY CATCHPOLE

PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT

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# McLAREN V2.0

McLaren's first decade was a whirlwind of super and hypercars, highs and lows, and endless special editions. Now the Artura's here to start the next chapter







ARTURA

**L**ARRY KING, THE MUCH-CELEBRATED broadcaster who died in January, famously said: 'I remind myself every morning: Nothing I say this day will teach me anything. So, if I'm going to learn, I must do it by listening.' Now, listening is not something that supercar companies are famous for. While the Fords and Kias might put a lot of effort into market research and customer surveys, you expect Ferrari to simply invoke the spirit of old man Enzo and *tell* people what their heart desires. On a scale of one to five, five being completely satisfied, how would you rate the ergonomics of your dashboard? A question put to people by Peugeot, perhaps, but likely not Pagani.

I recall there was an element of this almost-condescending conviction when McLaren launched the MP4-12C. Journalists were very much told, sometimes by Ron Dennis himself, why the McLaren way was the right way. If you disagreed, well, there were usually numbers to prove you wrong.

Part of me admires and even commends this approach. Not everything should be put to a vote or aim to please the majority. That way blandness often lies. We desire the inspired and even the flawed, because they make the world more

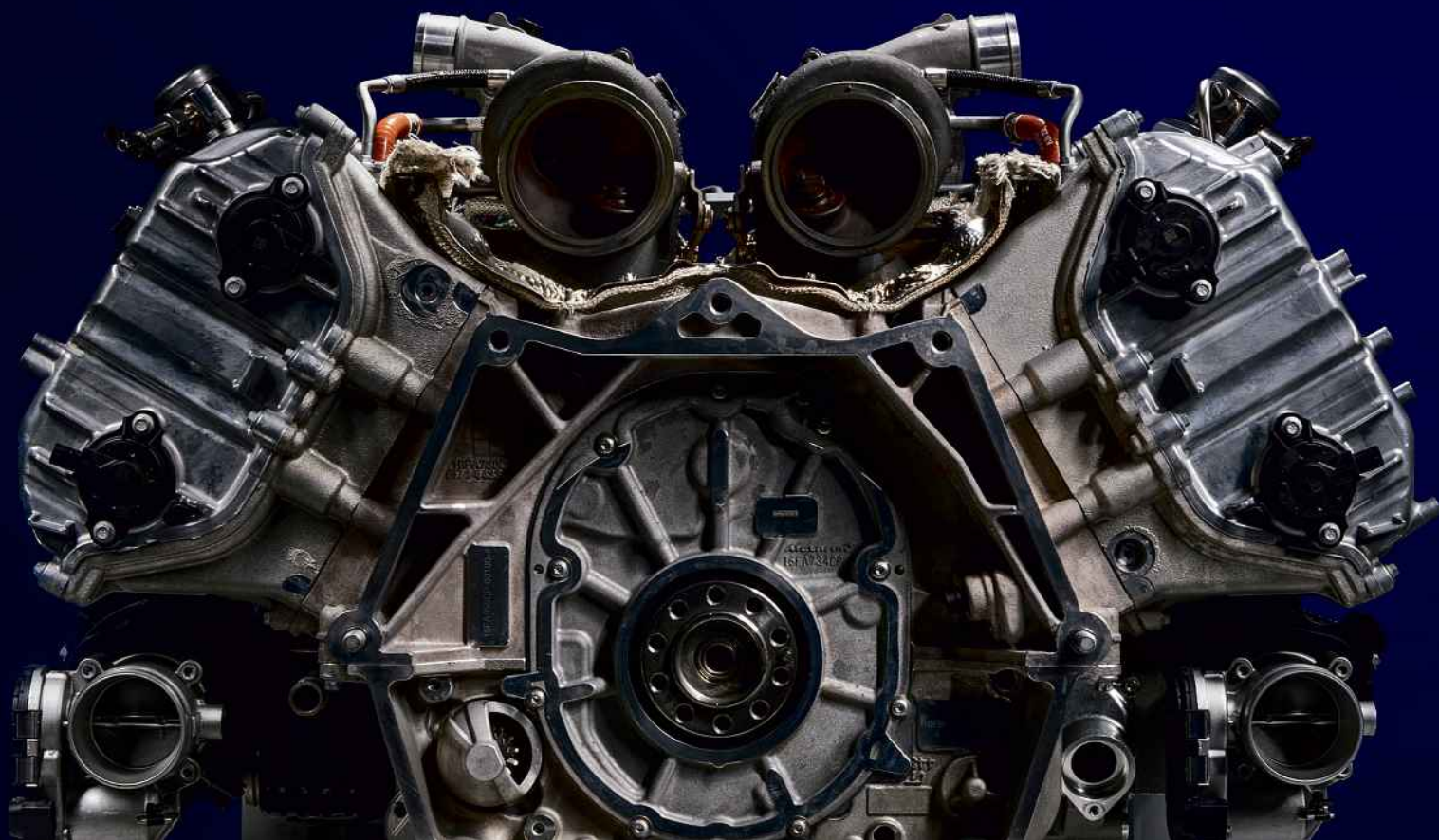
interesting. Product innovation should give you something that you didn't know you needed, but subsequently can't imagine living without.

All of which brings me to a small, subterranean theatre in the bowels of the grandly named Thought Leadership Centre at McLaren HQ in Woking. It is dimly lit and an archetypal mid-engined supercar shape lurks under a cover on the stage. A presentation about the new car is underway and what's caught my attention is not the power figure nor an acceleration time, but the fact that McLaren has said it has listened.

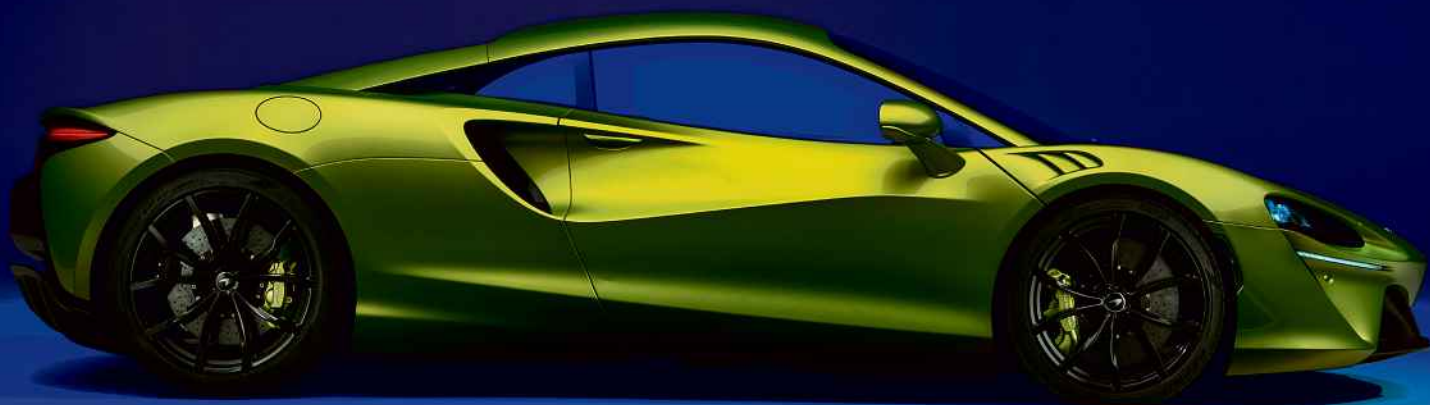
You see, McLaren has got an awful lot very right in the decade since the MP4-12C, but there is an argument to be made that all the cars since the original 12C have been very closely related to the 12C. Possibly too closely. The same engine, the same shunning of a limited-slip diff, the same modes, the same switches. People often voiced their dislike of certain elements, big or small, but generally the next model would arrive with the same elements unchanged. Was this an inability to alter – or a lack of inclination to alter? Now, with this completely new car, I think we have the answer. McLaren has listened.

It has kept the things that people have liked and for which the company's cars have been praised. Things such as the

**Below:** new 3-litre twin-turbo V6 is notably compact and weighs 40kg less than the V8







**Above:** Artura packs a lot of hardware into a pleasingly compact and subtly shaped bodyshell

deliciously tactile, hydraulically power-assisted steering. The pedal layout. The brake feel. The performance and attention to paring weight. But other facets, things that after ten years seemed like they might become the norm in McLarens for evermore, have been changed. Adios, Active button. Hello, limited-slip differential. So long, awkward seat buttons. A friendly welcome to Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. Greetings, better throttle response. Yes, you can even fathom how to activate the nose lift on this new McLaren.

But let's go back to the beginning. This freshly minted supercar is called the Artura. Which, from my brief onomastic research, is a female variant of the name Arthur. Curious. Within the McLaren range, it will sit below the 720S but above the GT and we've been told to expect a starting price of around £182,500 when it goes on sale later this year.

It is a plug-in hybrid. The petrol-powered part is an all-new, twin-turbocharged, 2993cc, 120-degree, hot-vee V6. If you like your engine codes, then it is designated M630. This is augmented by an axial flux e-motor that is situated within the bell housing of the new eight-speed, dual-clutch transmission. It is, as far as I'm aware, only the second time that we have seen an axial instead of radial flux motor used in a supercar, the

first being in Ferrari's SF90. The advantages are the slimmer packaging and reduced weight for a greater power density, making it ideal for an in-transmission application.

Power is delivered to the rear wheels via an electronically controlled limited-slip differential. And there is, as you'd expect, a lot of power. Maximum outputs are 671bhp and 531lb ft of torque. The V6 provides 577bhp at 7500rpm (the red line is another 1000rpm higher) and 431lb ft of torque between 2250 and 7000rpm. Meanwhile the e-motor is capable of producing 94bhp and 166lb ft of torque, although that maximum of 94bhp (and therefore the entire 671bhp) is only transient, lasting for 15sec of full throttle before reducing to 49bhp (giving a measly 626bhp in total).

That might be of some concern should you ever find yourself with a clear run at the full length of the Döttinger Höhe straight on the Nordschleife (luckily McLaren has never gone in for lap times around the Ring), but is unlikely to worry most owners. After all, 0-62mph is dispatched in 3.0sec and 0-124mph in just 8.3sec. Top speed is 205mph.

So, the power and performance are everything you would expect from a modern junior supercar, but as this is a hybrid, you're probably wondering about the weight. Well, the bad







**Above:** all-new carbon tub is even stiffer than before and now includes the battery housing

news is that it weighs more than the 570S that it replaces. The good and frankly quite extraordinary news is that the Artura weighs only 46kg more. It has a DIN weight of 1498kg (its lightest dry weight is 1395kg), which is 7kg lighter than a base Porsche 992 Carrera.

According to McLaren, everything associated with the hybrid part of the car adds 140kg to the overall weight, 88kg of which is the batteries. This means the engineers have managed to claw back 94kg from the rest of the car. The biggest saving was in the V6 engine, which weighs over 40kg less than the old V8. The standard Clubsport seats (apparently so comfy you won't need the comfort option) save another 8kg, the doors a further 6kg per side, while the new, future-proofing Ethernet electrical system has reduced wiring by 25 per cent and saved ten per cent in weight.

The all-new carbonfibre tub (or McLaren Lightweight Architecture, as they call it), which is designed and produced at the new McLaren Composites Technology Centre near Sheffield, weighs in at 82kg compared to its predecessor's 76kg. However, like-for-like the new tub is lighter, as well as stronger and safer, because its weight encompasses the newly integrated battery housing at the back as well as the B-pillars and various other fixings not previously included.

Despite the extra gubbins, McLaren has also managed to keep the Artura neatly compact, with the engine and transmission coming up 150mm shorter than the previous V8 powertrain. Yes, a V6 should be shorter than a V8, but the new drivetrain has to squeeze in not only the clutch that sits between the engine and gearbox (disconnecting one from the other during EV driving) but also that new e-motor.

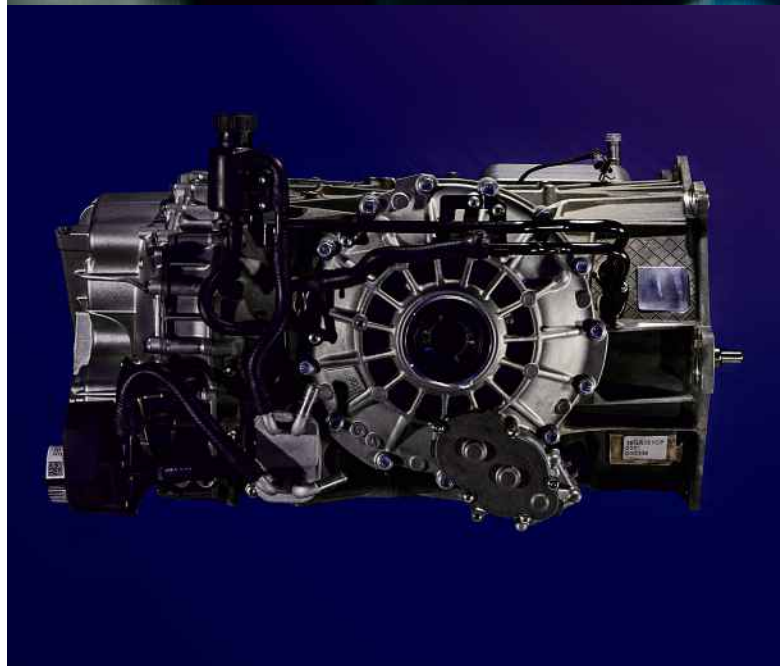
Now, I've mentioned an awful lot of fresh, new stuff so far. In fact, the Artura is 98 per cent new. However, I think there

is a good chance that if you passed an Artura on the street, you wouldn't instantly clock it as the brand new McLaren. Particularly if it was in one of its more subdued colours instead of this striking Flux Green.

That's not to say it is a bad looking car, far from it. I love the single-piece rear deck, which gives the Artura a wonderfully clean look. The fact the A-pillars now flow seamlessly into the roof also adds subtly to the smoothness of the design, aided by the fact the rear buttresses make it look as though the top of the car is being pulled tight. I'm less keen on the pressure-relieving vents over the front arches (even though I know they are extremely effective aerodynamically) and the door mirrors look a touch fussy, but I like the eye-socket design of the headlights, even though I know others find it awkward. Switching to a big, motorsport-inspired, single windscreen wiper is also an aesthetic win in my book.

Overall it looks pleasingly compact, and I suppose there is mileage in McLaren continuing in a similar design vein, creating a clear, familiar identity for its cars. I just think that it perhaps looks too similar to a 570S on the surface when so much beneath the skin is new.

Anyway, open the driver's door, drop down into the new seat and you will find yourself in a cabin that has certainly had more than a light refresh. Aside from the design, a host of driver aids such as lane departure warning, road sign recognition, adaptive cruise control and auto high beam headlights are now present. However, what most customers will probably appreciate more is the introduction of smartphone mirroring, negating the need to do battle with the native system, although that is said to have been improved. The hi-fi has been revamped and the HVAC system has also been significantly upgraded to the point where it's said to be rather over-specced now.





Having said all that, the first thing that greets you is rather like an old friend, because the steering wheel remains beautifully uncluttered without a button in sight. Look through it and you'll see the new instrument binnacle, which is attached to the steering column. This means that, however you adjust the wheel for reach and rake, you should have a perfect view of the screen behind it. Overall the Artura feels like it has retained that trademark McLaren view out, but the binnacle isn't the most svelte item (certainly compared to the 720S's foldaway item) so it will be interesting to see how forward visibility feels out on the road.

Mounted on the top corners of the binnacle are two rocker switches. These replace the old P(owertrain) and H(andling) rotary switches that were on the centre console. The Artura also does without the Active button, which is what you've previously needed to press to instigate any changes. Instead you simply stretch out your fingers and tune the dampers or drivetrain to your preferred setting.

Within Handling, there are three very self-explanatory damper modes: Comfort, Sport and Track. By the way, the Artura uses a new version of the Proactive Damping system that was debuted on the McLaren GT. This uses multiple sensors to read the road and adjust the damping in as close to real time as possible.

The new multi-link set-up for the rear suspension has been aimed at increasing camber stiffness for more grip, and toe-stiffness for more stability. I've always liked the slightly loose feeling of the rear of the 570S that was particularly evident under hard braking, but I can see why it wasn't for everyone. The Artura should be much more secure and stable in this regard, but if that sounds a touch dull then don't worry, because in turn it has allowed the engineers to ratchet the steering up to 600LT levels of directness, while the Artura also has a slightly shorter wheelbase, so agility should be every bit as good.

Linked to this new rear suspension is one of the biggest changes in the dynamic philosophy of the Artura: the addition of an e-diff. Chris Goodwin, who was McLaren's chief test driver until a couple of years ago, was always adamant that a limited-slip differential wasn't necessary and merely added weight. It might just be coincidence, but he has now left (to work at Aston Martin on the Valkyrie project) and lo and behold the next major McLaren has an e-diff fitted. Like the suspension, it should help with stability under braking, but

it should also make the car less busy when it's sliding, with greater predictability on the limit for the driver.

Then we have the Powertrain modes. The Artura will always start in electric mode, and it's worth mentioning that reversing is carried out entirely by the electric motor turning backwards – there is no mechanical reverse gear. When you are in electric mode, a full charge of the 7.4kWh battery (which takes 2.5 hours at 3.3kW AC via the EVSE cable) will allow you to travel about 19 miles and attain speeds up to 80mph. If you have been using the V6 prior to switching to EV mode then the petrol engine will periodically switch on for under a minute to keep temperature in the catalysts for emissions.

Comfort mode sees the V6 running alongside the e-motor. However, under 20mph and with small throttle openings, the Artura will still run predominantly with the V6 off. The car can also be set to use the engine to charge the batteries more quickly – useful if you're approaching a low-emissions zone and will imminently want to run in electric mode.

Sport and Track are generally similar modes, with both targeting maximum performance from the powertrain and high levels of charging to maintain that performance. The e-motor is used for power/torque infill – torque at lower revs to boost acceleration and power at higher revs for speed. This is, perhaps unsurprisingly, where McLaren feels the real gains have been made in throttle response, with reaction being twice as fast as in non-hybrid models. In Sport the gearshifts are carried out with cylinder-cut while in Track the more aggressive ignition-cut is used, which should give a nice loud crack from the exhausts. Hopefully the V6 will sound good too (never the V8's strongest suit), although it will obviously be the silent running ability that will attract some.

What you've probably gathered by now is that this is rather a sophisticated supercar. There is a lot going on. And, because it is complicated, McLaren needs to inspire confidence in its reliability. Yes, it listened to those comments, too. So there is a five-year vehicle warranty, a six-year battery warranty and a ten-year corrosion warranty on the Artura.

From a driving perspective, the trick it needs to play is to make all its new technology feel simple and natural to use. From behind the wheel you need to be able to feel like it has melded into one harmoniously tactile experience. But, as its back catalogue shows, McLaren shouldn't really need to listen to anyone to figure out how to do that. ✕



### McLaren Artura

**Engine** V6, 2993cc, twin-turbo plus e-motor  
**Power** 671bhp combined **Torque** 531lb ft combined  
**Weight** 1498kg **Power-to-weight** 455bhp/ton  
**0-62mph** 3.0sec **Top speed** 205mph  
**Basic price** c£182,500







MADAM COWLEY PHOTOGRAPHY/STON PARROTT

# TANGERINE SCREAM

AMG's GT Black Series packs a fierce 720bhp. On a near-freezing track, it's one wild ride



**THE AMG GT BLACK SERIES IS HUNGRY.** Not just peckish, but full-on, stomach churning, dementedly ravenous. It sits idling in the cold air on the broad expanse of the West Circuit pitlane at Bedford Autodrome, a hint of agitation to its note but surprisingly reserved as it ticks over, while its giant mouth, now even bigger than that of the GT R and GT R Pro models and inspired by the GT3-spec racer, demands to be fed. Air, or a 991.2 GT2 RS for brunch, perhaps? Me, as a tough and tasteless hors d'oeuvres? Glistening Armco with a sodden grass jus for high tea, given the weather conditions today? I hardly dare contemplate that particular scenario, nor the fact that the Black costs a formidable £335,000.

This superhero AMG is the nastiest-looking, most amusingly caricature-like supercar this side of a first-gen Dodge Viper GTS. Its rear wing is as tall as the roof, always the sign of a real troublemaker – see Audi S1 E2, Porsche 935 (the original one) and plenty of others – and when you stand head-on to the front number plate the Black's footprint and dimensions are wickedly extravagant, verging on the surreal. There's just... So. Much. Car.

Having said that, there's one element missing: it simply doesn't sound like the devil's chariot, and if you've done your homework you'll already know that the reason for this is what makes this car especially interesting.

It's known as the LS2, and while maybe the Detroit reference is German humour to throw spies off the scent during the development of this M178 derivative, it's far from a classic pushrod bent-eight. Consider it a thorough reinvention of the ubiquitous 'hot-vee' V8, switching from a cross-plane

crankshaft to a flat-plane one, so out goes the traditional rumble and in comes the higher-pitched, harder timbre of a duophonic four-cylinder with added range and bite. Ever heard an AJP8-engined TVR Cerbera blast into the distance? It's a bit like that.

For this final and ultimate AMG GT, the engineers wanted more power. 'Don't they always,' you might say, and power is hardly something the M178 has been known for lacking in the past. But to hit a 700bhp-plus target they needed to run serious levels of boost – 1.7 bar, as it turns out – and the objective was revs: that hard-edged, aggressive top end that would allow the GT to stand nose-canard-to-nose-canard with the Longtail McLarens, Special Series Ferraris and force-fed GT department Porsches of this world.

The subsequently improved gas flow and the lighter crank assembly contribute to an engine that lacks the smoothness and sometimes the low-down torque of a rumble, cross-plane V8, but one that typically has a greater appetite for revs. It's a bold project from Affalterbach, especially for just this one car, although one can't help but wonder whether a few crates might make their way to Gaydon in due course, particularly given the new man at the top at Aston Martin...

You won't be surprised to hear that much of the engine's hardware has been redesigned. The turbochargers themselves are bigger, with the low-friction bearings used on the mighty GT63 S four-door also used here, while there are bigger intercoolers and completely new exhaust manifolds and camshafts. The result? 720bhp from 6700 to 6900rpm, and 590lb ft from just 2000rpm all the way to 6000rpm.

**Top:** superb bucket seats, an acreage of Alcantara and a beefy roll-cage show the new Black Series means business





**'THE BLACK  
SERIES IS A LOT  
MORE THAN JUST  
ITS ENGINE'**







The Black Series is a lot more than just its engine, however. The 577bhp GT R is a terrific thing: a driver-focused supercar with its own individual appeal; far, far more of a car than the regular AMG GT. The GT R Pro took that evolution a stage further, adding a GT3 RS-threatening trackday vibe and scooping 2nd overall in the 2019 edition of eCoty. It was a big car with a massive heart, but also one that communicated clearly: sometimes that was to say 'watch yourself mate', but such correspondence between man and machine made it far less intimidating on the limit than anything with its looks has any right to be. But the Black doesn't even attract the GT R moniker: it's simply GT Black Series. A model apart. How very mysterious. How very 'skunkworks'.

As I roll down Bedford's pitlane, the Pro comes immediately to mind. Titanium roll-cage? Check. Awesomely supportive bucket seats and spot-on driving position like a GT3 racer's? Check. Baffling array of driver modes, switches, functionality and what-have-you? Check. Letterbox view ahead over a bonnet that never seems to end, and the driver's posterior almost on top of the rear axle? Check. What's more, the Black Series could inadvertently trigger a worldwide shortage in man-made suede, given just how much is plastered over the interior, but that's no bad thing at all: its tactile qualities make this interior a dark but reassuringly cosy and combat-spec environment, ready for action.





**Above and left:** there's a plethora of driving modes and electronic aids, but given an empty track and variable grip, the fewer interventions the better

I have a distinct feeling that the first few laps are going to be a wild ride. There's an extra set of Michelin Cup 2 Rs in tyre-warmers currently sitting in the pit garage, but the Rs currently fitted are stone cold and today's ambient temperature is barely above zero. The 2 R (or, to give this bespoke rubber its full name, the 2 R MO1A) is like the late Keith Flint to the standard Cup 2's 1990s boy band. It's essentially a cut slick, with not so much tread as rather a band of slashes on the shoulder and a few smaller cuts towards the inner edge. No idea how that manages to be road-legal, but one thing you can be sure of is that whether your ultimate trackday special hails from Weissach or wherever, its record Ring time wasn't set on the hardcore Cup 2 but on its much more aggressive twin. They are often a dealer order extra (although they're standard-fit on the Black Series) and, without any doubt whatsoever, they are the least appropriate tyre for a day like today.

I've put the Black Series into Individual mode. I know there are countless levels to choose from, but given we're solely on track today I'm configuring it exactly how I want it. I've set everything to 'maximum attack' save the adaptive damping (no manually adjustable units as in the Pro here), which I've softened slightly in the name of traction (in its firmest of three settings it adapts to different types of racetracks, apparently), and disabled the ESP completely, switching into the adjustable

traction control levels, set via a yellow rotary switch that looks as though it should be part of a missile launcher's user interface. One cheeky red light out of nine reds and yellows tells me it's about halfway towards off; a decent place to start.

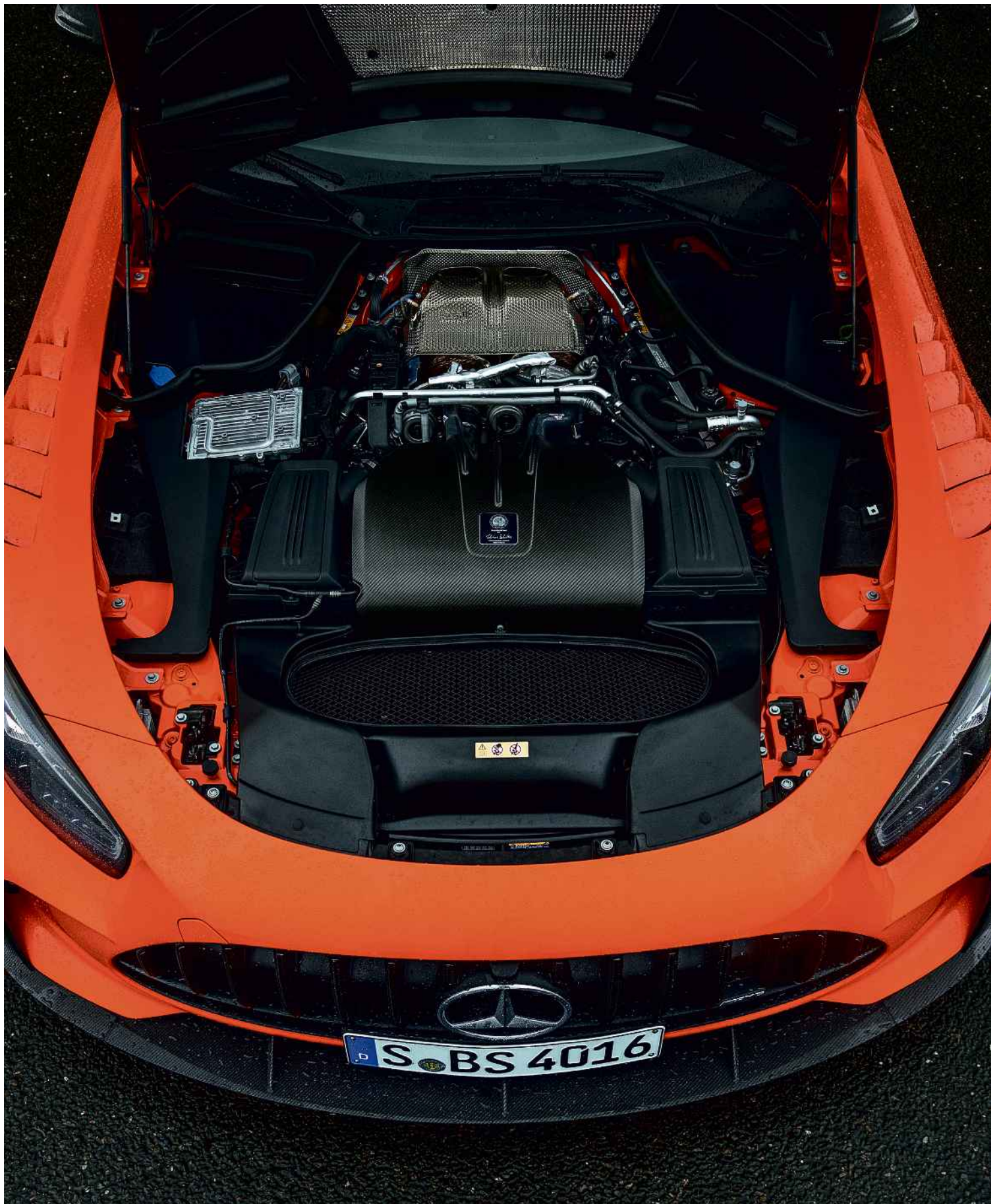
Down, slowly, to the first hairpin, and turn the nose smoothly in. There's a cringe-inducing series of thuds, just as there was in the pitlane when the Black was tasked with manoeuvring at walking pace for Aston Parrott's lens. This is understeer of a visceral, physical nature, so ghastly as to make a driver wince in pain. The front tyres, visibly running massive negative camber, are skating across the surface as though they've been tasked with turning in on icy medieval cobbles, and the grip level doesn't increase on the exit, where the tail swings wide in a surprisingly graceful arc, but generates very little forward momentum whatsoever for what feels like an eternity. The car's behaviour under braking is even more alarming because, in keeping with the cartoon vibe, it's as if Bambi has suddenly stumbled on a frozen lake: the ABS goes into overdrive, the nose darts and stumbles, and the braking distance elongates by the split second. It's an unnerving experience, and I wouldn't want to be trying an emergency stop on the public road right about now.

It doesn't get much better as the lap progresses, but already there are some very strong messages filtering back about the Black. I can sense its directness, its rigidity of structure, its sheer unflinching purposefulness. It's big and bad and scary, but it's also all-of-a-piece, and unflinchingly precise, and there are numerous reasons why that should be so.

The AMG engineers have worked hard to increase the rigidity of the chassis, an imperative given the mechanical grip and aerodynamic load now generated by the car. There are carbon shear panels at the front, centre and rear, and a lightweight front subframe and carbon transmission tunnel brace. Naturally they've sought to shave off every last gram where possible. You'll find carbonfibre everywhere, from














the front adjustable anti-roll bars to the new bonnet with its enormous extractor holes. The roof and tailgate are also now made of the stuff, while there's lightweight glazing and all sorts of lightened minor componentry. As the engineers confided to **evo** a while back, save making fundamental and unrealistically expensive changes to the inherent structure of the car, there's really no way they could have gone much lower than the Black's quoted 1520kg kerb weight (41kg lighter than the Pro).

What I'm not getting today is much of a sense of the car's increased downforce, simply because the speeds aren't high enough to really have the wings biting into the cold Bedfordshire air. The massive front splitter can be extended manually, but the rear wing is something else again: two tiers with a section of the upper wing adjustable by up to 20 degrees via the electronic driving modes, depending on speed, driving style and any given corner.

Coupled with an almost completely flat underside, the Black's aero qualities are considerable. And you don't need numbers to know that; the sturdy rear wing supports that are located through the boot floor are testament to just how much load is generated at high speed.

The traction control is impressive, but it's got an almost impossible task working with so little grip – and varying grip levels at that. One moment one rear tyre might be struggling with a mu coefficient approximate to ice, the next – or at the same time – the other might be on a dry line. In the end, the vicious wrenching of grip and intervention across the rear axle is more uncomfortable than rolling up the shirtsleeves, twisting the big dial to 'off entirely', and just getting on with it. With all the traction on, you'll not really be going anywhere fast; with it all off, it's a revealing test of the LS2's torque delivery and throttle control, because you quickly realise how linear and progressive its delivery is – more so, I think, than the standard hot-vee V8 with its bombastic torque.

Slowly the circuit begins to dry, the sun that's broken through battling the dampness and revealing paler cold asphalt underneath. After the tricky direction change of the chicane at Turn 2, the track opens up dramatically and in a powerful car the long left and sudden switch to the fast right are quick corners. Finally there's a genuinely dry line here, and I suddenly realise that I'm not leaning anywhere near hard enough on the car through this section. With a

A red Lotus Evija electric hypercar is shown from a low-angle, rear-quarter perspective on a racetrack. The car is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its rear wing and side mirrors visible. The background features a dramatic sunset sky with orange and yellow clouds, and a dark, straight racetrack stretching into the distance. The overall mood is high-speed and dynamic.

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**‘WITH ZERO  
SUBTLETY, THE  
ACCELERATION  
SUDDENLY  
RAMPS UP’**



MERCEDES-AMG GT BLACK SERIES

---

**'THIS HAS BEEN A BRIEF GLIMPSE OF ITS ABILITIES'**





further squeeze of the pedal the Black's response is every bit as cartoonish as its appearance. It had felt fast; *this* is now fast. With zero subtlety, the acceleration suddenly ramps up several notches without any steps in between, like the worst Hollywood car chase scene. The Black bolts forward, and here, finally, is the true ferocity held within. I wouldn't call it a nice noise, but it's not entirely without appeal – businesslike, not what you'd call rough, but certainly without the smoothness we've come to expect from AMG.

Now that it can find purchase, the Black Series feels wild but for all the right reasons, the thrust generated by the V8 eye-widening at higher revs, the strengthened gearbox able to rifle through the shifts on command from the nicely crafted paddles. It's still slippery on the exit of the far hairpin, but the surface turns abruptly to dry tarmac halfway along the exit. Sliding at 45 degrees, steam vaporising off the rear, the Michelins suddenly hit grippy (relatively) tarmac and the whole car lurches, squeals, and then smoke begins to pour forth, all in the blink of an eye, the grip level varying wildly in the space of a few metres.

We try the 'warmed' 2 Rs, but the effect lasts for barely a lap before they're stone cold again. Nevertheless the Black Series continues to impress, because it can be thrown around and accept liberties being taken in a way you'd never expect of a 720bhp hardcore track car. No longer do you have the sense, as you do in the GT R, of the extremities of the car being far

away, doing something slightly different to each other; no more that almost overwhelming feeling of sitting way back in the wheelbase. The Black Series just feels dialled-in, with an immediate turn-in but admirable stability from the rear, too. I've no doubt that the giant carbon-ceramic brakes can complete the package, but they're the one aspect that seems beyond us today, due, entirely, to the tyres' lack of grip at the front contact patches.

It's getting dark, my brain is frazzled and my luck surely all used up, plus the Black needs to be loaded onto a truck to begin its journey back to Germany. I'm fully aware this has been only a brief glimpse of its abilities, but it has revealed enough for us to feel that it is something rather special. The urge to pitch it against a McLaren 765LT on hot, dry tarmac, somewhere with speeds and corners to really do it justice, is strong. Leave those logistics to us, but be in no doubt in the meantime that in the superniche for terrifyingly fast, capable and expensive machinery, AMG has raised its game to a level where the established players should be very worried indeed. ✕

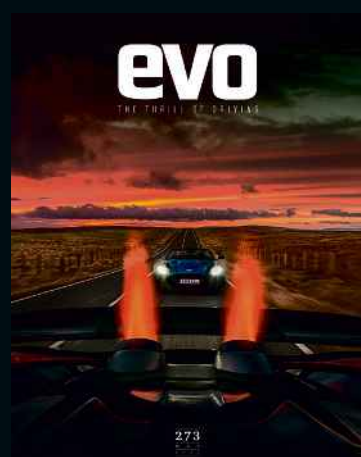
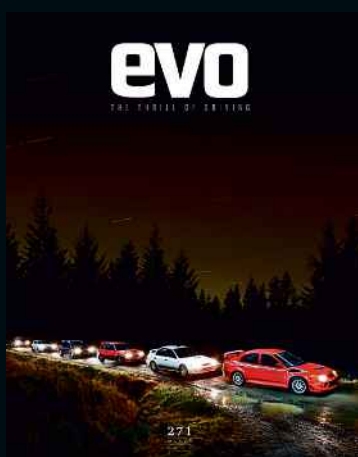
### Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series

**Engine** V8, 3982cc, twin-turbo **Power** 720bhp @ 6700-6900rpm

**Torque** 590lb ft @ 2000-6000rpm **Weight** 1520kg **Power-to-weight** 480bhp/ton **0-62mph** 3.2sec **Top speed** 202mph **Basic price** £335,000

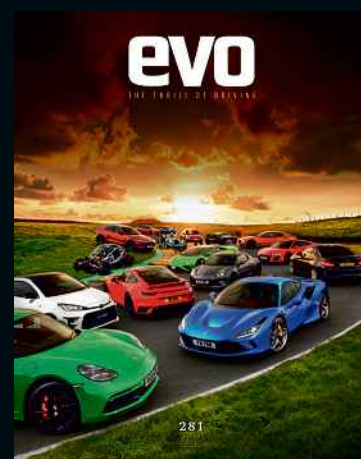
**evo rating** ★★★★★





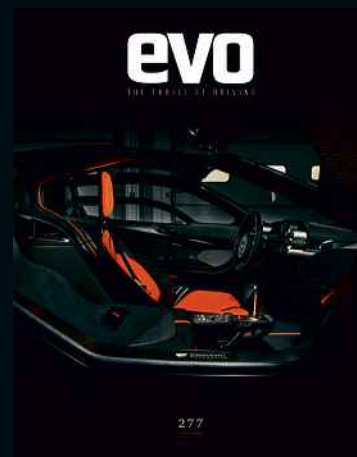
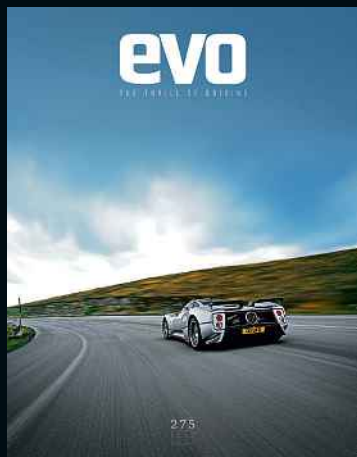
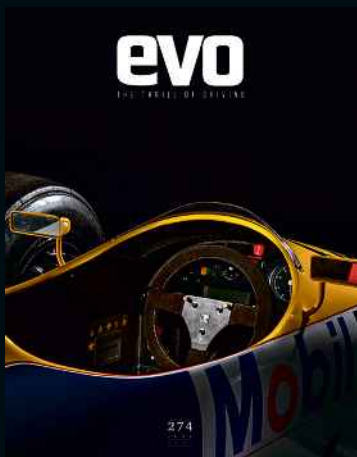
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by ADAM TOWLER PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT

# A QUESTION OF SPORTS

*Porsche Cayman GTS 4.0, Life110 Alpine A110 and Lotus Exige Sport 410 offer three different interpretations of the sports car theme, but which one really hits the spot? A spirited drive on road and track reveals the answer*





GTS 4.0



**LOVE SPORTS CARS. THAT'S NOT EXACTLY A SURPRISING** revelation, I know, and I'm sure most of you feel the same, but I do – more than any hypercar you care to mention. Sports cars, to my mind, are cars with dimensions, kerb weights and engine outputs ideally suited to enjoyment on a great B-road; cars that are equally at home on a circuit but not overpowered or overbearing; cars that are attainable, even if just vaguely so.

The trouble is, what we loosely term 'sports cars' are currently a dying breed, with many major manufacturers simply not making any, and even Lotus about to stop making them for a while, so it's particularly exciting to get these three together: the all-rounder, the hardcore track machine, and the modified one.

In the blue corner is the Alpine A110, not a standard 'Pure', or an S model for that matter, but rather a Life110, the aftermarket tuned version that we first drove in *evo* 277. If you read that piece you may recall that I fell head-over-heels in love with it, and the opportunity to get it back again for a comparative test was one not to be missed.

Ranged against it are two stalwarts that couldn't be more different to each other if they tried, despite featuring fundamentally the same mid-engined layout and both having six-cylinder engines. Both have a point to prove: the Porsche once again toting six cylinders from a mainstream mid-engined vehicle from Stuttgart – and ready for revenge on all those taking pot-shots at the Caymans lower down the range. We wondered if it might challenge for overall honours at eCoty last year, but while it made the final, its gradual slump to the penultimate position in the final eight was a shock, one that is in danger of obscuring the fact that it remains a brilliant and hugely desirable car.

Then there's the Lotus. Keeping up with the firm's naming policy in recent years hasn't always been the easiest task, but this Sport 410 model sits between the entry-level Sport 350 and the nutjob Cup 430. Yes, at £79,900, or £91,100 as specced here, its pricing looks uncomfortable next to the other two cars in the test, so we'll tackle that one head-on right now: despite its best efforts, Lotus wasn't able to provide us with the Sport 350 version we asked for, a car that costs £59,600 and that feels a much better fit for this test with

its slightly less track-focused mantra. For reference, the Cayman GTS is £64,480 (£74,343 as tested) and the Life110 is available from around £54,480 (from a basic 'Pure' model starting at £48,990) if you add all the pieces together.

The destination is Wales, the car, a determinedly retro-inspired green Porsche, and I'm going to take the scenic route. There's a seemingly bottomless layer of polish to everything that the Cayman does that's, largely, one of its strongest attributes and, occasionally, its unexpected downfall. It's an eminently useable machine, with a logical layout, a slick infotainment set-up, comfort and refinement, and controls that exude an oily, finely honed quality, majoring on precision while making little in the way of demands. There's plenty of luggage space, occupant space, storage space; the gears of the six-speed manual 'box slot home with little more than finger pressure but also retain a tight, mechanical feel that immediately helps you to build a dialogue and subsequent bond with a machine. Yet most of all, initially at least, the Cayman's biggest draw is its engine, which manages to make 394bhp a constant thrill from the moment you turn the key. It feels like a treat just to have a new internal combustion engine in the early years of the 2020s, but the reach and soundtrack of this 4-litre motor are really something to savour: they are worth the price of admission alone.

Porsche has honed its mid-engined offerings over the past 15 or more years to the point where, dynamically, the Cayman GTS feels as though it has already visited the road you're about to drive down, with a Porsche chassis engineering team and an accompanying truckload of springs and dampers; it's as if it knows every inch of it already, with a set-up to suit. You can drive it as fast as you dare, or merely stroke it along at pace; you can be aggressive or super smooth, avoid bumps or ride right over them. Whatever you do, the GTS has the answer for it. Maybe that polish layer is almost worked to an overly smooth finish.

The steering is a near-perfect blend of weight, precision and feedback, the chassis absorbent one moment, suitably taut the next, with brilliant damping and an inherent agility born from





**'YOU FEEL THE A110  
IS COMPLETELY  
WITHIN YOUR  
COMMAND AT  
ALL TIMES'**





having a compact flat engine mounted right down on the floor, nestled up to the back of your seat. There's no delay with the GTS – you turn, and it turns. In typical Porsche fashion, every major control is perfectly matched to the other ones. What a pity then about the gear ratios – second is so long, it's all you'll ever need on a B-road, which often makes the box largely redundant anyway. It's a small, but nagging flaw, although there is, of course, the PDK option.

When I arrive at our meeting point, one thing becomes immediately, abundantly clear. Out of the three, the Lotus is by far the most dramatic to look at, and there's nothing the Porsche's Python Green paintjob can do to change that. The Exige's narrow-waisted form and recognisable glasshouse hint strongly at its Elise roots, and while it doesn't quite pull off the baby endurance racer vibe like the Series 1 K-series-engined Exige did all those years ago, it's still resolutely extrovert, a cross between a baby supercar and something born to race.

In particular, the jutting front splitter cutting through the air and the high-rise rear wing on its elaborate metal framework supports offer a totally different approach to the smoothed forms of the other two. It's true, a Sport 350 has a slightly more 'designed', low-downforce rear wing, but the effect – at least visually – is largely the same between all the Exige models. Most bystanders don't even notice the Porsche when the Lotus is in town.

I've driven plenty of V6-engined Exiges before, but a re-acclimatisation is due and I'll gladly take the opportunity. The '410' relates to the power generated by the venerable, quad-cam, 3.5-litre supercharged Toyota V6, which gets charge-cooling to make the higher output. In a car that weighs around 1141kg (Lotus quotes 1110kg, but this is an unladen figure without fuel, so needs adjusting to make it comparable with the Porsche and Alpine's DIN weights of 1405kg and 1098kg respectively) that equates to 365bhp per ton, with a 0-62mph time of just 3.4sec. The Sport 410 may possess a hefty price premium in this company, but it's certainly got the edge on the others in terms of straight-line pace, although it exchanges ultimate top speed for genuine downforce – 115kg of the stuff at its 174mph maximum speed – and hence trails the 182mph Porsche.

Even in those first few moments, the Exige proposition is laid bare – and it couldn't be any more different to the Porsche's. You can almost sense the Lotus mocking the German car's polished manners, excess flab and extensive features. 'Call yourself a sports car!' it bellows through that fat centre-exit exhaust pipe, the boisterous bark of the V6 drowning out everything around it. Yes, you must suffer a little to gain access to the cabin – either be naturally athletic or clamber/fall a little inelegantly down into it – but it's clear that the Lotus will demand more of its driver, and that, indeed, turns out to be the case.

Inside it's still essentially an Elise. There's some nice man-made suede elements, some attractively stitched leather, and the exposed gearchange mechanism is a masterstroke, but the tiny, sparse information binnacle, small rotary heater controls, unfathomable single-DIN aftermarket sound system and the aluminium shelf that

**Left to right:** Exige determined to grow old disgracefully, its supercharged engine delivering an intense bombardment of pace and noise; similarly featherweight Alpine has benefited significantly from the Life110 enhancements; Cayman is the consummate all-rounder and all the better for having a flat-six at the driver's back



**'IDEALLY SUITED TO A**



**B-ROAD, THESE CARS ARE EQUALLY AT HOME ON A CIRCUIT'**











runs across to the passenger side are all present as usual, along with the Exige's terrible rear-three-quarter and rear visibility. As ever, I'm gutted to be reminded that I don't fit properly in these cars – I'm too tall for it, the steering wheel set too low and far away if I sit naturally, or my legs a mess with the wheel more in reach. It's so infuriating, for if there's one sports car you really want to feel at one with, it's the Lotus Elise/Exige family, and I just don't.

I remember Lotus once telling me that the V6 Exige's weight and its tyre footprint meant it was at the limit of what was acceptable for a non-power-assisted set-up in terms of steering effort. Low-speed manoeuvring requires genuine bicep power but you do get used to it, adapting to shifting your hands' position on the wheel in such situations. I'm reminded, too, of the engine's slightly odd relationship with the throttle, where very small inputs at low speed seem to have little effect, and then a slightly larger one rouses the V6 more than you intended. Couple that with a gearshift intolerant of an imperfect change, plus a light-ish clutch, firm brakes and heavy steering, and the Lotus is a car that takes time to master completely if you want to make smooth, competent progress.

What's never in question is the Exige's performance. Its acceleration is delivered in one long stream of power, accompanied by the banshee wail of the engine overlaid with supercharger, an intense bombardment of pace and noise with a linearity that somehow encourages you to keep your foot flat to the floor until the limiter is announcing its stuttering intervention.

The comparison with the Life110 is even more interesting. The Alpine weighs pretty much the same as the Lotus, but feels much bigger inside the cabin and much smaller beyond those confines. It's a real Tardis effect, but with ample elbow room and a calm ride quality it's actually an effortless everyday companion, no more demanding than the Cayman in most regards, and there's the convenience of the twin-clutch gearbox, too, which shifts quickly and unobtrusively.


We know that Porsche has dissected an A110 and believes its customers wouldn't accept Alpine's standard of build, but given the car's headline weight, part of me finds that troubling. There's nothing flimsy or rattly about the Alpine's interior. You can argue that what lets it down is the naff infotainment system or the lack of maturity in smaller aspects such as the instrument fonts and the tactile workings of the switchgear, but it's largely subjective, perception stuff.

The Life110 is the work of former head of vehicle dynamics at JLR's SVO division, David Pook, and is aimed squarely at tackling the criticisms we've always had of the little French sports car: namely its slightly unnerving remoteness on corner entry and a sometimes wayward tail that can easily catch out the unwary. There's so much to admire dynamically about the A110, but we've always felt there's been room for improvement.

Pook highlights the standard car's toe-out setting at the front axle and toe-in at the rear, the former causing the car to wander at speed and the latter a reluctance to turn in. So far, the S models he's measured have all had even more toe at the rear (although the factory settings are the same). He's bought some S anti-roll bars

**From far left:** A110 can't quite match the Cayman for tactile quality but there's nothing low-rent about its boldly sculpted interior; Lotus will look and feel familiar to anyone who's sat in an Elise and taller drivers can struggle to get comfortable; exposed gearshift mechanism is a brilliant touch, though





**'THE LOTUS IS  
MORE FOCUSED IN  
ITS DEMEANOUR  
— AND HOW IT  
DEMANDS YOU  
DRIVE IT'**





(which he describes as ‘flipping enormous’) and tried them on his car, but he dislikes the lateral kickback over poor surfaces and the understeer they bring, both of which we found with the S on eCoty, along with a corruption to the car’s steering. Instead, the Life package consists of a radical rethink of the suspension geo; stiffer springs that lower the car; the wheels and rear spoiler from the Alpine Cup racing car; an engine remap via DMS Automotive that yields 296bhp and 280lb ft of torque; Pook’s own design of gearshift paddles, and uprated front brake pads (with similarly uprated rears on the way).

The result, as we’ve said before, is extraordinary. You can have so much faith now in what the front end is going to do, and the rear of the car feels much more stable during more extreme manoeuvres. Confidence is the key with the Life110 mods, for you feel the Alpine is completely within your command at all times, without the effort and harshness of the Lotus. The front end now positively dives for the apex, and with body roll reduced that occasional sense of roll oversteer with, say, a sudden lift of the throttle mid-corner, is eradicated. There’s a slight detriment to the Alpine’s fabulously supple ride, but only really at low speed: the vast bulk of the car’s inherent, loose-limbed character remains, enabled by its ultra-low kerb weight, and it’s a joy.

WE’VE CALLED IN AT THE TINY LLANDOW CIRCUIT FOR A quick blast. It’s hardly the Nürburgring, but it will allow us to safely – well, sort of – explore the outer reaches of our trio’s respective handling envelopes. I start off in the Porsche, for it feels like a predictable place to begin, in an entirely positive way. Wow, does that flat-six sing: the ratios still feel long, but it’s less of an issue on a circuit than on the road. The Cayman encourages you, communicates with you, and never loses its composure. The brakes are resilient, and when you breach its limits there’s a clear and logical pattern to what it does. That it happens rather quickly at times is to be expected of a mid-engined car, but as long as you’re ready for it, then even on the fast, off-camber right-hander at the back of the circuit the car can be turned in on the brakes, at the top of third gear, allowed to set an attitude, and then powered through with a quarter of a turn of opposite lock. It can overwhelm the rears in the slower stuff, but it requires very deliberate provocation in the dry, such is the purchase it finds on the road’s surface.

The Lotus is a complete contrast. It’s much more focused, not just in its demeanour but also in how it demands you drive it. While the steering loses weight as the speed rises, it puts it all back on again when you want to turn, particularly in the high-speed corners where you really need to hang onto the car with brute force. Couple that with a definite feeling that the engine’s mass is located towards the rear of the car, and for me there’s a nagging sense that if it lets go at high speed, I’m unlikely to catch it. It feels surprisingly stiff, too, particularly across the front axle, and its Michelin Cup 2s want to dig in or slightly understeer in the slower stuff rather than let you indulge in some mild oversteer, while its gearshift is easy to baulk if you rush the change and heel-and-toe downshifts feel awkward. If the Cayman is the sort of car that you can just exit the pitlane and have a ball in, the Lotus is a car that needs proper learning... and I’ll freely

**Left:** Llandow exposes more differences between the three cars – the Cayman and Life110 proving much more easy to bend to your will, where the bewinged Exige is more of a challenge. It does, however, have a degree of adjustment in its dampers and anti-roll bars, as befits a serious track car, so can be set up to taste



admit today's session is not enough. However, both its Nitron dampers and Eibach anti-roll bars are adjustable, providing the Exige driver the opportunity to set-up as desired.

The Life110 is quite different. The remapped engine now has the top-end power to feel at home on a circuit, but it's the much keener body control that transforms the experience and reminds me of a track test in the Cup race car. There's a 'bus stop' style chicane by the control tower and the way the Alpine rotates into the corner, then snaps the other way without inertia, lining up perfectly for the exit curve, is exquisite. It'll also drift controllably around the next right, and even when the tail breaks away on the higher speed back

section through a little too much exuberance with corner speed, it's ridiculously easy to gather together.

Once you've felt that sort of hyper-agility, it's addictive. I drive the Porsche again, and without the direct focus of its GT4 twin's reactions the GTS can just feel a little soft, more consciously affected by the inertia of its mass. The GTS is a brilliant car, and it takes something really special to cast it in that light, but it's an inescapable conclusion in this company.

The Lotus is the first to fall in my book. It's an outlier here, existing as ever on the fringes of the sports car world and feeling much more one-dimensional than the others. You've probably read that before, and there's no reason why

### Lotus Exige Sport 410

Engine V6, 3456cc, supercharged

Power 410bhp @ 7000rpm Torque 310lb ft @ 3500rpm

Weight 1141kg Power-to-weight 365bhp/ton 0-62mph  
3.4sec Top speed 174mph Basic price £79,900

evo rating ★★★★★





it should change now: some will adore it for what it is. And yet I didn't enjoy it as much as I thought I would in a track environment, and while I love it for its drama and what it represents – and the thrill it provides on the right road – it's too compromised a lot of the time, while its powertrain is undeniably effective but somehow lacks a cohesive class and depth. It feels heresy to say it, but in spite of loving how it looks, it's not a car I warm to when driving.

Splitting the other two is a much, much harder business. The crux is the Porsche's engine and gearbox, which are, ratios aside, completely sublime. Yes, it's also a complete package, and it has that badge, but as a driving enthusiast

it's the powertrain that makes it so hard to overlook. Yet such is the thrill of the Life110 that I reckon I could make that compromise – just. I'd take the little blue car for one reason above all others: however great its dynamics, the GTS can never fully conceal its 300kg penalty over the Alpine, and that means it needs to be driven harder, further and on indulgent roads to fully reveal its talents. It needs those loads placed upon it to come alive, but the magic of the A110, fully exploited in Life110 form at last, is that any and every journey can give you those thrills, without any obvious compromises. That's the beauty of a true sports car, and that's why in my opinion blue vanquishes green. ✕

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### Life110 Alpine A110

**Engine** In-line 4-cyl, 1798cc, turbo

**Power** 296bhp @ n/a rpm **Torque** 280lb ft @ n/a rpm

**Weight** 1098kg **Power-to-weight** 274bhp/ton

**0-62mph** c4.4sec **Top speed** cl60mph **Basic price** £54,480

**evo rating** ★★★★★

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### Porsche Cayman GTS 4.0

**Engine** Flat-6-cyl, 3995cc

**Power** 394bhp @ 7000rpm **Torque** 310lb ft @ 5000rpm

**Weight** 1405kg **Power-to-weight** 285bhp/ton

**0-62mph** 4.5sec **Top speed** 182mph **Basic price** £64,480

**evo rating** ★★★★★





# POCKET ROCKET



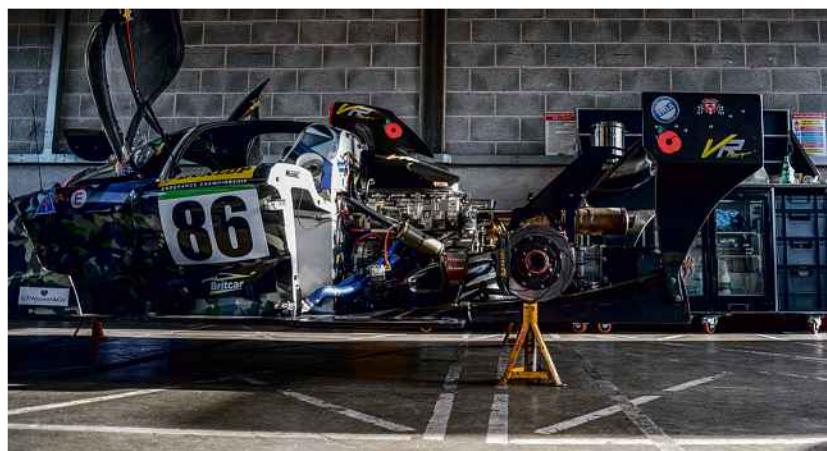


*The Praga R1 is every inch the scaled-down LMP car, but even in naturally aspirated form it's still a very grown-up racer, as we discover at a chilly Donington*

*by ADAM TOWLER PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT*







**G**IANT INDUSTRIAL CONGLOMERATES FOR WHOM building cars is but one part of the corporate portfolio are nothing new. However, finding a minnow of a car company that makes racing cars, occasional road cars, karts, off-road trucks and aeroplanes is something of a novelty. But that's 114-year-old Praga, based in Slovakia, whose R1 bonsai LMP racer won outright the 2020 Britcar Endurance series. Designed for high-end trackday use and high-level competition, the R1 has the feel of a LMP3 car that's been shrunk in the wash.

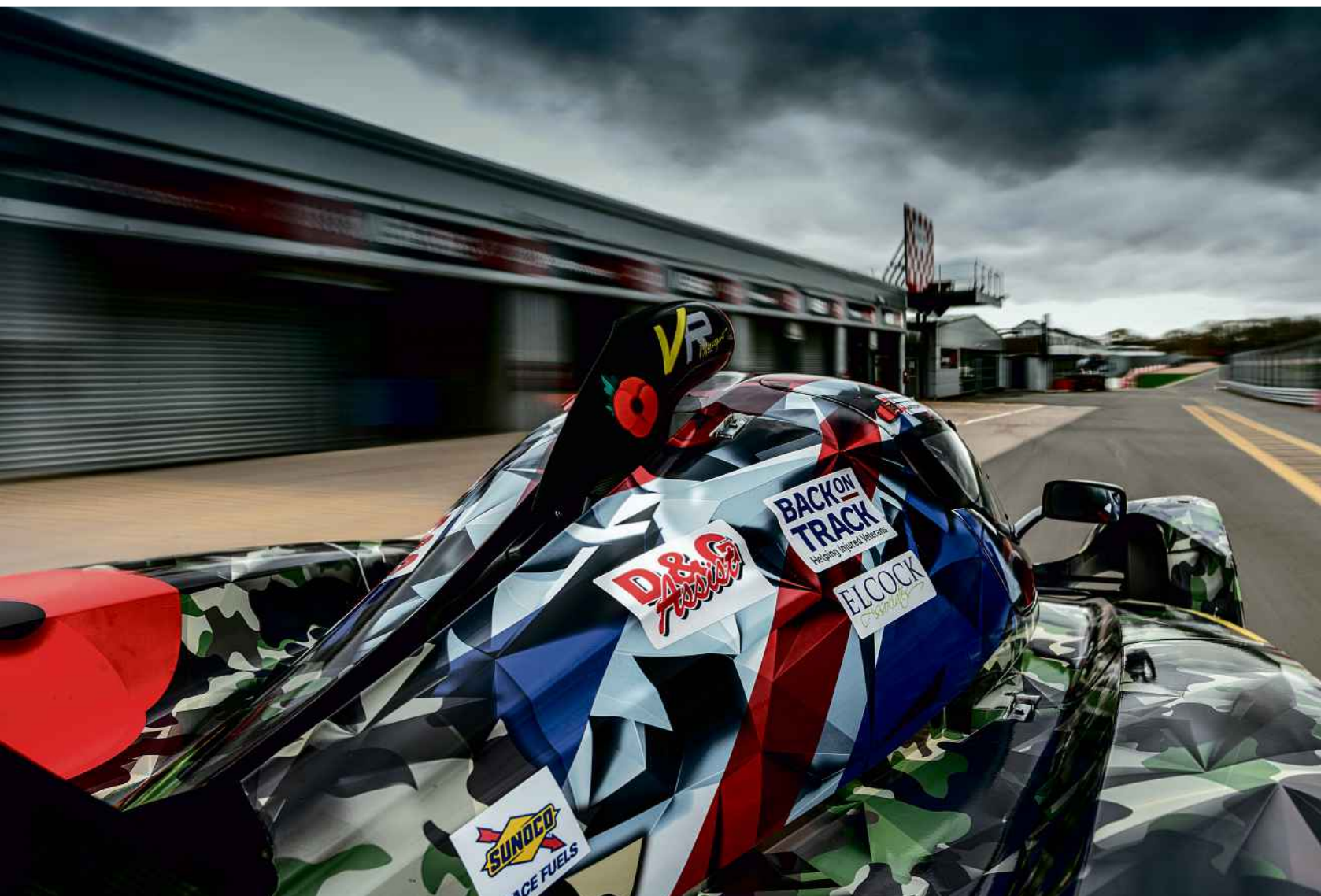
Not that the 195,000-euro (c£170,000) R1 feels much like a car at all. The 'door', if that's what you can call it, feels more like threading yourself through a ship's porthole window, and once you've slithered through, across and down into the cockpit your surroundings are no less alien. The R1 is the epitome of the old 'wear a car like a suit' cliché; with your legs divided centrally by the car it really does feel like you're pulling on a pair of trousers.

Ahead, and close by, is a small, multi-functional steering wheel with gearshift paddles, and beyond that

a deep, flat ledge of a dashboard, with a small, domed windshield somewhere at the end of it all, offering a narrow oblong view of the track ahead, a familiar one if you've ever watched onboard coverage from the WEC or any other type of prototype sportscar racing in recent years. The sides of the roof feel close to your head, the central driving position another unsettling move away from normality. If you suffer from claustrophobia, I reckon you might find it all rather uncomfortable: however diminutive you might think the R1 looks in the pictures, in reality it's one size smaller still.

I'm being strapped very firmly into a rather unusually liveried R1. Its camouflage-inspired scheme is wholly due to its exceptional driving duo (see panel, overleaf), but beneath the shades of khaki and brown is an R1 with a naturally aspirated engine, as opposed to the turbocharged R1s that we're sharing garage space with here at Donington Park racing circuit. In some ways the lack of force-fed torque means one less thing to worry about, with freezing cold temperatures on a typical winter's day in Leicestershire;





## **‘A SIDEWAYS GLANCE TOWARDS THE GLISTENING ARMCO SUGGESTS WE ARE TRAVELLING VERY QUICKLY’**

the fact that lockdown has also prevented much running on the circuit in 2020, and hence left the overflying cargo jets to claim the track's surface at will with their spent aviation fuel, is only going to exacerbate that headache.

We've driven the R1 before, when Jethro Bovingdon took the road-legal R1R around the same circuit seven years ago (evo 194). The recipe is certainly a formidable one. Not

for Praga the traditional high-end, club racing recipe of spaceframe with motorbike or turbocharged road car engine attached. The R1 is a complete carbon structure, LMP1-style, not just a carbon tub even, with a Formula Renault four-cylinder 2-litre engine and pure racing technology wherever you look. It majors on aerodynamic performance, weighs under 600kg, and even with the 235bhp and 184lb ft of the NA version (compared to the 380bhp/302lb ft of the turbo car) promises seriously quick lap times.

I run through the starting procedure and fire up the motor, which idles with the raw, uncomfortable vibration of a race four-pot attached directly to the chassis. It's loud and permanently amped-up on overdriven audio distortion, and I've been warned that stalling is but a mere inaccurate twitch of my toes away. I'm determined not to fall into that trap and dial in plenty of revs, releasing pressure on the clutch pedal (you only need the clutch for moving away from rest) as though each millimetre counts – which it kind of does.

Success. The wheels turn, there's the signal to go from the mechanic seeing me out, and then there isn't, so I

**Opposite page:** Towler prepares to thread himself into the Praga's cockpit; mid-mounted Formula Renault engine makes 235bhp in NA form; with a kerb weight of 600kg that's plenty



# GETTING BACK ON TRACK

How racing the Praga R1 has helped two ex-servicemen with their rehabilitation

'I WAS ALWAYS INTERESTED IN RACING, but until my injury I never had any ambition to be a racing driver,' says Warren McKinlay. 'Same here,' adds Martyn Compton. 'I always loved cars, but I joined the army at 16...'

Both Warren and Martyn are ex-servicemen dealing with, and recovering from, horrific injuries, but who've found a new purpose in the world of motor racing. 'I'd been at Headley Court [the Armed Forces' rehabilitation centre] for over four years,' says Martyn, 'and then got diagnosed with PTSD and started going downhill.'

'But then I joined a karting team, and it built on from there. It gave me everything I'd lost: a focus, something to look forward to, a target, being surrounded by guys that you can talk with.'

'I'd already been discharged from Headley Court before Martyn got there,' says Warren, 'but I was approached by the same charity that started

Martyn karting. I'd been out for nearly ten years at this point, but I didn't realise what a bad situation I'd let myself get in. Getting together with a load of ex-soldiers, regardless of injury, but who were competitive – with others and within the team – made me realise I lacked focus and was just drifting. It's the same now: with the season ongoing, it gives me focus, and even in the off-season we're trying to find sponsorship.'

'It also brings back the banter,' adds Martyn. 'Particularly what we're used to, because it's slightly darker... These days we work closely with a charity called Back on Track, which helps injured veterans with both physical and psychological rehabilitation. If it wasn't for the injuries we received, we wouldn't have got into this or met each other.'

After karting there were appearances for Martyn in a Golf in Britcar, and then they teamed up to drive together in the VW Fun Cup in 2018, and an Aston

Martin GT4 in 2019. Their Praga adventure started when VR Motorsport held a competition to drive an R1 and Martyn won. On the day the car had a technical malfunction, but both were invited back to a trackday. 'We had the test,' recalls Warren, 'and we both said: "That's what we want to race!"'

In last year's Britcar the duo finished third in class, and would have been second but for a shunt at Silverstone that wasn't their fault. For this year, they're hoping to upgrade to a turbocharged R1T – and, as Warren says, take the championship. When we spoke, they were grafting to find sponsorship for the new season. Their other aim is to have fellow vets helping in the pits as a way to get them into motorsport. 'When you've left the military, and you come into the racing environment, you realise how much you've missed the banter and camaraderie you once had,' reflects Martyn. It might only be driving a car around in circles, but there's nothing quite like the power of motor racing.







## 'IT SNAPS SIDWAYS IN WHAT FEELS LIKE A MILLIONTH OF A SECOND'

slow and fall foul of the other thing I've been warned about: because you can't get your right leg over into the space where the brake and clutch are, you need to select neutral before you stop rolling else the obvious happens, you stall. Which I promptly do, in a flap of feet and cursing.

Restart, and we're off, buzzing down the pitlane, already thankful for a tip-off about wearing earplugs, and straight into Redgate. There's no messing about with a pure racing machine such as the R1 – its dialogue is instantaneous, the clarity of its meaning unambiguous. The steering is incredibly direct, and negotiating the Craner Curves requires little more than the deftest of nudges to alter the car's trajectory, steering not so much from your wrists as from your fingers, albeit with a reasonably sturdy effort required. I'm also immediately conscious of what's happening at the rear axle, trying to be as smooth as I can so as not to provoke the car into oversteer – potentially a mistake given that generating heat in everything today will be crucial.

The buzz-saw engine note really tries to bore its way into your head, but strangely enough the NA R1 doesn't *feel* that fast. A glance sideways towards the grassy banks and glistening Armco suggests we are in fact travelling very quickly, and our closing speed on the next corner reinforces that belief, but the sensation of speed is curiously submerged beneath trying to get a feel for the car and judging those all-important appropriate cornering speeds.

To be more precise, today is really about judging entry speeds. I know so much of the R1 NA's performance is about its downforce, and so the real battle is a mental one: we're on wets, which 'give' a little, although not a lot,



but there's a certain amount of self belief and belief in the car required to really commit. It's a devilish task to judge just where that point may be, particularly through McLeans and Coppice, so I simply try to run through them faster with every passing lap, using freshly garnered experience as a confidence booster to carry more speed in metronomic incremental improvements. The fact that the grip levels change from corner to corner, let alone lap to lap, doesn't make the task any easier. The brakes, predictably, are masterful, with a very solid pedal feel, and because the car's so light it's almost more of a challenge not to overbrake than it is to leave your braking late enough.

After a while my brain starts to warn of impending overload and I peel off into the pits for a breather and a mull over how I might get those turn-in speeds higher. In the meantime the VR Motorsport team that runs the Pragas in Britcar decides to fit slicks as there's a definite dry line appearing in some sections of the circuit. It makes sense, but there'll be no shallying around now

**Left:** regular R1 pilots Warren McKinlay (left) and Martyn Compton, hoping to trade up to a R1T for 2021. **Above:** Towler getting to grips with the Praga on Donington's testing curves and gradients



– I'll need to be really aggressive from the pitlane exit to get tyre and brake temps where they need to be.

Without the tangible communication of load build-up that the wets were able to provide, the R1 is a tricky thing to get a handle on in these conditions, and that tantalising promise of massive, sucked-to-the-floor aero grip and balance from warm slicks proves elusive to find. A little too much trail-braking and commitment into Old Hairpin and the R1 snaps sideways in what feels like a millionth of a second; the recovery is of the instinctive type that I'm not sure I can explain afterwards,

leaving my arms pumped and my eyes on stalks. Actual power oversteer in this NA car feels almost an impossibility, because the mechanical grip is very high, but when it does slew on the exit of the chicane it needs to be gathered up smartish.

It's one area where the Praga feels very different from a traditional track car like a Radical, which also looks intimidating to drive quickly in less than ideal conditions but which behaves – relatively speaking – like a very quick road car with a wavelength that you can tune into and then exploit. The R1 is several rungs of seriousness and





performance above that – it demands absolute accuracy of input and complete confidence from the off, but that makes it a thrilling challenge to sink your teeth into.

Frustratingly, **evo**'s time in the car ends before the track can dry out any further, so we can only look on enviously as drier and warmer tarmac after lunchtime inevitably unlocks more of what this car can offer. Hopefully next time we get to try one those slicks will be nicely sticky, because properly on the boil the R1 promises to be a devastatingly quick machine. ✕



## RACING FORWARDS

Revamped R1T raises its game for the 2021 Britcar series

IT MAY LOOK VERY SIMILAR TO LAST YEAR'S CAR, BUT THE new R1T is a thorough evolution for the 2021 season, with up to ten cars set to compete within their own class in the Britcar Endurance series.

The Praga engineering team have added further carbonfibre to the structure, increasing its strength and stiffness in specific areas, while extremely tough Zylon panels form the bodywork around the sides and A- and B-pillars, the aim being to assist with distributing the force over a wider area in the event of a heavy impact.

Naturally, the car's aerodynamics have been given a further honing, although the changes are not so radical that a 2020 car can't be upgraded to 2021 spec. After CFD work with Praga's aero partner, a 15 per cent increase in downforce and 5 per cent decrease in drag is the claim, thanks largely to a new front splitter and underfloor and a new rear wing.

There are also new, much more effective headlamps, useful for any endurance appearances, especially when coupled with a 50 per cent larger fuel tank (now 92 litres) and additional fuel pumps that make extracting the fuel more effective. The R1T can now cover a one-and-a-half-hour stint as opposed to the 56 minutes previously, which gives many more options for race strategy.

The pedal box is now adjustable from within the cabin (at pit stop time when switching drivers, hence saving time) and there's a completely new electronics package incorporating a digital dash, many more sensors, and PCBs in place of analogue fuses. Fuel level and brake pedal pressure are among the parameters that can now be shown, and there are hazard lights for the first time. A new pump-based system keeps the coolant flowing after the engine is switched off – useful if the car is directed straight to parc fermé at the end of a race.

The powertrain is unchanged, with the same Renault 2-litre turbocharged engine and sequential paddleshift gearbox, but, with 567bhp per ton and up to 3G of cornering force potentially generated, the R1T's performance stats are as formidable as ever.



# LIFE THROUGH A LENS

## JAKOB EBREY

He started by taking photos at race meetings as a hobby, and soon Jakob Ebrey became the go-to motorsport photographer for teams and drivers alike. Here he shares his story and a selection of his favourite images

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*by* ANTONY INGRAM

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OTHER THAN PERHAPS BEING ON THE grid itself, there are few better ways to spend a weekend than watching some racing at one of the UK's multitude of historic circuits. Once the world reopens, your support will be more valuable than ever too, with club motorsport in particular heavily reliant on its audience to keep the wheels turning and ensure it survives well into the future.

And who knows, if your kids enjoy it (and chances are they'll love it), you might also sow the seeds of a future career – just as it did for Jakob Ebrey. Today Ebrey is known as one of the country's most prominent motorsport photographers, with more than two decades shooting the British Touring Car Championship, British Rally Championship, GT racing, Formula 1 and more, but not unlike other photographers featured in Life Through a Lens, Ebrey's inspiration came at a very young age.

'I used to go to Oulton Park with my parents – I probably went to my first meeting there before I could walk,' he says, 'and we used to just go as spectators to as many different and varied events as we could. Oulton was my local circuit so I've got a particular affinity with the place. We'd watch car racing, mainly at a club level, but we also used to go and watch motocross, banger racing, anything at all that was engine powered.'

You probably know what's coming next – it wasn't a huge leap from visiting those events to taking the odd photograph here and there. 'My dad used to be a keen photographer,' Ebrey explains, 'so we'd always take a camera along with us. When I grew up a little bit I wanted to take some photos myself.' He would then get the images developed, before returning to a meeting a few weeks later to get them signed by the drivers.

'It was quite a big thing to do for someone 10 or 11 years old!' Ebrey remembers, but it



**European Le Man Series, Paul Ricard (previous pages)**  
'We wanted to get the curves of Paul Ricard in this ELMS publicity shot. As we lined up the cars, the mother of all storms arrived in the distance. I think I took ten frames before the heavens opened, and we had a lot of very wet mechanics pushing their cars back to the paddock!'

**Lewis Hamilton, Silverstone (above)**  
'It's like *Where's Wally?*! I think this was when Lewis equalled

or passed Jim Clark's record, maybe his fifth British GP victory, when he started his now traditional crowd-surfing efforts at Silverstone. It's one of my favourite pictures; everybody's eyes are on one man, all the arms are pointing towards him – it'd make a great jigsaw!'

**Goodwood Revival (right)**  
'I had the idea of how to take this photograph, I just needed Mother Nature to help me out. It's in the Kinrara, the first race of the Goodwood Revival.

I used a much longer lens than I normally would, to make the sun as big as possible in the frame. Technology aside, it could've been taken in-period, which is one of the things I love about that place.'

**Michael Schumacher, Silverstone (far right)**  
'Schumacher got a little bit of a wobble on exiting Abbey, and he appeared in the frame sideways on the grass, and held it! It was one of those moments where you take the photograph and run away!'













Andy Jordan, Knockhill (top left)

'Knockhill is probably the greatest place to watch a touring car race. This was towards the end of Free Practice 2, where the drivers normally have a practice run for qualifying so they're on it for the next session. Andy Jordan was a little bit too much on it for this one!'

Porsche 911 RSR (left)

'A good example of forgetting the images you take. The car was just sitting there in

the garage by itself when I walked past, so I took a few frames and popped it to our clients as part of a normal set of pictures. Then it appeared in *Autosport's* pictures of the year!'

Fuji sunset (top)

'Another one where Mother Nature helped out massively. All week Fuji had been shrouded in cloud, then in the last ten minutes of Free Practice, it appeared for the first time. Absolutely unbelievable.'

Colin Turkington, Brands Hatch (above)

'The 2019 BTCC season went to a showdown at Brands Hatch. Dan Cammish was going to win the championship, but a brake issue pitched him off the track with a lap and a half to go and Colin Turkington came through to win the title. As soon as the car came into parc fermé he leapt out in pure emotion, and the sky went the most magical colour. You couldn't make it up.'

also laid the groundwork for a future career. 'A driver or two used to say, "Oh, can I get a copy of that?" or "Can I buy that?" or "Am I okay to keep it?" and from there, even at an early age, I thought this was something I could enjoy doing as more of a full-time thing going forward. A few people started saying, "You should try and get them published," so I spoke to my local newspaper and I started doing the reports and pictures following the race weekends at Oulton Park for our local paper in Macclesfield.'

One of Ebrey's mantras – to always leave your camera on – no doubt assisted with the next step. 'I don't know how it happened but I started getting a lot of crash photos, and I started thinking, "Oh, I think I got that picture" – at the time I didn't quite know because it was still on film. I'd submit them to *Autosport* and *Motorsport News*, and so I'd get pictures used in there as well, and from there they started booking me for race weekend photography to cover individual events.'

Not a bad gig, considering Ebrey was at the time still in the sixth form studying for his A-levels, and on the phone in his lunch breaks selling photographs to some of the drivers in the various series. 'I was probably the only person in lower sixth at the time with a mobile phone, which was quite cool!' he laughs.

'One day, while I was at Oulton Park, I met a photographer called John Colley, who was pretty much the benchmark in the industry at the time for national event coverage. And John, luckily enough, was looking for someone to join his company. I finished my A-levels on a Friday and started work full-time for John on the Monday. I think that was the last time I had a weekend off! It was brilliant: John taught me so much about photography, business, and life in general, that he set me on a good path when I eventually started up my own company and spread my wings.'

That move into solo work came in around 2000, with Colley wanting to slow down his commitments just as Ebrey was keen to build his career. With Colley's blessing, Ebrey took on some of their existing clients and developed a full business from there, with contracts for the Vauxhall BTCC squad, Renault and some of the other TOCA support championships, the British Rally Championship, F3, GT racing and various other events – many of which Ebrey continues to shoot for to this day.

Currently Ebrey's business is a team of four, himself, fellow photographers Mike Hoyer and Stephen Fisher, and Amy Bowden-Rooke, who 'runs the business and office side of the company, which is probably more important

than what the rest of us do!' Ebrey himself carries a hefty kit bag around with him to events: 'In my standard go-to kit I have two Canon EOS 1D X MkIIIs and an EOS 5D MkIV, and for the lenses I have a 16-35mm, a fixed 24mm which is an f/1.4, a 70-200mm, a 300mm f/2.8, a 50mm f/1.8, a 24-105mm mid-range zoom that does everything, and for the bigger events – as in the cars being further away – a 500mm lens.'

Kit is only ever part of the equation though, and Ebrey is keen to put people in the moment with his images: 'I love photographs that put people in the position as if they were there themselves. This last year, during the pandemic, I'd say that's been more important than ever, to try and put your pictures across as what the viewer wants to see.'

It's also an important record of the time: 'Doing a shot of Paddock Hill at Brands with an empty grandstand would be a massive no-no in the past! You don't want to show that people aren't there watching the racing. Whereas this year it's been good to show the predicament that we're all in, for history's sake. With the season being pushed back effectively two months, a lot of the test days have moved to November and December too, which for me has been fantastic because the sunrise and sunsets have been phenomenal, something you never normally get in our line of work.'

It was Brands Hatch that provided one of Ebrey's most memorable moments too, when Colin Turkington took the 2019 BTCC title. It showed that the job was about far more than shooting fast cars: 'The pure emotion when he got out of the car was something I've never really seen before. He's normally very reserved and calculated, but when he got out of the car that day, I've never seen somebody just so pumped to have won a championship in my life. It's like the whole weight of the world had been taken off his shoulders in the last lap or two. He was physically overcome with it. It's an honour to be there for those moments... sometimes you find yourself so busy in that moment you don't really take in the significance at the time.'

With that in mind, surely Ebrey has taken shots before whose significance only came to light later on? 'Sometimes you see a lot of pictures that you initially miss. We've been doing a lot of archiving during the lockdown period, and when you go back and look at the stuff now, and they bring back great memories, you think, why didn't that get used in period? Perhaps it just wasn't quite as relevant at the time.'

'There's just been so many different moments though which have meant so much over the years, it's been pretty amazing.' ❌



**Hayanari Shimoda, Eastern Creek, Australia (top)**  
'This was in AIGP. I was walking along with my camera in my hand, saw him coming and fired off a sequence of shots as it happened. If you look at the left-hand side in the gravel, that's the roll hoop. One of the scariest accidents I've ever seen.'

**Daytona 24 Hours (middle)**  
'For years I've been working out how to get a picture of the Ferris wheel at Daytona at night, with cars in it. This is taken from the spotter's tower on top of the grandstand. It

took ages because the wheel lights up with different colours, and it was never quite the right combination of car and lights.'

**BTCC, Rockingham (above)**  
'This was during qualifying in 2016. It got darker and darker, quite surreal, almost like an eclipse. Then the heavens opened, so I ran to one of the garages and put half my kit in there. When I ran back out it dawned on me there was nobody else in the pitlane but me. As the cars came in, the rain and the headlights were just phenomenal.'

**911 GT3 Cup and 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport (top right)**  
'This was taken from the boot of a 911! I find it easier to shoot like this than on a remote camera because you can see what you're doing, and if it's not working you can change to get what you need.'

**Le Mans racers, Monza (right)**  
'We're the official photographers for the ELMS, and for the last year the Masters series ran alongside them. To get a chance to do a tracking lap with the new cars and old cars together was amazing.'







by STUART GALLAGHER & ADAM TOWLER

PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT

# CIVIL







# WAR

BMW has launched an audacious challenge to the Golf GTI with its first front-drive hot hatch, the 128ti. Meanwhile VW has countered with the Golf GTI Clubsport. We assess them both







**'AT SPEED  
THE CHASSIS  
SETTLES AND  
BEGINS TO  
FLOW'**







**Y**OU HAVE TO HAND IT TO BMW, it's never been afraid to rip up its own rulebook, stare controversy hard in the face and ask: 'So what? What are you going to do about it?' Electric and hybrid cars that resembled nothing else in the line-up a decade before any of its competitors had anything remotely interesting to offer with

a plug; SUVs larger than the second homes their owners drive them to at the weekend; a willingness to apply the sacred M name to anything that glides down its production line and to hell with the backlash (profit is profit); and a readiness to flip its design language on its head, seemingly on a whim. There are certainly some brave souls in Munich.

How brave? They've just built a front-wheel-drive hot hatch aimed directly at the Golf GTI, and not simply by taking the innards of the hottest Mini and securing them to a 1-series, either. The 128ti is the result of BMW's engineers, led by Jos van As, VP for driving dynamics, pondering what a two-wheel-drive 135i xDrive would be like and whether it would make the dumpy hatch rather more exciting to drive. So they removed everything connected with driving the rear wheels and turned all the focus to the front end.

Out went the underbody bracing of the xDrive; spring rates were stiffened by eight per cent and toe-in at all four corners revised. The steering rate has been slowed compared to that of the 135i and the 128ti's Torsen mechanical limited-slip diff has a seven per cent lower locking ratio, at 31 per cent, under acceleration.

Its 18-inch wheels are fitted with Michelin's Pilot Sport 5 tyre rather than the ancient Bridgestone Potenza you'll find on many of BMW's products today, including the 135i. The M Sport brakes are the same size as those fitted to the more powerful four-wheel-drive car (360mm discs on the front axle with four-pot calipers, 300mm rotors on the rear with a single-piston caliper), but where the range-topper is available with adaptive dampers the 128ti has fixed-rate units, which have a higher compression rate than the sportiest setting available on the 135i. Like the braking systems, the chassis upgrades come from the M Sport family, despite the 128ti categorically not being an M Sport model.

At this point alarm bells might be ringing with the mention of higher spring and compression rates, especially so if you've driven the Mini GP3 and your spine is still recovering. But there's no need to worry because the 128ti's chassis is a little marvel. Yes, there's a harshness at very low speeds, say 30-40mph, where any surface imperfections are felt through the cabin with a harder thud than you were perhaps expecting, and it's magnified during the first few miles of your journey if the ambient temperature is in single figures. Reach above these speeds and the chassis settles and begins to flow and breathe much more calmly with the surface, with a pliancy that's very, er, Golf GTI in how it works with the road rather than trying to beat it up.

And then you start to push harder and a high level of precision to the 128ti's front end comes to the fore. It's the precision that's missing in the 135i and it's what the Golf GTI lacks when you really could do with more clarity. It's a busier front end than expected as a consequence, the steering wheel writhing away in your hands more than anticipated, but as a result you do have a clearer picture of what's going on at each corner and before





**'IT OFFERS  
FAR MORE  
THRILLS THAN  
ITS LOOKS  
SUGGEST'**





**Left and below:** playful chassis allows you to unsettle the rear on the way in to a corner before getting back on the power. No manual gearbox option: 128ti is auto-only. Red accents struggle to inject much visual excitement

long you're hustling it with more enthusiasm and determination than you would the aforementioned hatches and even Mini's own Cooper S model.

The Torsen diff doesn't hook up as quickly as you expect and it isn't as aggressive as some, but it does allow the front Michelins to pull through the corner cleanly and the driver to open the throttle wider much earlier. The 128ti enjoys being thrown at a corner too, and, as with all the best front-drivers, the tail goes light when your entry speed is on the high side. So you can either keep your foot in and let the diff hook up and pull you through, or lift out of the throttle and let the rear carve a wider arc before getting back on the power when you feel you've wound on enough opposite lock. Cross-country on the sort of roads hot hatches excel on, it's an engaging car that offers far more thrills than its looks suggest.

Powering those thrills is a detuned version of the 135i xDrive's 2-litre turbocharged four, with power dropped by 45bhp to 261bhp and torque 37lb ft lower at 295lb ft. Despite carrying a hefty 1445kg (80kg less than the 135i), the playfulness of the 128ti's chassis makes up for the seconds lost against the clock compared with its four-wheel-drive big brother. Its enthusiasm for any given corner far outweighs any disadvantage it had down the straight getting there. It also does a respectable job of masking its mass, which is inexplicably high for a front-wheel-drive car.

It's not an especially strong engine in terms of soundtrack: it can come across as strained at the top end and there's a harshness over the last 1000rpm that has you pulling for another gear earlier than anticipated. And, like all turbocharged engines of its ilk, it feels one-dimensional in terms of character, but it will deliver what's required at the moment when you require it.

It's not only the engine that the 128ti shares with the more powerful 135i; the eight-speed ZF auto is also carried over and is the only transmission offered. Shift speeds are quicker

for the 128ti and have been recalibrated for the front-drive car, hitting home harder and with more conviction. The paddles are okay rather than great; they're rather too small and their action suffers from feeling like a switch rather than a control function for an integral piece of the drivetrain, but they are better than most in similarly priced cars.

Low and mid-range ratios in the ZF unit suit the nature of the 128's motor: not too short so that you're constantly throwing gears at it, nor Porsche-like in length so that you can listen to a five-day Test match as you wait for the revs to build before the next gear is needed. And yes, a six-speed manual would be preferable: it would suit the nature of this type of car so much better and add another welcome layer of interaction. But it's a familiar story, BMW predicting that less than a third of customers (and that's being optimistic) would opt for a manual if one was offered. Sigh.

While we're talking of downsides, it's not the most exciting of hot hatches to look at, either. The token red highlights on the front intakes and those hidden within the rear bumper do little to raise the excitement levels. Then again a Golf GTI is more introvert than extrovert to look at. But the 1-series lends itself to being punchier in the visual department and you can't but think this is an opportunity missed. It's not as if BMW isn't prepared to push its design, after all. Some grippier seats wouldn't go amiss, either.

Despite these reservations, the curiosity of BMW's engineers to find out what a front-wheel-drive 1-series hot hatch would be like has resulted in a car that is both more exciting and more rewarding to drive than the latest Golf GTI. It doesn't have the effervescence and infectious energy of Hyundai's i30 N and the latest – and last – RS Mégane (see p112), but it does raise a broad smile when you find yourself on a good road. It might not be afraid to rip up its own rulebook, but in developing the 128ti, BMW appears to have spent a long time reading up on how to build a GTI-beater.

## BMW 128ti

**Engine** In-line 4-cyl, 1988cc, turbo **Power** 261bhp @ 4750-6500rpm  
**Torque** 295bhp @ 1750-4500rpm **Weight** 1445kg **Power-to-weight** 184bhp/ton  
**0-62mph** 6.1sec **Top speed** 155mph (limited) **Basic price** £31,875

**evo rating** ★★★★★





A

**AND RELAX. AFTER THE RATHER**

unsettling proposition that is the front-wheel-drive, automatic BMW hot hatch on the preceding pages – who'd have once thought that possible? – here's something much more within our respective comfort zones. A new Golf GTI. A go-faster one at that. And breathe...

If the concept, and indeed the ingredients, are all very familiar, then that needn't detract from what should hopefully be an important new arrival in the hot hatch market. In recent years, Karsten Schebsdat's engineering team have brought us a superb series of VW hot hatches, peaking with future classics such as the Mk7 Clubsport S. This new Mk8 Clubsport is unusual in that it's available right from the start of this generation's GTI production run, rather than late in the day, and there's no ambiguity about the fact that it's aimed squarely at those with an interest in driving. Expectations, then, are high.

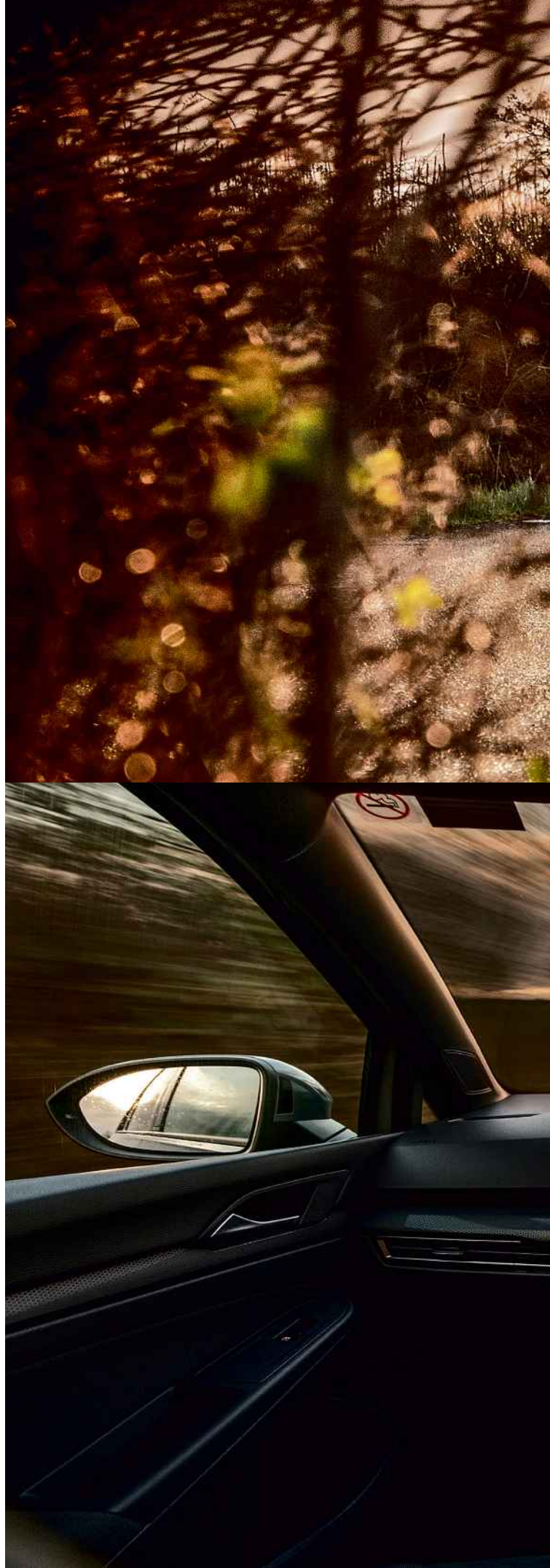
That said, the fact it's available only in a five-door body (as with all Mk8 Golfs), and this time only with the twin-clutch DSG gearbox, is not necessarily the promising start a lot of enthusiasts will have hoped for. However, there are plenty of changes over the regular Mk8 GTI – a car, you will recall, that we're rather fond of (albeit especially when it's fitted with a manual 'box).

For the Clubsport, the EA888 Evo4 engine runs a completely new turbocharger made by Continental, not Garrett, along with a larger intercooler, and is mapped to give its best on 98 RON fuel, all of which means its figures are now 296bhp and 295lb ft, as opposed to the 242bhp and 273lb ft of the standard GTI. A glance at the graphs shows that the real gains are above 5000rpm, which means the Clubsport should feel far more energetic on the road, just at the point where the GTI starts to feel rather asthmatic and encourages an early upshift.

You'll be able to spot a Clubsport by its unique design of front bumper featuring a larger cooling opening and the small, painted 'flics', along with its flared sills and larger rear wing: lift is reduced front and rear over the standard GTI, although for a slight penalty in drag. Yet it's under the skin that the most intriguing changes have been made. As standard, the Clubsport sits 15mm lower than a GTI, with an increase in negative camber on the front axle and new control arm mounts and different bearings on the rear.

'Linearity and predictability of reactions' is the phrase coined by Schebsdat, and further changes include a new calibration for the power steering set-up (just 2.1 turns lock-to-lock) and, unlike in the GTI, the electronically controlled limited-slip differential (VAQ in VW speak) is under the control of the Vehicle Dynamics Manager (VDM) and operated via the car's giant central screen. There are also bigger front brake discs (357mm) and, if the car has the option fitted, a unique calibration for the DCC adaptive dampers that includes a specific Nürburgring setting.

So I think it's fair to say that the Clubsport is a lot more than just a GTI with a remap, which, you may have been thinking, was a fair assumption. And yet... on initial acquaintance it's hard to shake off that suspicion. The Clubsport, at least this particular example, is not exactly a firecracker, regardless of whether it has been put in the Sport driving mode: the visual changes aren't that easy to spot, the grey paint of its exterior matches the grey sky perfectly and looks like it's come from Royal Navy surplus,







**'THE GOLF  
STRUGGLES  
TO DEPLOY  
ITS TORQUE  
IN THE LOWER  
GEARS'**









**Below and left:** new Clubsport looks a little underwhelming in battleship grey with standard 18in wheels, and that's how it feels initially, too, but it's a car of hidden depths

and on standard 18in alloys it looks under-wheeled. Those wheels are shod with 225/40 R18 Bridgestone Potenzas (a Goodyear Eagle F1 is the other factory fitment; a Hankook makes a trio on the 19in wheel) and in cold, slippery conditions, even without any standing water on the road, they offer very limited traction and outright grip.

Running a Toyota GR Yaris on the Fast Fleet has reminded us what useable, all-weather turbocharged performance in a hatchback feels like and, by comparison, the Clubsport shows the limitations of the large, high-power, front-wheel-drive hot hatch, really struggling to deploy the majority of its torque in the lower gears, and slipping and tugging this way and that despite the best interventions of the differential. It also feels like it's constantly at the outer reaches of its grip envelope, particularly in a faster corner, where once learnt, an early turn-in then allows a predictable skate through the apex in a state of mild understeer. There's a certain sadistic fun to that, but all the while there's a nagging feeling that the Clubsport is being significantly hamstrung.

However, there's no doubting the effectiveness of the powertrain, which is smooth, punchy and flexible, albeit not the most character-laden, though DSG does, as ever, remove you slightly from the business of driving. The hopelessly tiny paddles don't help, with no sign of the bigger ones seen in press shots of the new Golf R being made available on the Clubsport. That really needs to be addressed PDQ.

Inside, there are unique fabrics for the fine sports seats, while you'll either love or hate the Mk8's haptic screens. This early press car doesn't have DCC fitted, so the swipe configurability of the car's damping, so effective in the GTI we tested (Driven, *evo* 279) is absent. As it is, the ride on the passive suspension is a little busy at low speed but nothing that doesn't feel in keeping with a proper hot hatch.

'Underwhelming' sums up the initial impressions of the Clubsport. There's no doubting its speed, of course, because

once the car is hooked up the four-pot turbo absolutely rips through its rev-range, but for £37,215 and all those detail changes, I'd been hoping for a car that really takes the fight to the Honda Civic Type R, and initially this seems by some margin out of range. There may be Clubsport-specific brake discs, for example, but the pedal offers nothing like the feel and grainy resistance found in the Honda.

And yet, the more I drive the Clubsport, the more I come to appreciate the completeness of its dynamics. There's a clean, unfussed, super-effective way that it goes about its business that suggests there's a car of real ability here. It's not prone to exaggerated oversteer on corner entry like a Mégane, or even a Civic, but you can definitely sense the rear axle chipping in to assist the turn, and you can provoke it to a certain, albeit limited, degree. The steering is surprisingly light, but it's a definite improvement on the regular GTI's, feeling much more direct and providing real accuracy. Once you've accepted the grip levels aren't high, you can be really accurate with where you place the car on the road, revelling in the economy of effort of both car and driver.

Would the larger contact patch of the optional 19in wheel (with 235/35 R19 tyres) make a difference? Interestingly, the Clubsport is said to be 13sec quicker around the Ring than the GTI, but when you look into the small print those times were set on Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 rubber! Is that what it takes to make the car truly come alive? No word yet from VW as to whether it'll become an option in the UK.

In short, I wonder whether the Clubsport has a lot more to give. The acid test will be when we try one in warmer weather, running on 19s, with the Clubsport-specific DCC dampers. It was the damping that was one of the really impressive aspects to the standard GTI, so will these options unlock the potential of the Clubsport and allow it to challenge the Type Rs, i30 Ns and Méganes of this world for genuine driver appeal? Frankly, I can't wait to find out.

### Volkswagen Golf GTI Clubsport

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1984cc, turbo Power 296bhp @ 5000rpm  
Torque 295lb ft @ 2000-5200rpm Weight 1461kg Power-to-weight 206bhp/ton  
0-62mph 5.6sec Top speed 155mph (limited) Basic price £37,315

evo rating ★★★★★





BY JORDAN KATSIANIS

# THE GALLIC ALTERNATIVE

New base model could be best current-gen Mégane yet

**AS OF 2021, THE RENAULT MÉGANE RS HAS BEEN** both refreshed and restructured into a simple two-tier range with a single engine and transmission. Both versions feature the 296bhp 1.8-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine from the previous Trophy, mated to a six-speed dual-clutch transmission. The six-speed manual is therefore gone in the UK, which means the Mégane joins the growing ranks of hot hatchbacks – like the BMW 128ti and Golf GTI Clubsport on the preceding pages – that are auto-only. The previous RS's rear-wheel-steering system is standard on both models, so too a valved exhaust and four-piston Brembo brakes.

We're driving the RS 300, which along with smaller 18-inch wheels (although optional 19s were fitted to our test car) also features the softer Sport chassis, an open front differential and passive dampers. The top-tier Trophy has the firmer Cup chassis, a limited-slip diff and a lighter set of brakes behind its own set of 19-inch wheels, in this case forged alloy.

Has the consolidated range limited the Mégane's appeal? Not a bit of it. In fact, the new RS 300 might just be the most complete current-generation Mégane RS so far.

While capability has never been lacking in this generation, to access the top-tier 297bhp engine you had to plump for the Trophy, which was fitted with the Cup chassis. Putting it simply, we found it a difficult car to engage with on the road as it pummelled you senseless with its relentlessly stiff suspension. Its iron-fisted body control and incredible reach into the tarmac was certainly impressive, but also punishing. Meanwhile the steering felt hyperactive with its combination of a fast rack and that rear-wheel steering, and its manual transmission was notchy and fickle.

This new base version not only combines the more potent engine with the Sport chassis for the first time, but also brings the dual-clutch 'box to the party. And do you know what? No RS Mégane has felt better on the road. As we found during our hot hatch extravaganza in issue 267, when equipped with this chassis the Mégane flows down the road with a poise and delicacy not too dissimilar to an Alpine A110. It does this without significant deterioration in body control too, allowing you to use its subtle lateral movement to read exactly what each corner of the car is doing.

**'IT COMBINES  
THE MORE  
POTENT  
ENGINE WITH  
THE SPORT  
CHASSIS'**





This uncovers even more opportunities to exploit the Mégane's hyper-agility and playful balance. The nose is just as laser-focused as before, and once locked into your chosen line there are plenty of options. Add a little more lock and the rear-wheel steer will neutralise the rear end; lift off the throttle and it'll give enough angle to apply some corrective lock; the choice is yours. If there's one element missing, it's the mechanical locking differential, but then the extra traction it unlocks out of tighter corners comes at the expense of corrupting the steering.

The final element is the dual-clutch 'box. Shared with the Alpine A110, it has an almost identical rate of paddle-to-shift response, while changes both up and down the 'box have an urgency and theatricality missing in most rivals. Even the column-mounted paddles feel good.

What we're left with, then, is a Mégane RS with all the good bits from before combined with a calmer chassis and a transmission that genuinely suits the package. Renault Sport might be retired in a manner of speaking, but there's still brilliance at work in Dieppe. ✕

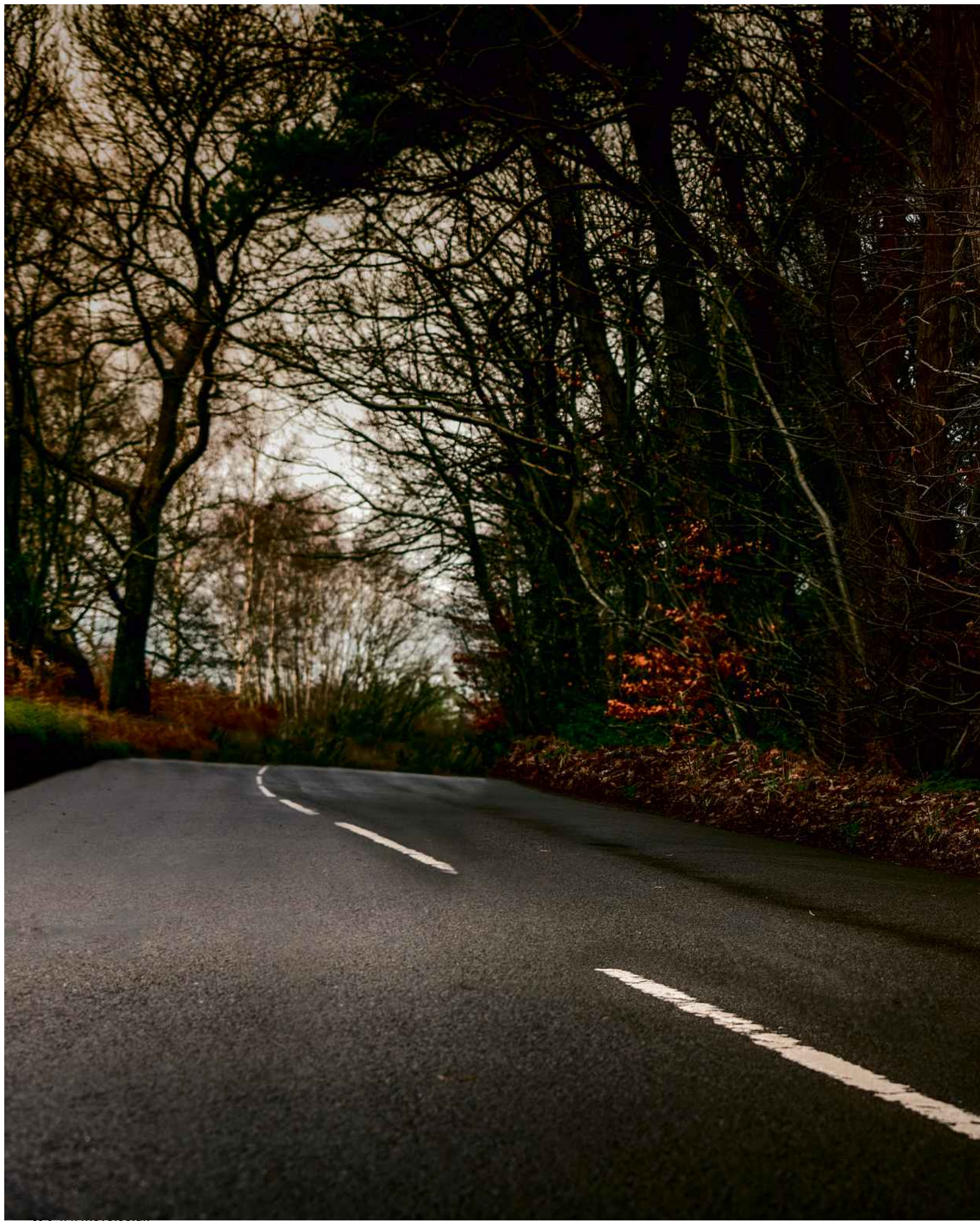
### Renault Mégane RS 300

**Engine** In-line 4-cyl, 1798cc, turbo **Power** 296bhp @ 6000rpm  
**Torque** 295lb ft @ 4000rpm **Weight** 1443kg **Power-to-weight** 209bhp/ton  
**0-62mph** 5.7sec **Top speed** 158mph **Basic price** £32,995

evo rating ★★★★★









A man with grey hair and a beard, wearing sunglasses, a white textured sweater, blue jeans, and brown leather shoes, is reclining against a large tree in a forest. He is holding a small object in his hands. The background is filled with bare tree branches and some autumn leaves.

# SELF DRIVEN

by COLIN GOODWIN  
PHOTOGRAPHY by  
ASTON PARROTT

*Gordon Murray's  
T.50 hypercar isn't quite  
finished yet, but that  
small detail can't prevent  
us taking it for a world-  
first virtual road test*





**THE LAYOUT AS YOU OPEN THE T.50'S DOOR AND** peer inside is very familiar. Same central driving position as the F1; same set-back, flanking second and third seats. Slide yourself in and the differences become apparent. In the McLaren F1 the longitudinal structural beams that run through the tub from the engine mounting points on the rear bulkhead to the front bulkhead were positioned more inboard than they are on the T.50. On the latter they're within the rocker panels so that getting in and out of the car is much easier.

Comfortably slotted in to the driver's seat, you have in front of you a simple steering wheel with a minimalist selection of buttons and switches, in contrast to the modern trend. What switches there are come from a high quality supplier and have a reassuringly positive feel. 'The switches we used on the F1 looked the part,' admits Gordon Murray, 'but looked better quality than they in fact were.'

Also bucking current ideas, the rim of the wheel is slim. Where did the idea of sausage-section steering wheel rims come from? Are they meant to be sporty? Also unusual is the lack of column stalks. Murray didn't want them on the F1 and now, on his car, for which he's called all the shots, they have gone. But before we fire up the 4-litre Cosworth V12 engine and discover what 12,000rpm feels and sounds like, some explanation is required.

We are living in a bizarre world, in which we have Zoom dinners with friends, work remotely, conference call online, distance ourselves from colleagues and associates, and to a great extent live our days in a two-dimensional world. Motor racing is now largely e-sports with virtual championships taking place in almost all categories.

So to join in with the spirit of the moment, you are reading

the world's first virtual road test of the Gordon Murray Automotive T.50 using data gathered from a variety of sources. Firstly, there's my own experience of driving most of the world's high performance cars over the last 30 years, including the McLaren F1 itself. Then there's the already published technical specifications of the T.50. Together, these sources help build a good picture of what the T.50 will be like to drive, but in truth only a low-res image.

The really important data has come from a long chat on the phone with Murray himself. Locked-down at his Surrey home, he is working harder than ever: glued to a computer screen, finalising tooling details and keeping in regular contact with T.50 customers who must be relishing this close contact with their purchase's creator.

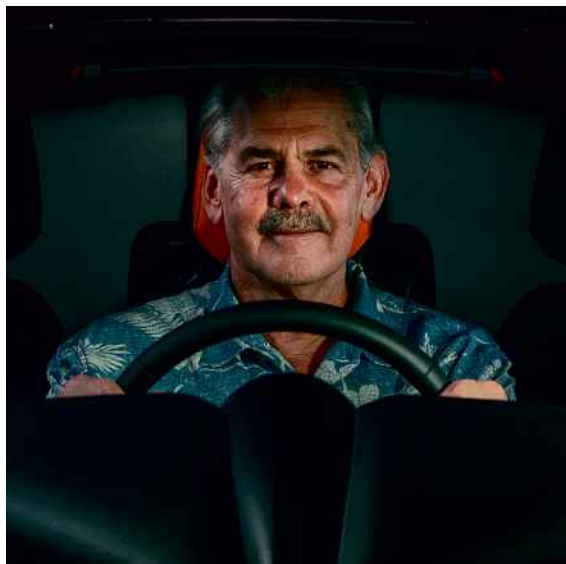
I can envisage the accelerative sensation of 650bhp in a 980kg car but, not having had the pleasure of driving either a Brabham BT46 or a Chaparral 2J, I have no idea what it will feel like to be in a car that is literally sucked to the ground by a fan. Here, talking to Murray has been essential, but we'll come to the fan shortly.

'We've focused on three key areas where we wanted to improve upon the F1 with the T.50,' he tells me, 'and these are driveability, useability and lastly functionality. Or, put simply, we wanted to fix the areas of the F1 that just didn't work properly.' Like the headlamps. I don't remember ever being in an F1 after dark but, according to Murray, the headlamps were crap even by 1990s standards. 'You couldn't drive over 100mph at night.'

The problem was the available technology and budget. This time around the wallet has been opened and Wipac has come up with a bespoke LED system for the T.50 that has cost a cool £3million to develop. The peepers on the

**Above, from left:** easier access than in the F1 to the central driving position and the slim, relatively unadorned steering wheel; obsessive weight saving is evident everywhere; Murray is determined the T.50 will be more driveable and useable than the iconic 1990s F1





**'WE'VE WAITED  
LONG ENOUGH.  
TIME TO FIRE  
UP THE 654BHP  
COSWORTH V12.  
THE SOUND IS  
AMAZING...'**

McLaren 720S are the benchmark; lights that, in Murray's opinion, are the most effective fitted to any car. I've done plenty of night miles in 720s and would concur with that.

It's always been said of the F1 that it tended to be owned by people who actually use their cars and not lock them away in a heated garage. Back when the car was new, I lived near an owner who I used to regularly see out shopping in his F1. It was usually dirty and often fully occupied. Which is why Murray and his team are focusing on areas that make, when done right, cars easy to live with.

'The air conditioning was hopeless,' says Murray. 'We ran the compressor off the engine and at low speeds it wasn't doing much. We also ran out of space for ventilation in the F1 and in the T.50 we've fixed that with vents that are four times bigger than the McLaren's and by making the cabin exhaust valve, which lets the air out and which is the really important bit, 500 per cent larger and placing it in the second lowest pressure-point in the car.'

For the F1, only one seating buck was made; for the T.50 there are three. I was never fortunate to go on holiday or even take a long weekend in an F1 so didn't experience the wrangle that was involved in loading luggage into the car. 'It was awkward,' explains Murray. 'We used helicopter bins that weren't easy to use.' The T.50 has 300 per cent more interior stowage space, while luggage loads into compartments from the top.

The T.50 is a fascinating mix of bang-on-the-moment technology and systems from the more recent past. For example, the engine is fitted with an ISG or Integrated Starter Generator. This unit generates the 48V supply that is used to power the electric air-conditioning compressor, the electric/hydraulic power steering pump and the famous

fan at the back of the car. Without the ISG, said Cosworth, three alternators would have been required. Also, 48 volts is needed for the fan because otherwise the DC motor would have weighed a tonne. Using the ISG saves 21kg and, as you can guess, as a Colin Chapman acolyte, Murray is obsessed by shedding the grams.

We've waited long enough. Time to fire up the 654bhp Cosworth V12. The sound is amazing, but what is truly staggering is how quickly the motor picks up revs. Just like the Paul Rosche-designed V12 in the F1, only more so. The BMW engine in the F1 accelerated at 10,000rpm per second; this Cosworth motor beats that with 28,400rpm per second. I don't have any numbers for superbike engines but it must be at least the equal of a Honda Fireblade's motor.

There was a throttle cable in the F1 but naturally it's fly-by-wire in the T.50. With barely any flywheel and this eagerness to rev, I wonder if the T.50 is going to be as tricky off the line as the Porsche Carrera GT? With Murray's determination that this car should be useable, the engine's ability to produce 70 per cent of maximum torque at 2500rpm and the fact that by using a bespoke Xtrac transaxle Murray will have been able to choose the ideal ratio for first gear, that's not the case.

As well as spending time with Murray on the phone for this exercise, I have also spent many hours perusing his ever-growing car collection. A collection that includes two Elans (in his opinion the best sports car of all time), a Europa and an Elite, plus several Lotus racers including a lovely Type 23. There is also an Alpine A110, which is his daily driver if he's not using a classic or his also well-loved Smart Roadster.

'The A110 is the car that we've used as a benchmark. It's



**'THE T.50 IS  
LIGHT ON ITS  
FEET, WITH  
SUPERBLY  
ACCURATE  
STEERING  
THAT GIVES  
SUPERLATIVE  
FEEDBACK'**







been in the workshop and the team have literally pulled it to bits. It has a fantastic compromise between ride and handling and that's what we're aiming at with the T.50.'

Not only is the new car 150kg lighter than the F1, but the unsprung weight has been reduced, too, by – you guessed it – attention to detail and to shaving every possible gram from every component. The wheels are 800g lighter than those fitted to the F1; the bespoke Brembo brakes use the lightest calipers that the company makes, from which a further 500g of material has been machined away. Add to this Formula 1-spec hubs and bearings that are three times stiffer than conventional items, forged uprights and wishbones, and rising rate springs (which help manage aero loads) with titanium pushrods. Not only does the T.50 weigh less than the F1, its centre of gravity is lower, too.

It's the perfect recipe: electric steering, low unsprung weight and a focus on the balance between ride and handling. What you get then is an A110 with outrageous performance. But the fan, what about that fan?

One of my first questions to Murray was 'Will I feel it working?' It would be a shame if this wonderful piece of theatre went about its work without the driver realising it. 'The effect of the fan will be felt at about 55-60mph,' explains Murray, 'and definitely at 70-80mph. That's the same speed at which you'll notice the streamline mode. At around 80-90mph the diffuser is made to stall so that the drag drops.'

The fan is going to be the defining feature of the T.50, the part that captures the public's imagination. It's also much more of a multi-role device than the one fitted to the Brabham BT46. On Murray's road-going supercar it also helps cools the engine, its efflux is used to extend the airflow over the back of the car, creating a long tail effect. Oh, and it produces 15kg of thrust.

As far as the driving experience goes, it's the car's 980kg kerb weight that sets it apart from other very fast cars. And here's where my supercar archive falls short. I've driven plenty with similar power outputs, but never in a car this light. My nearest benchmarks are racing cars: a Porsche 962 and McLaren M8F and both of those have somewhat different power units to the T.50.

My benchmark for power steering is still the Lotus Esprit Sport 300 as I've yet to drive a car that betters it. Perhaps until now. 'The F1's steering was excellent above 20mph,' says Murray, 'but was appalling at parking speeds.' The T.50's geometry has been designed as if there was no power steering so only a low level of assistance is required.

So the T.50 is light on its feet, with superbly accurate steering that gives superlative feedback through a thin rim. Acceleration with over 600bhp per ton is of course stunning, but unlike any current rival, you have the added pleasure of a manual gearbox. Braking is another area in which the T.50 stands out. The Brembo brakes of course play a part but it's the car's low weight that really counts, that and the extra braking effect you get from the aero and the fan.

I've learned three things about car projects over the years: the car is usually late, overweight and over-budget. The virus might have slightly set Murray's plan back, but you need to remember that he and his team went from a blank sheet to the winner's circle at Le Mans in under five years with the F1. Also many members of that team are building the T.50. I can't see Murray allowing the T.50 to creep a gram over its target weight. He is in charge, there are no marketing people demanding that extras be added. As for the costs, who knows? That's really a concern for Murray himself. ✕

**Above, from left:** F1's headlamps were poor, Murray admits, so the T.50 has bespoke Wipac LED units that cost £3m to develop; Cosworth-engineered 4-litre naturally aspirated V12 revs to 12,100rpm and gets there as fast as a superbike



ICON

# ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE V550



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by RICHARD MEADEN

PHOTOGRAPHY by ANDY MORGAN

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*The supercharged Vantage of the 1990s was the  
ultimate expression of the old-school V8-engined Aston  
– and it still has the power to inspire awe today*







**F**ORGET BOND AND HIS GADGET-LADEN Silver Birch DB5. When it comes to ultimate Astons, my heart has always belonged to the big, ballsy GT flagships. From the 1970s Vantage to today's epic, twin-turbocharged DBS Superleggera, there's something about these bruising machines that speaks so eloquently of the marque. To me, they will always be the quintessential Aston Martin.

Of all these rollicking flagships, it's the Virage-based V550 Vantage that makes the most emphatic statement. At least to me. This could have something to do with it being introduced at a time when I was just experienced enough for Aston's PR boss, Harry Calton, to entrust me with its humble, Ford-sourced ignition key. As a kid who'd grown up with a fascination for all cars, but especially Astons, getting near one of these hand-built, two-tonne monsters was a source of awe and wonder.

Fast-forward to 2021 and that feeling has not gone away. With good reason, for the V550 remains an extraordinary machine. Dressed in alloy bodywork that began as two-dimensional sheets of thin-gauge aluminium, each panel was lovingly wheeled, hammered, dolled and planished into glorious sculptural forms by craftsmen. These were the last of the coachbuilt Astons to emerge from the storied Newport Pagnell factory.

The V550's imposing style was defined by designers John Heffernan and Ken Greenley. Given they were also responsible for the somewhat limp and rather anodyne Virage on which the V550 was based, this transformation was less a redesign and more a glorious act of redemption. Few cars have more presence.

Only the roof and doors of the Virage survived their reworking. The glasshouse is more drawn-in at the C-pillars, the tail more truncated. The boot lid is flatter, but still with an upswept lip, below it a bold quartet of lollipop taillights. The nose is more of a shovel. Six headlamps give it an evil, aggressive face, but thanks to that iconic radiator grille aperture it's still unmistakably an Aston Martin.

The interior uses a classic palette of tactile and aromatic natural materials. It's a spectacular slice of '90s aristo-supercar, with several herds-worth of cream hide and a tree or two of glossy burr walnut veneer. With the shallow side windows, tall dash and rising instrument binnacle, you're struck by the not-unpleasant sensation of being sat down in the bowels of the beast. They don't make 'em like this anymore.

The seats themselves have a bewildering array of adjustment buttons, and Sod's Law dictates the last one you press is the one you wanted first. But they're comfortable and supportive and, once settled behind the steering wheel, you're braced for one of the epic driving experiences.

The heart of the matter is a hugely powerful twin-supercharged evolution of Aston's legendary 5340cc V8. Lift the bonnet and it's like peering into the engine room of a warship, the view dominated by the pair of finned supercharger housings; one blower for each bank of cylinders. These days most under-bonnets are wholesale disappointments, so it's wonderful to gaze upon an engine that looks so impressive. Not least because for a time it was the most powerful production engine in the world.

Like the bodywork, these engines were all hand-built at Newport Pagnell, by men wearing workshop coats with biro marks above the pockets. Theirs was a skill that was phased out of Aston's new-

**Right:** triple headlamps each side, adapted from the Alfa SZ, were one of the many visual changes from the 1989 Virage; cabin fittings were lavish, as was the oversteer...













car production when the V550 and its V600 and V600 Le Mans descendants ceased production. Thankfully their legacies live on, for each of these mighty powerplants bears a plaque with its maker's name.

It's this sense of it being made by people who understand how the car works, rather than it merely being assembled, that adds to the romance of the V550. And why it was such a glorious throwback, even when new. Aston was slow to move with the times, and paid the price, so it's amusing to see what was deemed an anachronistic approach in the 1990s – that of building cars by hand, to order, in small numbers for a lot of money – becoming a successful business model in 2021. At least amongst the big-ticket brands.

Before you start the engine and drive away, it pays to remind yourself that this is a 25-year-old car. One with 550bhp, 550lb ft and no traction control or adaptive damping to tame it. Things were different in the '90s, so rather than hoofing down the road and trusting in an invisible electronic safety net to catch your indiscretions, you read the road ahead and weigh up all your critical inputs, 'safe' in the knowledge that the V550 will hold you accountable if you don't.

It might look the antithesis of compact, but the V550 is responsive and keen to change direction. This sense of energy is amplified by the engine, which has a sharp and, at times, abrupt delivery. At low speed this somewhat jagged throttle response can be a bit disruptive, especially if you're blending in and out of the throttle, so care is needed if you're not to kangaroo your way down the road.

Soundtrack-wise it's very clearly a V8, but with brightness and clarity to the note that's very different to the down-and-dirty thump of, say, a Chevy small-block. And, of course, there's the additional layer of sound coming from the Eaton superchargers, which whistle and whine as the car starts to work hard. It's an amazingly mechanical cacophony. One that's all the more enjoyable when you can separate the contributions made by each of those big lumps of hardware beneath the bonnet.

The V550 has a six-speed manual gearbox, though there was the option of an automatic. A popular period modification to the manual 'box was to blank off the absurdly tall sixth gear and change the final drive ratio to create a close-ratio five-speeder. With or without those mods, it's a bit gristly and knotty to navigate the H-pattern gate, but once you get used to it you can cut some clean shifts. Describing the standard six-speed gearing as tall is a bit like saying Jeff Bezos is comfortably off, but such is the motor's muscle the loping ratios don't blunt the performance. Indeed a squeeze of the throttle in pretty much every gear apart from intergalactic sixth will lift the nose and push your head into the seat.

This is a seriously fast machine. Not in the context of today's supercars, but then they can't match the Aston's runaway-train sensation as it climbs on top of its intermediate gears. There's also something deeply impressive about the sense of energy and physics at work in picking up 1990kg of car and lobbing it down the road with such disdain. For a party piece, select a high gear and go from walking pace to warp speed in one eye-widening, ever-intensifying lunge. It really is like a steam locomotive once it hits its stride.

Contemporary road tests paint an impressive picture: 0-60mph in 4.6sec, 0-100mph in 10.1sec and a top speed of 186mph. Those figures certainly weren't messing about back

**Left:** the way Aston interiors were in the '90s. The supercharged car was the last time the Vantage badge was applied to one of Aston's mighty super-GTs

## 'WITH SUCH TORQUE IT'S EASY TO OVERWHELM THE REAR TYRES'

in 1993, and the intervening 28 years have done little to diminish the experience those numbers represent.

Thankfully the brakes give you a bit of confidence. And so they should, for the huge 362mm ventilated front discs and brick-sized AP Racing calipers were the largest fitted to a road car when the V550 was introduced. They have considerable work to do, but there's enough bite and stamina to give them a fighting chance against Sir Isaac Newton and his pesky laws of motion. The pedal is firm, the response nicely modulated. It's not a car that you stand on its nose on the entry to corners, but it's reassuring to feel the stoppers have the power to live up to their name.

Handling-wise there's a good deal more feel and response than you might expect. Like pretty much all power-assisted systems of the period, the steering is a bit on the light side, but surprisingly quick-witted. This does a good job of masking the car's weight and size, and is backed up by an impressive keenness to turn in. There's body-roll of a magnitude anyone weaned on 21st century GTs and supercars would be alarmed by, but, despite the lean, under lateral load the V550 works its tyres more evenly than you'd expect across the axles, with a nice sense of unity front to rear.

This natural handling balance is trustworthy and easy to read, so while you're respectful of the car's mass and the lack of ultra-responsive, finely tuned electronic driver aids as we know them today, the V550 finds decent grip and exhibits sufficient vertical body control for you to carry proper speed on undulating roads without undue fear of the big Aston squeezing its floorpan into the road through compressions.

If the primary ride is reasonably supple when the suspension is working meaningfully through its travel, the secondary ride has a slightly brittle edge, with less low-speed isolation than you'd expect from a big GT. It's not crashy or intrusively stiff, but sharp-edged potholes send a momentary shudder through the car. It's the kind of trade-off you have to make when you're trying to contain so much mass without the operating range of today's adaptive dampers.

As you might imagine with such an abundance of near-instant torque, it's easy to overwhelm the rear tyres. Goodyear Eagle GS-Ds are hardly state-of-the-art rubber, but the 285/45 ZR18 rear tyres put a sizeable slab of tread on the tarmac. Dry-road traction is strong in a straight line but, once you heel the V550 into a corner, it's easier to break them free.

The first time you do is a bit of a sweaty-palmed moment, but more because of how you're expecting the big Aston to behave than the reality. The speed of the steering, balance of the chassis and solid response from the throttle make it far more playful than you'd ever believe could be the case.

It's great, if somewhat juvenile fun, though I suspect the game would have rather higher stakes in the rain. Brave would be the driver who takes liberties with this 1990kg monster on a wet road. Better, I suspect, to slot a high gear, trust in the taming qualities of a tall gear ratio and lean on the front end more than the rear.







Introduced in 1993 and in production until 1999, just 239 of these amazing cars were built, around 80 of which received upgrades to V600 spec. With production drawing to a close as attention turned to readying the Mk1 Vanquish for production, Aston Martin built a further 40 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Aston's first (and only) outright win in the famous 24-hour race. Called the V8 Vantage Le Mans, they incorporated the Works brake and chassis upgrades (and most, but not all, had the V600 engine, too) along with more extensive – and expensive! – bodywork modifications, including a pair of aggressive nostrils and DBR1-style side strakes.

As you'd expect the latter are the most prized by collectors. Costing £250,000 when new, values today are between £400,000 and £500,000. Cars featuring V600 upgrades are next in terms of values, with the best examples pushing £300k. Investment buyers tend to fixate on these rarest of the rare, but the 'vanilla' V550 has every bit of their charisma, wants for little in terms of performance and is still far more exclusive than most of today's limited-run specials. High-mileage cars in less desirable colours can be had for around £130,000, while the

best examples nudge £200k. In the context of today's collector market, that's a lot of car for the money.

Rather like buying an historic Listed property, owning one of these last-of-the-handbuilt-era Astons requires financial fortitude to stay on top of essential maintenance. What you get in return is a car with abundant character, the like of which you simply cannot expect to find in a modern car. Even something like a DBS Superleggera. As such, the V550 is a monument to a bygone era. The ultimate post-historic Aston? You'll hear little argument from me. ✕

*With thanks to Roger Bennington and Stratton Motor Company (strattonmotorcompany.com) for the loan of the V550.*

### Aston Martin Vantage V550

**Engine** V8, 5340cc, twin-supercharged **Power** 550bhp @ 6500rpm  
**Torque** 550lb ft @ 4000rpm **Weight** 1990kg **Power-to-weight** 281bhp/ton  
**0-60mph** 4.6sec **Top speed** 186mph **Price new** £177,600 in 1993  
**evo rating** ★★★★★

**Opposite:** finned housings of twin Eaton blowers dominate the engine bay. Gearshift has a rather grisly action, but with 550lb ft of torque on tap, gearchanging is largely optional





# FAST FLEET

NEW ARRIVALS

## Lamborghini Aventador SVJ & Toyota GR Yaris

One's the new supermini hero, the other the quintessential supercar in its ultimate incarnation – and now both are **evo** long-termers. Fast Fleet months don't get better than this...

**I**T'S OFTEN SAID THAT TODAY'S SUPERCARS ARE perfectly useable machines, that you could drive one every day if you wanted to. Which begs the question, if you could, why wouldn't you? As I climbed aboard our latest Fast Fleet arrival for its maiden voyage with **evo**, it felt like I was about to find out.

It was a November evening, so it was dark, cold and raining. The windscreen was taking an age to demist; the headlights seemed so feeble that I twice checked it wasn't just the glow from the DRLs I was seeing (it wasn't). Several miles of unlit, breathe-in-for-oncoming-vehicles country roads lay ahead, to be negotiated in one of the widest cars currently on sale. Oh, and rather than winter tyres, it was wearing a set of P Zero Corsas.

Still, there was no backing out now. Having shamelessly thrust my hand into the air to be the first on the **evo** team to spend some time in our new Aventador SVJ long-termer, I'd made my 759bhp, £440,000-with-options bed, so now I had to lie in it.

As I acclimatised to the surroundings (did I mention FR624ZF is also a left-hooker?), those first few miles were embarrassingly slow. Disjointed, too, the SVJ's powertrain clearly not at its smoothest when driven in such a bridled fashion. Perhaps it would rather be somewhere else, probably on a circuit setting another production car lap record – as indeed this very car did at the Hockenheim GP circuit back in 2019.

Clearly I needed to at least attempt to speak its language: engage full manual mode to stop the clunky single-clutch







**p134** VW Passat R-Line Edition



**p137** BMW M340i xDrive



**p136** Audi S3 Sportback



**p138** Peugeot 106 Rallye





gearbox throwing its own shifts into the mix, lift the 6.5-litre V12 into the part of its rev band where it breathes more freely, and get more determined with all the controls, as if to let the car know I was ready for what it had to offer – even if I wasn't entirely sure that I was. And then it happened; suddenly I got my first glimpse of the real SVJ: alive, able to flow along the road, and considerably less intimidating as a result. Phew. Maybe the Lamborghini long-termer dream wouldn't be completely shattered after all.

Admittedly, the SVJ resides towards the less docile end of the modern supercar spectrum, but in theory it still ought to be possible to use it as a 'daily'. So over the next few months we'll be finding out if indeed it is – come rain or shine, sleet or snow – and hopefully discovering what all

those owners who tuck such cars away so much of the time are missing out on.

One thing that quickly becomes apparent is that nothing lifts the spirits on a gloomy winter's day like the sight of a bright green Aventador. In the context of 'regular' cars it looks utterly, magnificently otherworldly and mesmerises onlookers like no other supercar. The reactions it draws are overwhelmingly positive, too – almost reverential. Everyone, it appears, feels they are in the presence of something truly special.

And this is before you've started the engine. It seems borderline criminal that such low-volume (and in most cases low-mileage) mechanical works of art are being condemned to the same fate as the millions of workaday units that exist merely to provide propulsion. Prodding the starter

button on your 2000bhp electric supercar of 2030 certainly won't have bystanders whooping with joy, or taking a step back in awe, or hitting record on their phone and begging you to blip the throttle. Nor will spines be set a-tingle by a high-revs drive-by, and no matter what mind-boggling acceleration figures are achievable with batteries and brushless motors, they will surely never deliver even half the drama of a Lamborghini V12 being worked through a sequence of gears.

All the more reason, then, to enjoy cars such as this as much as possible right now, by driving as many miles in them as possible. Lessons we've learned so far by doing just that in our SVJ? The front axle lift is a godsend, ensuring the expensive splitter and underparts have cleared every speed bump we've encountered. Manoeuvrability is





surprisingly good, the four-wheel steering ensuring a respectable turning circle (handy when we took the SVJ into London for last month's shoot alongside the Nismo GT-R). Visibility is a bit troublesome, there being virtually none through the rear window, and no second section in the side mirrors to show what's happening in your blind spots. And walking-pace traffic is the ISR transmission's nemesis, the repeated engaging and disengaging of the clutch onto first gear making for slightly lurching progress; better to hang back a few car lengths and then drive smoothly forward with a touch more speed.

Such considerations all ensure that even the most mundane of journeys is no longer mundane, but inevitably it's on open roads that the SVJ really makes an impression, and the great news is that, despite appearances, you don't have to be driving it

## 'A 2000bhp electric supercar will never deliver the drama of a Lamborghini V12'

at lap-record-setting pace to enjoy it. You won't be deploying the full 759bhp too often on wintry asphalt anyway, but those Corsas remain surprisingly capable and reveal exactly how hard they're working, which makes the SVJ an unexpectedly easy car to make the most of in less-than-perfect conditions, as you can be confident of keeping it within its – or more likely your – comfort zone.

Yes, I'd be lying if I said there wasn't extra effort and a little determination required to make your every journey in an Aventador, but the investment is repaid with substantial rewards – to the point where when a colleague finally prised FR624ZF's key from my grasp after five weeks behind its wheel, the novelty was a long way from wearing off. But I can still appreciate why you might sometimes want something a little more practical, not to mention more affordable, to get around in. In which case our next new arrival could fit the bill perfectly...

**Ian Eveleigh**

**Date acquired** November 2020 **Total mileage** 8757 **Mileage this month** 1247 **Costs this month** £0 **mpg this month** 12.1





**I**N THE SAME WEEK THAT I SAW AN advert for a brand new Toyota GR Yaris for substantially over list, **evo**'s own GR Yaris was delivered. There are a number of significant perks to this job, and one of them is most definitely the access to a great new driver's car, an undeniable thrill for any car enthusiast. And when that car has massive hype around it there's an inevitable additional frisson of electricity.

You may be thinking what else could possibly be written about this car; indeed, it played a starring role in both eCoty and last month's three-car rallying-inspired cover feature. Nevertheless, the Fast Fleet allows us to approach cars from alternative perspectives, an interesting case in point being that other GR Toyota concurrently running on the **evo** fleet, the Supra, which has revealed further elements of its character – both for better and for worse – in the time it's spent with us. There's an added layer with the Yaris's Fast Fleet career too, because we've decided to distribute it on a monthly basis amongst a number of us. I've got first dibs, for no other reason

than my previous long-termer had departed and, fortunately, there was a gap to fill.

Our black, Circuit Pack-equipped example (£33,495, plus £880 for the metallic Precious Black paint) arrived with the running-in completed, but what an inopportune time to have such a car! You can imagine that, compared with normal life on planet **evo**, there's a lot less driving going on at the moment, particularly since the lockdown became much tighter after Christmas, and there have been periods when there was nothing to do but to leave GY70 GMZ parked up, pads rusting to discs, and follow the government guidelines. Of course, that's small-fry to what's going on in the world at large, but undeniably frustrating all the same...

One early task for the car, though, was joining the Impreza 22B and Audi Sport Quattro up on the North York Moors for last month's cover shoot, which allowed me to put some serious miles on the Toyota in a short space of time. Everything that I've felt about the GR Yaris was still present and correct, but other thoughts now accumulated. How, in miserable

conditions, it blitzed the motorway grind, with a surprising blend of comfort and refinement, along with superb directional stability even in monsoon conditions. The infotainment was a lot better than I expected, too, and the level of attention it got was verging on the surreal; it must be a long time since other drivers have flashed their lights and given the thumbs up to a Toyota.

By the same token, the tiny fuel tank was soon obvious, as was the lack of a rear window wiper: after 15 minutes of driving in poor conditions it became impossible to see out the back. The artificial engine noise really begins to grate, too, but most of all I really struggle with the driving position. I'm over 6ft, and appreciate this won't apply to all, but at one point, not long into the journey, I noticed I was permanently slouching in the seat. Sitting bolt upright I nearly had to peer under the so-called cant rail (the top edge of the windscreen), and I felt like I was driving a child's pedal car, towering above the controls. Perhaps because of this, I've never found a compromise that allows space under the steering





## 'It proved itself a master of the B-road. I don't think anything could have been faster'

column and a useable angle of ankle joint to enable heel and toe work.

Still, the Yaris easily kept the Quattro and 22B honest (can you imagine?!) and on the way home, on an unintended detour across the country in foul conditions, it proved itself a master of the British B-road. I don't think anything could have been faster at that moment: it was a riot.

So yes, the GR Yaris is searingly fast and effective, point-to-point, just as we said in eCoty. But as we also said, it's also sometimes not quite as 'fun' as you might imagine – or indeed hope. At slower speeds it's all about traction, regardless of which diff setting you have the car in, whereas a bit of tail

happiness leaving a 90-degree corner would be no bad thing occasionally. I almost find myself asking the car to 'lighten up' a bit, wishing it wasn't quite so serious.

But then on one occasion it decided power oversteer in fourth gear on a very fast wet curve would be the order of the day, even with ESP on, and although I grinned demonically afterwards, at the time it was a senior-grade challenge to get right in a car with a very short wheelbase. Perhaps because of its mix of small footprint and permanent four-wheel drive, the Yaris is not always the easiest car to read.

For now, though, my love of the GR Yaris remains strong, albeit not so that I'm blind to its faults. It goes without saying I love the fact it exists in the first place; no one quibbles over Toyota's triumph in pulling that one off. I would undoubtedly buy one, but I'd want to start modifying it straight away, and I'd begin with some new seat frames, smartish.

**Adam Towler** (@AdamTowler)

**Date acquired** December 2020 **Total mileage** 1652 **Mileage this month** 854 **Costs this month** £0 **mpg this month** 26.7





## END OF TERM

### Volkswagen Passat R-Line Edition

It was quick, practical and exclusive, but was that enough?

**A**FTER 11 MONTHS AND NEARLY 8000 MILES of service on the Fast Fleet, our Volkswagen Passat R-Line Edition has left us. **evo's** example of the range-topping, 268bhp Passat arrived in January 2020 and was one of a limited run of only 2000 cars, each fitted with pretty much all the goodies available on VW's large estate car.

The Moonstone Grey paint – the only colour choice – was almost always the first talking point for anyone who crossed paths with KY69 BZN. It's a very Marmite colour (not literally, of course), with some loving it but seemingly more unsure about it, but I thought

it worked well with the black 19-inch wheels and smattering of gloss black trim pieces that were all part of the sportier R-Line look.

Inside, everything was what you would hope for from a high-end Volkswagen. Stylish, quite minimalist and with a well thought-out design, the centrepiece was the entirely buttonless 9.2-inch Discover Navigation Pro infotainment system, although once you'd connected it to Apple CarPlay it inevitably became just like any other large-screened entertainment system.

On the move the Passat proved to be a very

capable companion. The turbocharged 2-litre petrol engine was admirable rather than spectacular. It's quite a flat motor in how it delivers its performance and it didn't show much enthusiasm for being driven hard. It certainly didn't offer enough to stretch the 4Motion four-wheel-drive system. Meanwhile Volkswagen's latest DCC adaptive dampers soaked up the worst that a ravaged British road could throw at it and also kept body movement nicely in check. Altogether, it made for comfortable, confidence-inspiring progress in all weathers, although a little more feedback would have been welcome.

The spacious load area made the Passat an ideal photographer's car, and also led to it being borrowed by deputy editor Adam Towler





## Mazda 3 Skyactiv-X AWD

Colder conditions have brought a warmer reception for our Mazda hatchback

**I**'VE WARMED TO CERTAIN ASPECTS of the Mazda since the chilly weather arrived. It has heated seats, which I think are a highly desirable option with leather trim because it tends to be cold in the winter. There are three settings and by the time you've gone five miles you're dialling it back because it's toasting your buns.

The real luxury, though, is that the Mazda also has a heated steering wheel. The element is only around the quarter-to-three bit of the rim but that's where your hands mostly sit, so it's very welcome and saves wearing gloves. The pinnacle of luxury would be a heated gearlever, but I can't recall ever seeing one or hearing of a car maker who has offered a hot stick.

As I write we've had plenty of days when the windows have needed de-icing, and I wasn't expecting the slim and plain-looking Bridgestone Turanzas to impress on slick, wet roads at around freezing point, and the same goes for the car despite it being all-wheel drive, but the combination cuts through impressively.

Pressing on, it doesn't feel especially keyed-in to the surface – no change there – and I fully expected it to push into understeer chucking it into tighter corners. Instead the Mazda turns as keenly as ever, and you can get on the power hard and early to pull through without troubling the traction control. As we've said before, there's not much power or torque to bother the grip, but this is a welcome display of poise in an otherwise barren dynamic landscape.

**John Barker** (@evoJB)

**Date acquired** March 2020 **Total Mileage** 6447 **Mileage this month** 413 **Costs this month** 0 **Mpg this month** 41.0



## 'It was confidence-inspiring in all weathers and made an ideal photographer's car'

for a family holiday. His thoughts were that it was a pleasant car but somewhat devoid of character, making it hard to justify spending over £45k on it when a lesser Passat could do all the practical, large-estate stuff just as well. And after spending a little time in a 2-litre diesel Passat estate, I would have to agree.

As a Volkswagen performance estate the R-Line Edition was clearly a stopgap before the full-blown Arteon R Shooting Brake arrives, packing more power (315bhp, from the same 2-litre turbocharged four as the Golf R) and hopefully being more fun to drive.

The Passat has never been a focus for VW's performance aspirations, and despite the best intentions of the R-Line Edition, it's still best considered as a family holdall.

**Aston Parrott** (@AstonParrott)

**Date acquired** January 2020 **Duration of test** 11 months **Total test mileage** 7814 **Overall mpg** 29.7 **Costs** £0 **Purchase price** £45,035 **Value today** £31,495



## NEW ARRIVAL

# Audi S3 Sportback

We've run all of its main rivals on the Fast Fleet. Can the new S3 make a bigger impression?

**R**EGULAR READERS WILL SEE A PATTERN emerging here. I've been banging on about the benefits of premium hot hatches for a while now in Fast Fleet, having spent a good amount of time in several of them, from the benchmark Volkswagen Golf R to BMW's latest M135i. In recent times this class of car has become a real box-ticker for me, despite having a demanding family who need transporting all over the place, because design developments have meant it's possible to get all the practicality needed for that role without compromising on the power and fun we crave. (Well, that's what I tell Mrs Browne anyway.) So when the chance came along to run the new Audi S3 Sportback, I was quick to put my name forward.

The first thing you notice about KY70 CMF is the colour: it's Turbo Blue apparently, but looks more like a 100 per cent Pantone Process Cyan to my designer eyes. It certainly stands out. Audi has given the S3's exterior a slight refresh for this fourth-generation version, with changes including a more aggressive-looking nose and more stylised light clusters front and rear to accompany the revised bodywork that's shared with the lesser A3. Interestingly, and to my surprise, of all the *evo* long-termers I've run it's the S3 that has attracted the most admiring glances and comments from friends and family. Maybe it's a combination of the colour and *that* badge?

Under the bonnet sits a version of the VW Group's



EA888 2-litre turbo engine with 306bhp and 295lb ft of torque (up 10bhp and 15lb ft on the previous S3) and mated to a seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox. The claimed 0-62mph time is 4.8sec, which is a dead match for the M135i and puts it a negligible tenth of a second behind the Mercedes-AMG A35 and the upcoming Mk8 Golf R. Like all of those rivals the S3 is also four-wheel drive, and with 'quattro weather' here for a while yet, I'm more than happy with that. Although trying to find winter tyres in the right fitment has proved fruitless.

Inside, the S3 feels spacious, and if you get on with VW Group interiors this one won't disappoint: like putting on an old pair of slippers it's immediately comfortable and everything is where you expect it to be, so visits to the owner's manual ought to be rare. However, you could argue that it's a bit predictable, making it one area where the M135i and A35 steal a march on the S3 by being more bold. The Audi's infotainment console can be a little fiddly to navigate whilst keeping your eyes on the road, too, but the driving position is better than the BMW's – the diamond stitched nappa leather sports seats look and feel the part – and the steering wheel isn't pointlessly chunky either.

Curiously, the S3 isn't available with parking cameras, just sensors, which seems unusual at this level, but our car does have the Bang & Olufsen Premium Sound System upgrade (£865), which is





very welcome. This, the blue paint (£575), 19-inch wheels (£770), Matrix LED headlights (£430) and a few other minor options take our S3's price up to £41,200 from £36,315 basic.

With lockdown having kept my mileage in CMF relatively low so far, it's a bit early to be making any definitive statements about its dynamics, but from the start I've enjoyed the way it picks up speed with ease and makes all the right sounds to go with it (admittedly enhanced by fake noise through the speakers). As is common these days the lane assist system needs turning off immediately, and the Pre-Sense can be weirdly temperamental. The ride offers a good blend of smooth and firm – although I fear some of my colleagues may disagree with that statement – and as you'd expect there's plenty of grip on offer, giving you great confidence in the corners and on twistier B-roads. It all combines to make the S3 a very flexible performer.

So far so good, then. But I'm keen to push our S3's performance more, to find out what it's really capable of, so next month I'll be taking it to Bedford Autodrome to put it through its paces. In the meantime, I'll be enjoying those essential journeys that lockdown allows and hoping for further opportunities to enjoy more of what the S3 Sportback has to offer.

**Richard Browne** (@washlander)

**Date acquired** December 2020 **Total mileage** 2198 **Mileage this month** 145  
**Costs this month** £0 **mpg this month** 28.1

**'Everything combines to make the S3 a very flexible performer'**



## BMW M340i xDrive Touring

What's not to like about this 369bhp estate? Very little. Except...

**T**HREE MONTHS IN IS THE TIME WHEN the odd gripe or criticism starts to bubble to the surface of a recently acquired resident of the *evo* garage. The honeymoon period is over, the miles are accumulating and you start to notice the small things that are missed, ignored or not even seen during those first couple of months.

Now they are there. Glaringly obvious and staring you in the face every time you drive. The equivalent of spotting an imperfection in an otherwise flawless piece of artwork, or that area of the ceiling that you missed during Lockdown 1's decorating blitz. You know it's there and your attention can't help but be drawn to it each and every time.

All Fast Fleeters have had something that has stood out for the wrong reasons and caught their custodian's eye. The bonnet vents of our recently departed Vantage were crudely secured with a set of rather agricultural nuts and bolts. You couldn't see them, but once you knew they were there the Vantage was no longer blemish-free. The RS7 that left us last month? The pathetic excuse for a pair of gearshift paddles. The i8? A great GT car with no room to carry any luggage, rendering its ability to be a GT car null and void. Alfa's Giulia Quadrifoglio? Er, no, can't think of anything on that which jarred, other than Alfa asking for it back.

The M340i xDrive, then. I've never been a fan of black wheels, but that's something that can be easily rectified. In terms of exterior design

I'm sure those with a degree in drawing can tell me about swage lines and other stuff but proportionally and visually the G31 Touring hits the brief of blending in rather than standing out. As 3-series Tourings always have.

Inside it nails the ergonomics like a mass-market car has no right to do. Where rivals sit you too high, the M340i lets you drop in and connect with it. A manual gearbox would be preferable, but the only people who buy manuals are those who buy their cars once they are five years old and have depreciated like airline stock in a pandemic. If no one buys manual cars when they are new, you won't be able to buy them when they are used. It's quite a simple concept.

Red interior? Yep, like that. Infotainment system? It has buttons as well as a touchscreen and gesture controls, so you can ignore the last two and still live in the '90s. Same with the driver modes: simple, efficient, straightforward to operate. The M340i is also comfortable, engaging to drive, light on its toes when I need it to be, a do-everything family-car when required.

There must be something that vexes right? Of course there is. The instruments are an abomination. Sorry BMW, but you dropped the ball here on this otherwise exceptional car.

**Stuart Gallagher** (@stuartg917)

**Date acquired** October 2020 **Total mileage** 6718 **Mileage this month** 187  
**Costs this month** £0 **mpg this month** 33.1





## Peugeot 106 Rallye

After a stint of piling on the miles, the Rallye gets a well-earned rest – thanks to an unusual stand-in

**I**T'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I LAST PUT finger to keyboard on the Rallye, and the rollercoaster that was 2020 means its latest appearance comes after an unexpected flurry of activity. Put simply, my small, French, late-'90s homologation special bought for weekend blasts spent two or three months acting as my primary mode of transportation.

Aside from everything else, this has had quite an impact on the odometer. In the car's previous report in June 2020 the odo was reading 113,976, which meant I'd put only around 3000 miles on the car in three full years. Fast-forward a few months and that number read 116,299 – 2323 miles greater.

It turns out that piling miles on a tiny car with little in the way of modern equipment, no power steering and no air conditioning isn't the hardship you might expect, even throughout those particularly warm weeks we got late in the summer. One of those days was spent whizzing around Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire in an appropriately socially distanced convoy with Aston Parrott and a few other colleagues old and new, sweltering windows-down in 30-plus degree heat, and the Pug looked a whole lot better at the

### 'The idea of running the Rallye through rivers of brine made my skin crawl'

end of it than I did, even with the thick layer of unfortunate bugs shotgunned across its nose.

It was just another reminder that cars are meant to be used. They're some of the most remarkable consumer products on the planet, designed to operate in a multitude of conditions and by customers of wildly varying skill levels, and they're expected to do so for tens of years and tens of thousands of miles. Driving them doesn't hurt them. It's what they're designed for, and that applies as much to a small, sporty hatchback with more than two decades on its logbook as it does a zero-miles family wagon rolling fresh from the showroom floor.

All that said, I wasn't going to continue running the Peugeot in this manner, largely because winter

was fast approaching and the idea of running the Rallye through rivers of brine made my skin crawl. The car is largely rust-free and I'd quite like to keep it that way. The other, admittedly more easily remedied issue was that back in May I put the car on a classic insurance policy with a 3000-mile limit, meaning I had 677 miles left to last me another six months.

The solution, as all card-carrying petrolheads will know, was to acquire another car and subject that to the salty torture instead. Many were considered, but fortune shone a light on me when Porsche PR man Rory Lumsdon mentioned a friend of his was offloading a Toyota Paseo he no longer needed (small 1990s coupe, for those currently drawing a blank), and if I made a donation to his chosen charity it could be mine. So I did, it was, and fresh from its first service in god-knows how long it's now dutifully ticking up the miles, while the Peugeot finally gets to relax again in my garage.

**Antony Ingram** (@evoAntony)

**Date acquired** August 2017 **Total mileage** 116,299 **Mileage this month** 432 **Costs this month** £0 **mpg this month** 42.5





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**Lotus Evora 400, 2016**  
Black Metallic with Tan Leather  
12,760 miles  
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**Lotus Exige Sport 410, 2020**  
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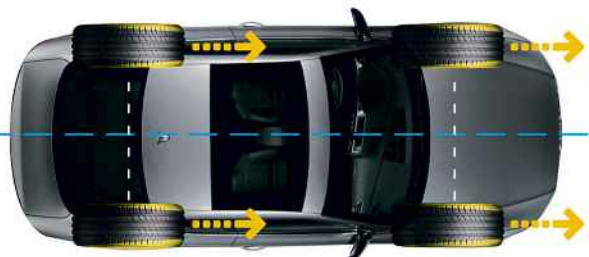
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# The Knowledge

## RATINGS

★ = Thrill-free zone ★★ = Tepid ★★★ = Interesting ★★★★★ = Seriously good ★★★★★★ = A truly great car

⊕ = new entry this month. Cars in italics are no longer on sale. **Issue no.** is for our most recent major test of the car (D = Driven, T = Driven Too, I = Ignition, F = feature). Call 0330 333 9491 for back issues. **Engine** is the car's combustion engine only – electric motors aren't shown. **Weight** is as quoted by the manufacturer for the car in basic spec, e.g. with a manual gearbox. In most cases this is to DIN standards (i.e. with fluids but without a driver), but where the manufacturer only quotes a 'dry' weight (i.e. without fluids) this is indicated by \*. Note that a dry weight will make the car's power-to-weight ratio (bhp/ton) appear more favourable. **0-62mph (claimed)** is the manufacturer's 0-62 figure, with a manual gearbox where offered. Our **0-60mph** and **0-100mph (tested)** figures could be with either a manual or automatic gearbox/DCT.

## SUPERMINIS / HOT HATCHES



### OUR CHOICE

**Honda Civic Type R.** Building on the promise shown by the short-lived FK2 version, the FK8 Type R is a more rounded proposition – and is all the better for it. It's outrageously fast on every kind of road, edges ahead of its rivals on track, offers oodles of interaction and is practical to boot.



### BEST OF THE REST

The **Toyota GR Yaris** (left) is just the kind of performance car we've been praying would get made. The **Renault Mégane RS** has a strong B-road game, especially with the non-Cup chassis, the **Hyundai i30 N** is an intriguing and impressive alternative to the usual suspects, and the **Ford Fiesta ST** remains a characterful, affordable and fun supermini.

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (ON TALKS IN SALE)	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMED)	0-60MPH (TESTED)	0-100MPH (TESTED)	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Abarth 595 Competizione	256 T	£21,985	4/1368	178/5500	184/3000	1035kg	175	6.7	-	-	140	+ Spirited engine; still looks great - Favours fun over finesse	★★★★☆
Abarth 595 Esseesse	264 D	£25,295	4/1368	178/5500	184/3000	1044kg	173	6.7	-	-	140	+ A bundle of fun if you're in the mood for it - Dynamically dated; expensive	★★★★☆
Abarth 695 Biposto	205 F	14-18	4/1369	187/5500	184/3000	997kg*	191	5.9	-	-	143	+ Engineered like a true Abarth product - Expensive for a city car	★★★★☆
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA	187 F	03-'06	6/3179	247/6200	221/4800	1360kg	185	6.3	6.0	15.5	153	+ Mk1 Focus RS pace without the histrionics - Slightly nose-heavy	★★★★☆
Audi A1 40 TFSI	256 D	£24,470	4/1984	197/6000	236/1500	1260kg	159	6.5	-	-	155	+ Capable - It's no S1 replacement	★★★★☆
Audi S1	246 F	14-18	4/1984	228/6000	273/1600	1315kg	176	5.8	-	-	155	+ Compliant and engaging chassis; quick, too - Looks dull without options	★★★★☆
Audi A1 quattro	264 F	13	4/1984	253/6000	258/2500	1420kg	181	5.7	-	-	152	+ Polished 253bhp all-wheel-drive A1 - Just 19 came to the UK, with a Porsche Cayman price	★★★★☆
Audi S3 Sportback	279 D	£38,475	4/1984	306/5450	295/2000	1500kg	207	4.8	-	-	155	+ Less one-dimensional than its predecessor - Breaks little new ground	★★★★☆
Audi RS3 Sportback	256 F	£46,285	5/2480	394/5850	354/1700	1510kg	265	4.1	-	-	155	+ Hugely quick point-to-point - Sometimes speed isn't the be-all and end-all	★★★★☆
Audi S3	188 F	13-20	4/1984	296/5500	280/1800	1395kg	216	5.2	5.4	12.5	155	+ Lots of grip and one of the best-sounding four-pot turbos - Still a little too clinical	★★★★☆
Audi RS3 Sportback	221 F	15-16	5/2480	362/5500	343/1625	1520kg	242	4.3	3.6	-	155	+ Addictive five-cylinder noise; monster pace - Chassis not exactly playful	★★★★☆
BMW M135i xDrive	271 F	£36,430	4/1998	302/5000	332/1750	1525kg	201	4.8	-	-	155	+ Strong performance, monster 4WD traction - Engine lacks character	★★★★☆
BMW M235i xDrive Gran Coupé	274 D	£37,595	4/1998	302/5000	332/1750	1570kg	195	4.8	-	-	155	+ Quick, with an able chassis and quality cabin - Just not that exciting	★★★★☆
BMW 125i M Sport	176 D	12-18	4/1997	221/5200	229/1400	1400kg	160	6.4	-	-	155	+ Performance, price, running costs - Dull four-pot soundtrack	★★★★☆
BMW M135i	212 F	12-15	6/2979	321/5800	332/1300	1430kg	228	5.1	5.2	-	155	+ Powertrain, noise, chassis - M235i looks nicer, and has an LSD option	★★★★☆
Citroën DS3 1.6 THP	142 F	10-15	4/1598	154/6000	177/1400	1240kg	126	7.3	-	-	133	+ A proper French hot hatch - Petrolheads might find it too 'designed'	★★★★☆
Citroën DS3 Racing	153 D	11-12	4/1598	204/6000	203/2000	1240kg	167	6.5	-	-	146	+ A faster, feistier DS3 - Not as hardcore as its 'Racing' tag suggests	★★★★☆
Citroën AX GT	195 F	87-92	4/1360	85/6400	86/4000	722kg	120	9.2	-	-	110	+ Makes terrific use of 85bhp - Feels like it's made from paper	★★★★☆
Cupra Leon e-Hybrid	280 D	£34,495	4/1395	242	295	1596kg	154	6.7	-	-	140	+ Steers and handles neatly; tax-friendly - Can't decide if it's a hot hatch or a Prius rival	★★★★☆
DS 3 Performance	222 D	16-18	4/1598	205/6000	221/3000	1175kg	177	6.5	-	-	143	+ All the right ingredients - Undercooked	★★★★☆
Fiat Panda 100HP	273 F	06-11	4/1368	99/6000	97/4250	975kg	103	9.5	-	-	115	+ About as fun as small cars get - Optional ESP can't be turned off	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST-Line 140	251 F	£18,440	3/1998	138/6000	133/1500	1144kg	123	9.0	9.2	26.4	125	+ Quality chassis makes for a born entertainer - Tall gearing and dull engine can spoil the fun	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST	259 F	£20,700	3/1497	197/6000	214/1600	1187kg	169	6.5	-	-	144	+ Highly talented, with real depth to its character - Can get wrong-footed on bad tarmac	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST Performance Edition	269 F	£26,495	3/1497	197/6000	214/1600	1187kg	169	6.5	-	-	144	+ All the good things about the regular Fiesta ST, but with added composure - How much?!	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST	207 F	13-17	4/1596	197/5700	214/2500	1088kg	184	6.9	7.4	18.4	137	+ Chassis, price, punchy performance - Have you heard of Mountune?	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST200	253 F	16	4/1596	212/6000	236/2500	1088kg	198	6.7	-	-	143	+ Massive fun - They only made 400	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta Zetec S	123 D	08-13	4/1596	118/6000	112/4050	1045kg	115	9.9	-	-	120	+ Genuinely entertaining supermini - Renault Sport Twingo and Suzuki Swift are even more fun	★★★★☆
Ford Fiesta ST	075 D	05-08	4/1999	148/6000	140/4500	1137kg	132	7.9	-	-	129	+ Great looks, decent brakes - Disappointing chassis, gutless engine	★★★★☆
Ford Focus ST (Mk4)	267 F	£31,995	4/2261	276/5500	310/3000	1433kg	196	5.7	-	-	155	+ A return to form - Lacks the poise and precision of the very best	★★★★☆
Ford Focus ST (Mk3)	207 F	15-18	4/1999	247/5500	265/2000	1362kg	184	6.5	-	-	154	+ Excellent engine - Scrappy when pushed	★★★★☆
Ford Focus ST (Mk2)	119 F	05-10	5/2522	222/6000	236/1600	1392kg	162	6.8	6.7	16.8	150	+ Value, performance, integrity - Big engine compromises handling	★★★★☆
Ford Focus RS (Mk3)	246 F	15-18	4/2261	345/6000	347/2000	1547kg	227	4.7	4.9	12.6	166	+ Torque-vectoring 4WD brings new sensations to hot hatch sector - Needs to be driven hard	★★★★☆
Ford Focus RS Edition (Mk3)	246 D	18	4/2261	345/6000	347/2000	1547kg	227	4.7	-	-	166	+ Front limited-slip differential brings more precise handling - Pricey and still heavy	★★★★☆
Ford Focus RS (Mk2)	195 F	09-11	5/2522	300/6500	324/2300	1467kg	208	5.9	5.9	14.2	163	+ Huge performance, highly capable FWD chassis - Body control is occasionally clumsy	★★★★☆
Ford Focus RS500 (Mk2)	256 F	10-11	5/2522	345/6000	339/2500	1467kg	239	5.6	5.6	12.7	165	+ More power and presence than regular Mk2 RS - Pricey	★★★★☆
Ford Focus RS (Mk1)	207 F	02-03	4/1998	212/5500	229/3500	1278kg	169	6.7	5.9	14.9	143	+ Some are great - Some are awful (so make sure you drive plenty)	★★★★☆
Ford Escort RS Cosworth	271 F	92-96	4/1993	224/6250	224/3500	1275kg	179	6.2	-	-	137	+ The ultimate Essex hot hatch - Unmodified ones are rare, and pricey	★★★★☆
Ford Puma 1.7	095 F	97-02	4/1679	123/6300	116/4500	1041kg	120	9.2	8.6	27.6	122	+ Revvy engine, sparkling chassis, bargain used prices - Rusty rear arches	★★★★☆
Ford Racing Puma	262 F	00-01	4/1679	153/7000	119/4500	1174kg	132	7.9	7.8	23.2	137	+ An affordable exotic - Corroding rear arches	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R (FK8)	281 F	£32,820	4/1996	316/6500	295/2500	1380kg	233	5.8	5.9	12.6	168	+ Wildly exciting, with improved refinement - Looks remain challenging for some	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R Limited Edition (FK8)	281 D	£39,995	4/1996	316/6500	295/2500	1333kg	241	5.8	-	-	168	+ Terrifically capable, blisteringly quick, still practical - Only 20 are coming to the UK	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R (FK2)	227 F	15-17	4/1996	306/6500	295/2500	1378kg	226	5.7	5.4	12.4	167	+ Great on smooth roads - Can be punishing on less-than-smooth roads	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R (FN2)	102 F	07-11	4/1998	198/7800	142/5600	1267kg	158	6.6	6.8	17.5	146	+ Looks great, VTEC more accessible - Steering lacks feel, inert balance	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R Mugen (FN2)	248 F	09-11	4/1998	237/8300	157/6250	1233kg	195	5.9	-	-	155	+ Fantastic on road and track - Only 20 were made, and they're a tad pricey...	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R (EP3)	258 F	01-05	4/1998	197/7400	145/5900	1204kg	166	6.8	6.8	16.9	146	+ Potent and great value - Duff steering	★★★★☆
Honda Civic Type R (EK9)	210 F	97-00	4/1595	182/8200	118/7500	1040kg	178	6.8	-	-	135	+ Sublime early incarnation of the Type R recipe - Good ones are thin on the ground	★★★★☆
Hyundai i30 N	19-20	£25,995	4/1998	247/6000	279/1750	1400kg	179	6.4	-	-	155	+ Very close to the Performance version on ability... - ...but not that far away on price	★★★★☆
Hyundai i30 N Performance	267 F	£29,495	4/1998	271/6000	279/1750	1429kg	193	6.1	6.6	14.9	155	+ A brilliant, thoroughly developed hot hatch - Imagine if it was lighter too...	★★★★☆
Hyundai i30 Fastback N Performance	269 F	£29,995	4/1998	271/6000	279/1750	1441kg	191	6.1	-	-	155	+ As above, but with a fractionally more mature ride and soundtrack - As above	★★★★☆
Kia Ceed GT	267 F	£25,850	4/1591	201/6000	195/1500	1386kg	147	7.2	-	-	143	+ Feels like a detuned i30 N - Lacks personality	★★★★☆
Kia ProCeed GT	259 D	£28,135	4/1591	201/6000	195/1500	1438kg	142	7.2	-	-	140	+ Flexible engine, handsome shooting brake body - It's warm rather than hot	★★★★☆
Kia ProCeed GT	217 D	13-18	4/1591	201/6000	195/1500	1359kg	143	7.3	-	-	150	+ Fun and appealing package - Soft-edged compared to rivals	★★★★☆
Lancia Delta HF Integrale Evoluzione II	271 F	93-94	4/1995	212/5750	232/2500	1340kg	161	5.7	-	-	137	+ One of the finest cars ever built - Demands love, LHD only	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG A35	267 F	£35,970	4/1991	302/5800	295/3000	1480kg	207	4.7	-	-	155	+ A formidable A-to-B device - Some front-drive rivals are more fun	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG A45 S	272 F	£50,570	4/1991	415/6750	369/5000	1550kg	272	3.9	-	-	167	+ A 21st-century reincarnation of late-'90s imprecise and Evos - It costs £50k	★★★★☆



MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (EX. VAT 10% INC. DEL.)	ENGINE Cyl./cc	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMMED)	0-60MPH (0-100)	0-100MPH (0-100)	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Mercedes-AMG A45	221 F	15-18	4/1991	376/6000	350/2250	1480kg	258	4.2	3.9	-	155	+ Tremendously fast - But not a true great	★★★★☆
Mercedes-Benz A45 AMG	194 F	12-15	4/1991	355/6000	332/2250	1480kg	244	4.6	4.3	10.6	155	+ Blisteringly quick everywhere - Not as rewarding as some slower rivals	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper (F56)	254 T	£17,635	3/1499	134/4500	162/1250	1085kg	125	7.9	-	-	130	+ Driving a slow car fast - Driving a car with Union Jack tail lights	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper S (F56)	268 F	£20,925	4/1998	189/4700	221/1250	1195kg	161	6.8	-	-	146	+ Feels darty and alive at moderate speeds - Loses its composure when you push harder	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works (F56)	211 F	£25,950	4/1998	228/5200	236/1250	1200kg	193	6.3	-	-	153	+ Fast, agile, nimble - Chassis lacks sparkle found in previous JCWs	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works GP (F56)	280 F	£33,895	4/1998	302/1750	332/1750	1255kg	244	5.2	-	-	164	+ Street-fighter looks, illustrious predecessors - Better at style than it is substance	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works Challenge (F56)	237 F	16-17	4/1998	228/5200	236/1250	1215kg	191	6.3	-	-	152	+ A more hardcore JCW - The ride could be considered a little too hardcore	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper (R56)	185 F	09-14	4/1598	120/6000	118/4250	1075kg	113	9.1	-	-	126	+ Brilliant ride and composure; could be all the Mini you need - You'll still buy the 'S'	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper S (R56)	149 F	06-14	4/1598	181/5500	177/1600	1140kg	161	7.0	7.0	-	142	+ Like the Cooper, but with added shove - Google 'Mini death rattle'	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works (R56)	184 F	08-14	4/1598	208/6000	206/2000	1160kg	182	6.9	7.2	16.7	148	+ A seriously rapid Mini - Occasionally just a little unruly	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works GP (R56)	231 F	13-14	4/1598	215/6000	206/2000	1160kg	188	6.3	-	-	150	+ Brazenly hyperactive - Too much for some roads and some tastes	★★★★☆
Mini John Cooper Works Coupé (R58)	164 F	11-15	4/1598	208/6000	206/2000	1175kg	180	6.3	-	-	149	+ The usual raucous Mini JCW experience - But wearing a backwards baseball cap	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper S (R53)	077 F	02-06	4/1598	168/6000	155/4000	1140kg	143	7.2	7.8	19.9	135	+ Strong performance, quality feel - Over-long gearing	★★★★☆
Mini Cooper S Works GP (R53)	262 F	06	4/1598	215/7100	184/4600	1090kg	200	6.5	-	-	149	+ Storming engine, agility - Almost too mannered for a road racer	★★★★☆
Nissan Juke Nismo RS	208 D	15-17	4/1618	215/6000	206/3600	1315kg	166	7.0	-	-	137	+ Quirky character and bold styling - Not a match for a pukka hot hatch	★★★★☆
Peugeot 106 Rallye (Series 2)	273 F	97-98	4/1587	103/6200	97/3500	865kg	121	8.8	-	-	121	+ Bargain no-frills thrills - Not as much fizz as original 1.3	★★★★☆
Peugeot 106 Rallye (Series 1)	095 F	94-96	4/1294	100/7200	80/5400	826kg	123	10.6	-	-	118	+ Frantic, thrashy fun - Needs caning to extract full potential	★★★★☆
Peugeot 106 GTi 16v	034 F	97-04	4/1587	120/6600	107/5200	950kg	128	7.4	-	-	127	+ Fine handling supermini - Looks its age	★★★★☆
Peugeot 208 GTi by Peugeot Sport	254 F	15-18	4/1598	205/6000	221/3000	1160kg	180	6.5	-	-	143	+ A brilliantly focused small hatch - Obscured dials	★★★★☆
Peugeot 208 GTi	184 F	12-16	4/1598	197/5800	203/1700	1160kg	173	6.8	6.8	17.9	143	+ Agile chassis works well on tough roads - Could be more involving	★★★★☆
Peugeot 205 GTi 119	195 F	88-91	4/1905	130/6000	119/4750	910kg	145	7.6	-	-	124	+ Still scintillating after all these years - Brittle build quality	★★★★☆
Peugeot 308 GTi by Peugeot Sport	245 F	93-04	4/1598	256/6000	251/2100	1205kg	224	6.0	6.0	13.8	155	+ A great entertainer with a cracker of an engine - Tiny steering wheel obscures the dials	★★★★☆
Peugeot 306 GTi 6	020 F	93-01	4/1998	167/6500	142/5500	1214kg	140	7.9	7.2	20.1	140	+ One of the great GTIs - They don't make them like this anymore	★★★★☆
Peugeot 306 Rallye	095 F	98-99	4/1998	167/6500	142/5500	1163kg	146	7.8	6.9	19.2	137	+ Essentially a GTi 6 for less dosh - Limited choice of colours	★★★★☆
Renault Twingo GT	248 F	16-19	3/898	109/5750	125/2000	1001kg	111	9.6	-	-	113	+ Nippy performance - Less fun than a rear-engined Renault Sport-fettled car should be	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Twingo 133	175 F	08-13	4/1598	131/6750	118/4400	1050kg	127	8.7	-	-	125	+ Renault Sport experience for pocket money - Optional Cup chassis gives bouncy ride	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 200 Auto	184 F	13-18	4/1618	197/6000	177/11750	1204kg	166	6.7	6.9	17.9	143	+ Faster, more refined, easier to drive - We miss the revvy NA engine and manual 'box	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 220 Trophy	229 D	16-18	4/1618	217/6050	206/2000	1204kg	183	6.6	-	-	146	+ Willing chassis - Awful paddleshift gearbox	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 200 Cup	247 F	09-13	4/1998	197/7100	159/5400	1204kg	166	6.9	6.6	16.7	141	+ The hot Clio at its best - They don't make 'em like this anymore	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 197 Cup	115 F	07-09	4/1998	194/7250	158/5550	1240kg	161	6.9	-	-	134	+ Quick, polished and capable - Not as much sheer fun as 182 Cup	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 182	066 F	04-05	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1101kg	165	7.1	6.6	17.5	139	+ Took hot hatches to a new level - Flawed driving position	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 182 Cup	187 F	04-05	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1090kg	168	6.9	-	-	139	+ Full of beans, fantastic value - Sunday-market upholstery	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio Trophy	262 F	05-06	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1090kg	168	6.9	6.6	17.3	140	+ The most fun you can have on three (sometimes two) wheels - Only 500 were built	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 172 (Phase 2)	034 F	01-03	4/1998	170/6250	147/5400	1101kg	156	7.2	7.1	20.0	138	+ Poised, predictable, fast - Lacks aggressive edge	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 172 Cup	048 F	02-03	4/1998	170/6250	147/5400	1011kg	171	6.9	6.5	17.7	138	+ Bargain old-school hot hatch - Nervous in the wet, no ABS	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio 172 (Phase 1)	146 F	00-01	4/1998	170/6250	147/5400	1035kg	167	7.2	6.6	18.2	138	+ Brilliantly accomplished - Imperfect driving position	★★★★☆
Renault Clio Williams	233 F	93-96	4/1988	148/6100	126/4500	981kg	153	7.8	7.6	20.8	134	+ One of the best hot hatches ever - Can be fragile	★★★★☆
Renault 5 GT Turbo	255 F	87-91	4/1397	118/5750	122/3000	855kg	140	7.3	-	-	120	+ Clio Williams' grand-daddy - Few unmodified ones left	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio V6 255	277 F	03-05	6/2946	251/7150	221/4560	1400kg	182	5.8	-	-	153	+ Supercar drama without the original's edgy handling - Uninspired interior	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Clio V6	029 F	99-02	6/2946	227/6000	221/3750	1410kg	164	6.6	5.8	17.0	145	+ Pocket supercar - Mid-engined handling can be tricky	★★★★☆
Renault Mégane RS (280)	267 F	£28,695	4/1798	276/6000	288/2400	1407kg	199	5.8	6.3	14.6	158	+ Outrageous grip and agility - Cup chassis option doesn't do its composure any favours	★★★★☆
Renault Mégane RS Trophy	267 F	£32,695	4/1798	296/6000	295/2400	1419kg	212	5.7	-	-	162	+ An RS with knobs on - Unforgiving ride can make it feel ill at ease on trickier roads	★★★★☆
Renault Mégane RS Trophy-R	280 F	£51,455	4/1798	296/6000	295/2400	1306kg	230	5.4	-	-	163	+ An absolute beast on track - Too much of a beast on the road	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 275 Cup-S/Nav 275	223 D	16	4/1998	271/5500	265/3000	1394kg	198	5.8	-	-	158	+ The same engine as the Trophy-R - They don't make it anymore	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 265 Cup	195 F	12-15	4/1998	261/5500	265/3000	1387kg	191	6.0	6.4	14.8	158	+ A hot hatch benchmark - Cupholder could be better positioned	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 275 Trophy	212 F	14-15	4/1998	271/5500	265/3000	1376kg	200	5.8	-	-	159	+ Another cracking Trophy model - Stripped-out Trophy-R is even more thrilling	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 275 Trophy-R	231 F	14-15	4/1998	271/5500	265/3000	1297kg	212	5.8	-	-	158	+ As absorbing as a 911 GT3 RS on the right road - Too uncompromising for some; pricey	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 250 Cup	139 F	09-12	4/1998	247/5500	251/3000	1387kg	181	6.1	6.1	14.6	156	+ Fantastic chassis - ...partially obscured by new-found maturity	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane dCi 175 Cup	119 F	07-09	4/1995	173/3750	265/2000	1470kg	119	8.3	8.3	23.5	137	+ A diesel with a genuinely sporty chassis - Could take more power	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane 230 FI Team R26	195 F	07-09	4/1998	227/5500	249/3000	1345kg	171	6.5	6.2	16.0	147	+ The car the R26 R is based on - FI Team stickers in dubious taste	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Mégane R26.R	276 F	08-09	4/1998	227/5500	229/3000	1220kg	189	6.0	5.8	15.1	147	+ A true hot hatch great - Two seats, plastic rear windows	★★★★☆
SEAT Ibiza Cupra	225 F	16-18	4/1798	189/4300	236/1450	1185kg	162	6.7	-	-	146	+ Quick, competent, refined, and manual only - Not exciting enough	★★★★☆
SEAT Ibiza Cupra	183 D	10-15	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1259kg	144	6.9	-	-	142	+ Punchy engine, unflappable DSG - Lacks engagement, DSG only	★★★★☆
SEAT Leon Cupra 290	267 F	£31,150	4/1984	286/5400	280/1950	1356kg	214	6.0	-	-	155	+ Agile, transparent and easily exploited - Can feel rather plain	★★★★☆
SEAT Leon Cupra R	244 D	18	4/1984	306/5800	280/1800	1378kg	226	5.8	-	-	155	+ Sharper handling and better body control - High price and limited availability	★★★★☆
SEAT Leon Cupra	105 F	07-11	4/1984	237/5700	221/2200	1375kg	175	6.4	-	-	153	+ Great engine, composure - Doesn't have the adjustability of the old Cupra R	★★★★☆
SEAT Leon Cupra R	139 F	10-12	4/1984	261/6000	258/2500	1375kg	193	6.2	6.1	14.0	155	+ Bold car, blinding engine - Lacks the character of its rivals; only 24 came to the UK	★★★★☆
Skoda Fabia vRS (Mk2)	146 D	10-14	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1218kg	148	7.3	-	-	139	+ Clever twincharged engine and DSG box - Do you homework on the reliability of the engine	★★★★☆
Skoda Fabia vRS (Mk1)	077 F	03-07	4/1896	130/4000	229/1900	1315kg	100	9.6	-	-	127	+ Fun and frugal hot hatch - A little short on steering feel	★★★★☆
Skoda Octavia vRS (Mk4)	281 D	£29,815	4/1984	242/5000	273/1600	1445kg	170	6.7	-	-	155	+ A capable Q-car for the masses - Engine lacks character	★★★★☆
Skoda Octavia vRS (Mk3)	187 D	13-17	4/1984	217/4500	258/1500	1345kg	164	6.8	-	-	154	+ Quick, agile, roomier than a Golf - Ride is harsh for what could be a family car	★★★★☆
Skoda Octavia vRS 245 (Mk3)	250 F	17-20	4/1984	242/5000	258/1600	1370kg	179	6.6	-	-	155	+ A credible, entertaining performer - You won't get out of bed at 4am to drive it	★★★★☆
Suzuki Swift Sport (Mk3)	267 F	£17,249	4/1373	138/5500	170/2500	975kg	144	8.1	7.6	20.1	130	+ Composed and brisk - Adjustability and character have been diluted	★★★★☆
Suzuki Swift Sport (Mk2)	175 F	12-17	4/1586	134/6900	118/4400	1045kg	130	8.7	-	-	121	+ Still a great pocket rocket - Not quite as adjustable as the original	★★★★☆
Suzuki Swift Sport (Mk1)	132 F	05-11	4/1586	123/6800	109/4800	1030kg	121	8.9	-	-	124	+ Entertaining handling, well built - Lacking in steering feedback	★★★★☆
Toyota GR Yaris	282 F	£29,995	3/1618	257/6500	265/3000	1280kg	204	5.5	-	-	142	+ A proper homologation special - More Subaru Impreza than Mitsubishi Evo	★★★★☆
Toyota Yaris GRMN	254 F	18	4/1798	209/6800	184/5000	1135kg	187	6.3	-	-	143	+ Appealingly feisty supercharged supermini - Artificial steering; they only made 400	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Corsa GSi	254 D	18-19	4/1364	148/5000	162/2750	1278kg	129	8.9	-	-	129	+ Grippy and eager - Older than time itself, and feels it	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Corsa VXR	211 F	14-18	4/1598	202/5800	206/1900	1278kg	161	6.8	-	-	143	+ Begs to be wrung out - You'll need the £2400 Performance Pack	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Corsa VX	154 F	07-14	4/1598	189/5850	192/1980	1166kg	165	7.2	-	-	140	+ Looks snazzy, punchy engine - Lacks feel, uncouth compared with rivals	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Corsa VXR Nürburgring/Clubsport	164 F	11-13/14	4/1598	202/5750	206/2250	1166kg	176	6.8	-	-	143	+ VXR gets more power and a limited-slip diff - But they come at a price	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Astra/GTC VXR (Mk2)	207 F	12-18	4/1998	276/5500	295/2500	1475kg	190	6.0	-	-	155	+ Loony turbo pace - Lacks the Renault Sport Mégane's precision	★★★★☆
Vauxhall Astra VXR (Mk1)	102 F	05-11	4/1998	237/5600	236/2400	1393kg	173	6.4	6.7	16.7	152	+ Fast and furious - Lacks a little composure and precision	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Up GTI	273 F	£16,320	3/999	113/5000	147/2000	995kg	115	8.8	-	-	122	+ Infectious appetite for fun - City car roots are still there	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Lupo GTI	034 F	01-04	4/1598	123/6500	112/3000	1038kg	120	8.2	8.9	30.1	127	+ Looks, performance, chassis - Lacks the fizz of the 106 GTI	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Polo GTI	244 D	£22,005	4/1984	197/4400	236/1500	1272kg	157	6.7	-	-	147	+ Decent performance; mature ride and handling - Lacks driver involvement	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Polo GTI	211 F	15-17	4/1998	189/4200	236/1450	1197kg	160	6.7	-	-	146	+ Smooth and brawny - Fiesta ST is more engaging	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Polo GTI	154 F	10-14	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1184kg	153	7.4	-	-	142	+ Modern-day Mk1 Golf GTI gets twin-clutch DSG - It's a little bit bland	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Golf GTI (Mk8)	279 D	£33,460	4/1984	242/5000	273/1600	1345kg	182	6.4	-	-	155	+ An alluring blend of the best GTI ingredients - The competition is stiffer than ever	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Golf GTI (Mk7.5)	233 D	17-18	4/1984	227/4700	258/1500	1289kg	179	6.4	-	-	155	+ Still the most capable all-round hot hatch - Should be more thrilling	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Golf GTI Performance (Mk7.5)	245 F	£32,985	4/1984	242/5000	273/1600	1312kg	187	6.2	6.5	14.6	155	+ A GTI with an extra 15bhp and an LSD - Could still be more thrilling	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR (Mk7.5)	267 F	£37,665	4/1984	286/5400	280/1950	1410kg	206	5.6	-	-	155	+ Quicker than a regular GTI - It's no Clubsport S	★★★★☆
Volkswagen Golf R (Mk													



## MAKE &amp; MODEL

Volkswagen Golf GTI (Mk5)  
087 F '06-'09  
Volkswagen Golf R32 (Mk5)  
053 F '02-'04  
Volkswagen Golf GTI 16V (Mk2)  
195 F '88-'92  
Volkswagen Golf GTI (Mk1, 1.8)  
224 F '82-'84

## ISSUE NO.

## PRICE

(00 YEARS ON SALE)

## ENGINE

CYL/CC

## BHP/RPM

## LB FT/RPM

## WEIGHT

## BHP/TON

## 0-62MPH

(CLAMMED)

## 0-60MPH

(TESTED)

## MAX MPH

## EVO RATING

+ Character and ability; the GTI's return to form - Lacking firepower?  
+ The traction's great and you'll love the soundtrack - We'd still have a GTI  
+ Charismatic - Boomy engine can be tiresome  
+ Still feels everyday useable - Too many have been modified  
+ The car that started it all - Tricky to find an unmolested one

★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★★★

## SALOONS / ESTATES / SUVs



## OUR CHOICE

**Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio.** At last, an Alfa Romeo we can love not just for its badge, for the noise it makes and for being Italian, but because it's a great car. In fact, the Giulia Quadrifoglio is a saloon car that feels like a sports car – and thankfully that sports car isn't a 4C.



## BEST OF THE REST

The **Jaguar XESV Project 8** (left) delivers unapologetic supersaloon thrills aplenty – just be sure to order a Touring Edition. If you have a preference for German metal, consider the rampant **Mercedes-AMG E63 S** (saloon or estate) or **BMW M5**, or the **Audi RS6 Avant**. In the class below, try the **Mercedes-AMG C63 S**.

Alfa Romeo Giulia 2.0 Turbo Super

234 D

£33,595

4/1995

197/5000

243/1750

1429kg

140

6.6

-

-

146

+ Keen engine, enjoyable handling - Firm low-speed ride

★★★★★

Alfa Romeo Giulia Veloce

244 F

£39,875

4/1995

276/5250

295/2250

1429kg

196

5.7

-

-

149

+ Supple and satisfying - Engine reluctant to rev

★★★★★

Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio

278 F

£67,195

6/2891

503/6500

442/2500

1620kg

315

3.9

-

-

191

+ If Ferrari built a saloon (really) - Lacks the final polish of German rivals

★★★★★

Alfa Romeo Stelvio Speciale AWD

234 D

£43,705

4/1995

276/5250

295/1750

1660kg

169

5.7

-

-

143

+ Agile feel, quick steering, attractive cabin - Engine not truly inspiring

★★★★★

Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio

244 D

£71,880

6/2891

503/6500

442/2500

1830kg

279

3.8

-

-

176

+ Rivals the Macan GTS - Needs optional P Zero Corsa tyres to give its very best

★★★★★

Alpina B3 Touring

281 D

£67,950

6/2993

456/5500

516/2500

1865kg

248

3.9

-

-

186

+ A richer, smoother drive than an M-car - Little different to an M340i at low speeds

★★★★★

Aston Martin Rapide

141 F

'10-'13

12/5935

470/6000

443/5000

1990kg

240

5.3

-

-

188

+ Better than its DB9 sibling - More of a 2+2 than a proper four-seater

★★★★★

Aston Martin Rapide S

201 D

'13-'19

12/5935

552/6650

465/5500

1990kg

282

4.4

-

-

203

+ Oozes star quality; gearbox on 2015MY cars a big improvement - It's cosy in the back

★★★★★

Aston Martin Rapide AMR

261 D

£194,950

12/5935

595/6650

465/5500

1990kg

304

4.4

-

-

205

+ Powertrain, performance, personality - When it goes off sale, so does Aston's 5.9 V12

★★★★★

Aston Martin DBX

277 D

£161,500

8/3982

542/6500

516/2200

2245kg

245

4.5

-

-

181

+ Drives nothing like an SUV - Still heavy and thirsty like an SUV

★★★★★

Audi S3 Saloon

192 D

'13-'20

4/1984

306/5500

280/1800

1430kg

210

5.3

-

-

155

+ On paper a match for the original S4 - In reality much less interesting

★★★★★

Audi RS3 Saloon

243 F

£47,310

5/2480

394/5850

354/1700

1515kg

264

4.1

3.6

8.8

155

+ Mini RS4 looks; stonking pace - Not the most involving driving experience

★★★★★

Audi S4 (B9, diesel)

266 D

£49,425

6/2967

342/3850

516/2500

1825kg

190

4.9

-

-

155

+ Effortless performance, well-judged chassis - Diesel power won't be to everyone's taste

★★★★★

Audi S4 (B9, petrol)

225 D

'17-'19

6/2995

349/5400

369/1370

1630kg

218

4.7

-

-

155

+ Strong response and delivery - Chassis feels softer than before

★★★★★

Audi RS4 Avant (B9)

282 F

£65,700

6/2894

444/5700

442/1900

1745kg

259

4.1

-

-

155

+ Very 'real world' fast - Some may feel it lacks character and drama

★★★★★

Audi RS4 Avant (B8)

216 F

'12-'15

8/4163

444/8250

317/4000

1795kg

251

4.7

4.5

10.5

174

+ Looks and sounds the part, thunderously fast - Unnatural steering, dull dynamics

★★★★★

Audi RS4 (B7)

250 F

'05-'08

8/4163

444/7800

317/5500

1650kg

255

4.7

4.5

10.5

155

+ 414bhp at 7800rpm! And there's an estate version too - Busy under braking

★★★★★

Audi RS4 (B5)

192 F

'00-'02

6/2671

375/6100

325/2500

1620kg

236

4.9

4.8

12.1

170

+ Effortless pace - Not the last word in agility; bends wheel rims

★★★★★

Audi RS2

214 F

'94-'95

5/2226

315/6500

302/3000

1595kg

201

4.8

4.8

13.1

162

+ Storming performance (thanks to Porsche) - Try finding one

★★★★★

Audi S5 Sportback

233 D

'17-'19

6/2995

349/5400

369/1370

1660kg

214

4.7

-

-

155

+ More capable than you think; strong V6 engine - Gearbox frustrating in auto mode

★★★★★

Audi RS5 Sportback

264 D

£69,525

6/2894

444/5700

442/1900

1720kg

262

3.9

-

-

155

+ High-speed composure - Flat-footed on more technical roads

★★★★★

Audi S6 Avant (C8)

263 D

£63,315

6/2967

344/3850

516/2500

2020kg

173

5.1

-

-

155

+ Diesel suits the S6 ethos - Poor low-end engine response

★★★★★

Audi RS6 Avant (C8)

272 F

£92,790

8/3996



## MAKE &amp; MODEL

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (ON PRICE ON SALE)	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMPE)	0-100MPH (CLAMPE)	0-100MPH (FREE)	MAX MPH
Kia Stinger GT-Line 2.0	247 D	'18-'20	4/1998	244/6200	260/1400	1642kg	151	5.8	-	-	149
Kia Stinger GT-Line 2.2 CRDi	251 T	'18-'20	4/1999	197/3800	324/1750	1735kg	115	7.3	-	-	143
Kia Stinger GT S	242 D	£40,495	6/3342	365/6000	376/1300	1780kg	168	4.7	-	-	168
Land Rover Defender 110 (P400)	273 F	£79,655	6/2996	394/5500	406/2000	2388kg	168	6.4	-	-	129
Lamborghini Urus	249 F	£159,925	8/3996	641/6000	627/2250	2200kg	296	3.6	-	-	190
Lexus IS F	151 F	'07-'12	8/4969	417/6600	372/5200	1714kg	247	5.2	4.7	10.9	173
Lotus Carlton	258 F	'90-'93	6/3615	377/5200	419/4200	1658kg	231	5.4	4.8	10.6	177
Maserati Ghibli	186 D	£57,015	6/2979	345/5000	406/1750	1810kg	194	5.5	-	-	166
Maserati Quattroporte S	184 D	'13-'18	6/2979	404/5500	406/1750	1860kg	221	5.1	-	-	177
Maserati Quattroporte GTS	226 D	'16-'18	8/3798	523/6800	479/2250	1900kg	280	4.7	-	-	193
Maserati Quattroporte S	137 F	'08-'12	8/4691	425/7000	361/4750	1990kg	216	5.4	5.1	12.1	174
Maserati Quattroporte Sport GTS	141 F	'08-'12	8/4691	433/7000	361/4750	1990kg	221	5.1	-	-	177
Maserati Levante Diesel	221 D	'16-'20	6/2897	271/4000	442/2000	2205kg	125	6.9	-	-	143
Mercedes-AMG A35 Saloon	271 F	£37,755	4/1991	302/5800	295/3000	1495kg	205	4.8	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C63 S Coupé	273 D	£51,010	4/1991	415/6750	369/5000	1600kg	264	4.0	-	-	167
Mercedes-AMG CLA45 S Shooting Brake	278 D	£52,010	4/1991	415/6750	369/5000	1630kg	259	4.0	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C43 Estate	228 D	£49,995	6/2996	362/5500	383/2000	1660kg	222	4.7	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C63 Saloon (W205)	209 D	'15-'20	8/3982	469/5500	479/1750	1640kg	291	4.1	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C63 Estate (S205)	216 F	'15-'20	8/3982	469/5500	479/1750	1710kg	279	4.2	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C63 S Saloon (W205)	258 T	£74,258	8/3982	503/5500	516/1750	1655kg	309	4.0	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG C63 S Estate (S205)	282 F	£75,458	8/3982	503/5500	516/2000	1670kg	306	4.1	-	-	180
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG (W204)	151 F	'08-'14	8/6208	451/6800	442/5000	1655kg	277	4.5	4.4	9.7	155
Mercedes-Benz C55 AMG (W203)	088 F	'04-'08	8/5439	367/5250	376/4000	1635kg	228	5.2	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16	185 F	'89-'92	4/2498	204/6750	177/5500	1300kg	159	7.5	-	-	146
Mercedes-Benz E400d 4Matic Estate (S213)	260 D	£55,140	6/2925	335/3600	516/1200	1920kg	177	5.1	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG E63 (W213)	242 D	'18-'20	8/3982	563/5750	553/2250	1875kg	305	3.5	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG E63 S (W213)	258 F	£96,525	8/3982	604/5750	627/2500	1880kg	326	3.4	3.4	7.4	155
Mercedes-AMG E63 S Estate (S213)	272 F	£98,525	8/3982	604/5750	627/2500	1995kg	308	3.5	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG GT63 4-Door Coupé	274 F	'19-'20	8/3982	577/5500	590/2500	2025kg	290	3.4	-	-	193
Mercedes-AMG GT63 S 4-Door Coupé	269 F	£138,815	8/3982	630/5500	664/2500	2045kg	313	3.2	-	-	196
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG (W212)	187 D	'13-'16	8/5461	549/5500	531/1750	1770kg	315	4.2	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG (W212)	208 F	'13-'16	8/5461	577/5500	590/1750	1795kg	327	4.1	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG (W212)	165 F	'11-'13	8/5461	518/5250	516/1750	1765kg	298	4.4	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG (W212)	134 D	'09-'11	8/6208	518/6800	465/5200	1765kg	298	4.5	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG (W211)	096 D	'06-'09	8/6208	507/6800	465/5200	1765kg	292	4.5	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz E55 AMG	052 F	'03-'06	8/5439	469/6100	516/2650	1760kg	271	4.7	4.8	10.2	155
Mercedes-AMG S63 L	246 D	£129,495	8/3982	604/5500	664/2750	1940kg	316	4.3	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG GLS53	247 D	£76,600	6/2999	451/6100	567/1800	1905kg	302	4.5	-	-	155
Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG S	199 D	'14-'17	8/5461	577/5500	590/1750	1795kg	327	4.1	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG GLC63 S Coupé	253 D	£85,495	8/3982	503/5500	516/1750	1945kg	263	3.8	-	-	174
Mercedes-AMG GLE63 S	218 D	£108,638	8/5461	577/5500	560/1750	2270kg	258	4.2	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG GLE63 S Coupé	213 D	£118,105	8/5461	577/5500	560/1750	2275kg	258	4.2	-	-	155
Mercedes-AMG G63	250 D	£146,490	8/3982	577/6000	627/2500	2485kg	236	4.5	-	-	137
Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG	172 D	'12-'18	8/5461	537/5500	560/2000	2475kg	220	5.4	-	-	130
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-300 SST	118 F	'08-'14	4/1998	290/6500	300/3500	1590kg	185	4.5	5.2	13.9	155
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-330 SST	134 F	'08-'14	4/1998	324/6500	322/3500	1590kg	207	4.4	-	-	155
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-360	122 D	'08-'14	4/1998	354/6500	363/3500	1560kg	231	4.0	-	-	155
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-400	181 F	'09-'10	4/1998	403/6500	387/3500	1560kg	262	3.8	-	-	155
Mitsubishi Evo IX FQ-360	088 F	'05-'08	4/1997	345/6800	321/4600	1400kg	250	4.2	4.3	10.9	157
Mitsubishi Evo IX MR FQ-360	181 F	'05-'08	4/1997	366/6887	363/3200	1400kg	266	4.0	-	-	157
Mitsubishi Evo VIII	055 F	'03-'05	4/1997	276/6500	289/3500	1410kg	199	5.1	-	-	157
Mitsubishi Evo VIII MR FQ-300	057 F	'03-'05	4/1997	305/6800	289/3500	1400kg	221	4.9	-	-	157
Mitsubishi Evo VII	031 F	'02-'03	4/1997	276/6500	282/3500	1360kg	206	5.1	5.0	13.0	140
Mitsubishi Evo VI Tommi Mäkinen Edition	271 F	'00-'01	4/1997	276/6500	275/2750	1365kg	205	4.6	-	-	150
Polestar 2	280 D	£46,900	-	402	487	2048kg	197	4.7	-	-	127
Porsche Taycan Turbo S	267 D	£138,830	-	750	774	2295kg	332	2.8	-	-	161
Porsche Panamera 4S Diesel	232 D	'17-'20	8/3956	416/3500	627/1000	2050kg	206	4.3	-	-	177
Porsche Panamera GTS	279 D	£107,180	8/3996	473/6500	457/1800	2040kg	236	3.9	-	-	181
Porsche Panamera Turbo	237 F	£115,100	8/3996	542/5750	568/1960	1995kg	276	3.6	3.4	8.3	190
Porsche Panamera Turbo Sport Turismo	239 D	£118,828	8/3996	542/5750	568/1960	2035kg	271	3.8	-	-	188
Porsche Panamera Turbo S E-Hybrid Sport T.	272 D	£142,280	8/3996	671	627	2325kg	293	3.4	-	-	192
Porsche Panamera GTS	208 F	'11-'16	8/4806	434/6700	383/3500	1925kg	229	4.4	-	-	178
Porsche Panamera Turbo	137 F	'10-'16	8/4806	493/6000	516/2250	1970kg	254	4.2	3.6	8.9	188
Porsche Panamera Turbo S	159 D	'11-'13	8/4806	542/6000	590/2250	1995kg	276	3.8	-	-	190
Porsche Macan	259 D	£47,060	4/1984	242/5000	273/1600	1795kg	137	6.1	-	-	139
Porsche Macan S	257 T	£49,420	6/2997	349/5400	354/1360	1865kg	190	5.3	-	-	157
Porsche Macan GTS	244 F	'16-'18	6/2997	355/6000	369/1650	1895kg	190	5.2	-	-	159
Porsche Cayenne S (Mk3)	253 T	£72,080	6/2894	434/5700	406/1800	2020kg	218	5.2	-	-	164
Porsche Cayenne Turbo (Mk3)	243 D	£104,490	8/3996	542/5750	568/1960	2175kg	254	4.1	-	-	177
Porsche Cayenne Turbo Coupé	263 D	£108,070	8/3996	542/5750	568/2000	2200kg	250	3.9	-	-	177
Porsche Cayenne GTS (Mk2, V6)	211 D	'15-'17	6/3604	434/6000	442/1600	2110kg	209	5.2	-	-	163
Porsche Cayenne GTS (Mk2, V8)	173 D	'12-'15	8/4806	414/6500	380/3500	2085kg	202	5.7	-	-	162
Porsche Cayenne Turbo (Mk2)	212 D	'10-'17	8/4806	513/6000	533/2250	185kg	239	4.5	-	-	173
Porsche Cayenne Turbo S (Mk2)	184 D	'10-'17	8/4806	562/6000	590/2250	2235kg	255	4.1	-	-	176
Range Rover Evoque P250	261 D	£38,050	6/2995	246/5500	269/1300	1818kg	137	7.0	-	-	143
Range Rover Velar P380	239 D	'17-'20	6/2995	375/6500	332/3500	1884kg	202	5.7	-	-	155
Range Rover Velar V8 Autobiography Dynamic	264 D	'19-'20	8/4999	542/6000	501/2500	2085kg	264	4.5	-	-	170
Range Rover Sport V8 Supercharged	186 D	'13-'19	8/5000	503/6000	460/2500	2335kg	219	5.0	-	-	155
Range Rover Sport SVR	260 D	£101,850	8/5000	567/6000	516/3500	2302kg	250	4.5	-	-	176
Range Rover SV Autobiography Dynamic	250 T	£144,265	8/4367	557/5000	516/3500	2497kg	227	5.4	-	-	155
Rolls-Royce Ghost	280 D	£249,600	12/6749	563/5000	627/1600	2490kg	230	4.8	-	-	155
Rolls-Royce Phantom	054 F	'03-'17	12/6749	453/5350	531/3500	2560kg	180	5.7	-	-	149
SEAT Leon Cupra R ST Abt	271 F	'19-'20	4/1984	345/5300	324/2000	1442kg	c237	4.7	-	-	163
Skoda Kodiaq vRS	258 T	£45,740	4/1968	236/4000	369/1750	1838kg	130	7.0	-	-	137
Subaru WRX STI S209	272 F	'20	4/2457	341/6400	300/3600	1580kg	219	4.9	-	-	162
Subaru WRX STI	253 F	'14-'18	4/2457	296/6000	300/4000	1534kg	196	5.2	-	-	158
Subaru Impreza STI ('Hawkeye')	090 F	'05-'07	4/2457	276/6000	289/4000	1495kg	188	5.3	-	-	158
Subaru Impreza WRX STI PPP ('Blobeys')	073 F	'03-'05	4/1994	300/6000	299/4000	1470kg	207	5.4	5.2	12.9	144
Subaru Impreza Turbo ('Classic')	011 F	'93-'00	4/1994	215/5600	214/4000	1235kg	177	5.8	5.4	14.6	144
Subaru Impreza RBS	187 F	'99	4/1994	237/6000	258/3500	1235kg	195	6.1	5.0	14.1	144
Subaru Impreza P1	259 F	'00-'01	4/1994	276/6500	260/4000	1283kg	219	4.7	4.9	13.3	150

## EVO RATING

+ Out-Jaguars Jaguar's XE and XF - Except in the looks department	★★★★☆
+ Smooth daily driver with a decent interior - Frustrating auto box, heavy kerb weight	★★★★☆
+ Playful handling, deep-chested performance - Engine lacks soul, steering lacks feel	★★★★☆
+ A great off-roader - If off-roading is your thing	★★★★☆
+ A freakish manipulator of physics - But also rather one-dimensional	★★★★☆
+ Shockingly good Lexus - The M3's available as a four-door too	★★★★☆
+ The Millennium Falcon of saloon cars - Every drive is a work-out	★★★★☆
+ Bursting with character; good value compared to Quattroporte - It's still a big car	★★★★☆
+ Tempting alternative to V8 - Feel-free steering, ride lacks decorum	★★★★☆
+ Still pretty - Off the pace dynamically	★★★★☆
+ A QP with the bhp it deserves - Grille is a bit Hannibal Lecter	★★★★☆
+ The most stylish of supersaloons - Slightly wooden brakes, unforgiving ride	★★★★☆
+ Impressive blend of ride and handling - Performance is mild for a Maserati	★★★★☆
+ Fun when you want it to be, secure when the heavens open - Others are even more fun	★★★★☆
+ Speed, ability and involvement - CLA35 offers a similar experience for less outlay	★★★★☆
+ Same stellar performance and involvement as the A45 - See above	★★★★☆
+ Incredibly fast and composed - Difficult to engage with	★★★★☆
+ Fast and feelsome - Lacks the ultimate finesse and response of the C63 S	★★★★☆
+ Much more fun than it looks - Gearbox dim-witted at low speeds	★★★★☆
+ Tremendous twin-turbo V8 power - Not quite as focused as an M division car	★★★★☆
+ One of the finest all-round compact performance cars - Baffling array of driver settings	★★★★☆
+ Monstrous pace and extremely engaging - Same-era M3 is just a little better...	★★★★☆
+ Furiously fast, commendably discreet - Overshadowed by M3 and RS4	★★★★☆
+ M-B's M3 alternative - Not as nimble as the Beemer	★★★★☆
+ A properly quick diesel estate - Steady image, size	★★★★☆
+ More rounded than the E63 S - Could be a little too discreet for some tastes	★★★★☆
+ Fast, refined, effective and fun - At nearly two tons, it's not 911 nimble	★★★★☆
+ As above - It's even heavier than the saloon, and five metres long	★★★★☆
+ Does the same as the S for less - Takes up plenty of road	★★★★☆
+ Agile and immensely quick - Lacks the coupe GT's drama	★★★★☆
+ Power, response and accuracy in spades - A little lacking in originality	★★★★☆
+ Effortless power; intuitive and approachable - Sluggish auto box	★★★★☆
+ Turbo engine didn't dilute the E63 experience - Sometimes struggles for traction...	★★★★☆
+ Indulgent chassis, brilliant engine - Steering still vague	★★★★☆





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MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE <small>(ON ROAD INCL. VAT)</small>	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB. FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH <small>(CL. TIME)</small>	0-60MPH <small>(TESTED)</small>	0-100MPH <small>(TESTED)</small>	MAX. MPH	EVO RATING	
Subaru Impreza 2.2B STI	282 F	'98-'99	4/2212	276/6000	268/3200	1270kg	220	5.3	5.0	13.1	150	+ The ultimate Impreza - Prices reflect this	★★★★★
Tesla Model 3 Performance	263 F	£56,490	-	444	471	1847kg	244	3.5	-	-	145	+ Quicker round a track than an M3 - Lap times aren't everything	★★★★★
Tesla Model S P100D	235 F	'17-'19	-	595	713	2108kg	287	2.4	2.9	7.7	155	+ Killer RWYB performance - Elon Musk	★★★★★
Vauxhall Insignia Grand Sport GSi BiTurbo D	246 D	'18-'20	4/1956	207/4000	354/1500	1772kg	145	7.3	-	-	145	+ Fine ride, strong real-world pace - Doesn't feel different enough from non-GSi Insignias	★★★★★
Vauxhall Insignia VXR SuperSport	189 D	'13-'17	6/2792	321/5250	321/5250	1825kg	179	5.6	-	-	170	+ A 170mph Vauxhall - Should be a more engaging steer	★★★★★
Vauxhall VXR8 GTS	215 D	'15-'17	8/6162	576/6150	546/3850	1834kg	319	4.2	-	-	155	+ Monster engine; engaging driving experience - Woeful interior	★★★★★
Vauxhall VXR8 GTS-R	272 F	'17	8/6162	587/6150	546/3850	1880kg	317	4.2	-	-	155	+ Blistering performance; bursting with character - The end of an era	★★★★★

## ROADSTERS / CONVERTIBLES



### OUR CHOICE

**Lotus Elise Sport 220.** Delivering just the right amount of power from its supercharged 1.8-litre engine to make the most of its low kerb weight, the Sport 220 is gutsy, grippy, accurate and enthusiastic. And, of course, it rides beautifully. It's the sweetest spot amongst many already-very-sweet Elises.



### BEST OF THE REST

The **Porsche 718 Spyder** (left) is essentially a drop-top Cayman GT4, while the **718 Boxster GTS 4.0** is essentially a cut-price 718 Spyder. The **Aston Martin Vantage Roadster** bests the 911 Cabriolet for character, while the **Caterham Seven** remains an exemplar of sports car purity whatever the model.

Abarth 124 Spider	256 F	'16-'19	4/1368	168/5500	184/2500	1060kg	161	6.8	-	-	143	+ A little car with a big soul - Vague and lifeless front end	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo 4C Spider	223 F	'15-'19	4/1742	237/6000	258/2200	940kg*	256	4.5	-	-	160	+ Stunningly beautiful; better steering than coupe version - Still has the coupe's other foibles	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo 8C Spider	161 F	'09-'11	8/4691	450/7000	354/4750	1675kg	273	4.4	-	-	181	+ Beauty meets beast. They hit it off - Boot is useless for touring	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 4	273 F	£39,975	4/1996	320/6500	310/3000	595kg	546	2.8	-	-	162	+ Sensory overload - Turbo engine lacks the old supercharged unit's frantic soundtrack	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3.245	248 F	'18-'12	4/1998	245/8600	177/7200	520kg	479	3.1	-	-	145	+ Even better than its predecessors - Can still be a bit draughty	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3.5 Supercharged	180 D	'13-'18	4/1998	310/8400	169/7200	550kg	573	2.7	-	-	155	+ As mad as ever - Rain	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3.5R	255 F	'14-'18	4/1998	350/8400	243/6100	550kg	647	2.6	-	-	155	+ Remarkable balance, poise and pace - Pricey	★★★★★
Ariel Nomad	248 F	£33,000	4/2354	235/7200	221/4300	670kg*	365	3.4	-	-	134	+ Off-road capabilities make for a super plaything - No Bluetooth	★★★★★
Ariel Nomad R	278 F	£77,400	4/1998	335/7200	243/4300	670kg*	486	2.9	-	-	134	+ Intriguing and effective mash-up of track car and off-roader - They're only making five	★★★★★
Aston Martin Vantage Roadster	279 D	£126,950	8/3982	503/6000	505/2000	1628kg*	314	3.8	-	-	190	+ Builds on the already excellent coupe's attributes - Interior design lags behind exterior	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage Roadster (4.7)	130 F	'09-'16	8/4735	420/7000	346/5750	1710kg	250	4.8	-	-	180	+ Sportiest, coolest drop-top Aston in years - Feels dated compared to contemporaries	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage S Roadster	161 F	'11-'17	8/4735	430/7300	361/5000	1690kg	258	4.8	-	-	189	+ Sounds amazing, looks even better - Still not the best drop-top in its class	★★★★★
Aston Martin V12 Vantage Roadster	175 F	'12-'14	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1760kg	294	4.5	-	-	190	+ As good as the coupe, with amplified V12 rumble - Just a smidgen shakier	★★★★★
Aston Martin V12 Vantage S Roadster	212 F	'14-'17	12/5935	565/6750	457/5750	1745kg	329	4.1	-	-	201	+ A brilliant two-seat roadster... - Let down by a frustrating automated manual gearbox	★★★★★
Aston Martin DB11 Volante	258 T	£159,000	8/3982	503/6000	498/2000	1795kg	285	4.1	-	-	187	+ Impressively wide range of dynamic personalities - Cabin could be better at this price	★★★★★
Audi TT Roadster 45 TFSI quattro (Mk3)	259 D	£37,005	4/1984	242/5000	273/1600	1455kg	167	5.5	-	-	155	+ Competent and stylish - Chunky weight dulls the performance	★★★★★
Audi TTS Roadster (Mk3)	207 D	£46,360	4/1984	302/5400	295/2000	1495kg	205	4.8	-	-	155	+ Highly capable - Most will want more than 'capable'	★★★★★
Audi TT RS Roadster (Mk3)	250 T	£55,655	5/2480	394/5850	354/1700	1530kg	262	3.9	-	-	155	+ Terrific engine... - Is the best thing about it	★★★★★
Audi R8 V8 Spyder	186 D	'11-'15	8/4163	424/7900	317/6000	1660kg	259	4.8	-	-	187	+ More delicate and subtle than the V10 - The V10 sounds even better	★★★★★
BAC Mono	189 F	£165,125	4/2261	305/7700	206/6000	580kg*	534	2.8	-	-	170	+ The most single-minded track car available - That means no passengers...	★★★★★
BMW Z4 sDrive20i	261 D	£36,990	4/1988	194/4500	236/1450	1405kg	140	6.6	-	-	149	+ Keen engine, communicative chassis - Could handle more power	★★★★★
BMW Z4 M40i	256 D	£49,050	6/2998	335/5000	369/1600	1535kg	222	4.6	-	-	155	+ Inherent agility and ability - Undemanding and unengaging	★★★★★
BMW Z4 sDrive 35i M Sport (Mk2)	186 D	'13-'17	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1505kg	204	5.2	-	-	155	+ Looks, hard-top versatility, drivetrain - Clumsy chassis is upset by ragged surfaces	★★★★★
BMW Z4 M Roadster	091 F	'06-'09	6/3246	338/7900	269/4900	1410kg	244	5.0	-	-	155	+ Exhilarating and characterful; that engine - Stiff suspension	★★★★★
BMW M Roadster	002 F	'98-'02	6/3246	325/7400	258/4900	1375kg	240	5.1	-	-	155	+ M3 motor; hunky looks - M Coupé drives better	★★★★★
BMW i8 Roadster	258 F	£124,735	3/1499	369/5800	420/3700	1595kg	235	4.6	-	-	155	+ Unique and engaging - Still more GT than sports car	★★★★★
BMW Z8	026 F	'00-'03	8/4941	400/6600	369/3800	1585kg	256	4.7	4.8	11.1	155	+ M5-powered super-sportsster - M5's more fun to drive	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 270	219 F	£29,885	4/1596	135/6800	122/4100	540kg*	254	5.0	-	-	122	+ Feisty engine, sweetly balanced, manic and exciting - The temptation of more power	★★★★★
Caterham Super Seven 1600	273 D	£33,495	4/1596	135/6800	122/4100	565kg*	243	5.0	-	-	122	+ As enjoyable as other Sevens, but more accessible - Vintage looks come at a price	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 310	273 F	£31,385	4/1596	152/7000	124/5600	540kg*	286	4.8	-	-	127	+ Intense and exciting - Sticky tyres limit the amount of throttle adjustability	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 360	209 F	£31,385	4/1999	180/7300	143/6100	560kg*	327	4.8	-	-	130	+ Extra power is welcome - You'll need the six-speed gearbox to make the most of it	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 420	223 F	£36,385	4/1999	210/7600	150/6300	560kg*	381	3.8	4.0	10.3	136	+ It's the one we built for ourselves - Trickier on the limit than lesser-powered Sevens	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 620S	220 D	£48,890	4/1999	310/7700	219/7350	610kg*	516	3.4	-	-	155	+ Ludicrous, near-620R pace, with added habitability - Well, 'habitable' for a Seven...	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 620R	255 F	£53,885	4/1999	310/7700	219/7350	572kg*	551	2.8	-	-	155	+ Banzai on track, yet still relevant on the road - £50k for a Seven?	★★★★★
Caterham Seven 160	239 F	'13-'17	3/660	80/7000	79/3400	490kg*	166	6.9	-	-	100	+ The fabulous Seven formula at its most basic - Gets pricey with options	★★★★★
Caterham Seven SuperSprint	247 D	'17-'18	3/660	95/7000	82/5600	490kg*	197	6.9	-	-	100	+ Accessible limits with proper pace - You need to enjoy being exposed to the elements	★★★★★
Caterham Seven Roadsport 125	105 F	'07-'14	4/1596	125/6100	120/5350	539kg*	235	5.9	-	-	112	+ Great debut for Ford-engined model - Bigger drivers need SV model	★★★★★
Caterham Seven Supersport	165 F	'11-'14	4/1596	140/6900	120/5790	520kg*	273	4.9	-	-	120	+ One of the best Caterhams is also one of the cheapest of its era - It's quite minimalist	★★★★★
Caterham Seven Supersport R	180 D	'13-'14	4/1999	180/7300	143/6100	535kg*	342	4.8	-	-	130	+ One of the best road-and-track Sevens - Impractical, noisy, uncomfortable	★★★★★
Caterham Seven Supersprint R300	150 F	'09-'12	4/1999	175/7000	139/6000	515kg*	345	4.5	-	-	140	+ Possibly all the Caterham you need - They're not cheap	★★★★★
Caterham Seven CSR 260	094 F	'06-'17	4/2261	256/7500	200/6200	565kg*	460	3.1	3.8	-	155	+ Brilliant for high days, holidays and trackdays - Wet Wednesdays	★★★★★
Caterham Seven Supersprint R500	123 F	'08-'14	4/1999	263/8500	177/7200	506kg*	528	2.9	-	-	150	+ Better power-to-weight ratio than a Veyron - Until you add the driver	★★★★★
Caterham Seven R500	200 F	'99-'06	4/1796	230/8600	155/7200	460kg*	510	3.4	3.6	8.8	146	+ The K-series Seven at its very best - No cup holders	★★★★★
Dallara Stradale	267 F	£162,000	4/2300	394/6200	369/3000	855kg*	468	3.3	-	-	174	+ Startling on-road performance - Can leave you feeling detached on track	★★★★★
Elemental Rpl (2.3)	255 F	£139,800	4/2261	320	354	620kg*	557	2.6	-	-	165	+ Sensational, explosive, captivating, exploitable - Price will test your level of commitment	★★★★★
Ferrari Portofino	247 F	£166,180	8/3855	592/7500	560/3000	1664kg	366	3.5	-	-	199+	+ Better than the California - Not better than a DB11 Volante	★★★★★
Honda S2000	243 F	'99-'09	4/1997	237/8300	153/7500	1260kg	191	6.2	-	-	150	+ An alternative and rev-happy roadster - A Boxster's better	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type Convertible P450	271 D	£75,470	8/5000	444/6000	428/2500	1660kg	272	4.6	-	-	177	+ Strong and flexible supercharged V8 - Steering and chassis feel mismatched	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type Project 7	212 F	'15	8/5000	567/6500	501/2500	1585kg	363	3.9	-	-	186	+ Noise, performance, adjustability - Expensive, and not the GT3 rival we would have liked	★★★★★
KTM X-Bow GT	183 D	£95,880	4/1984	281/6400	310/3200	875kg	326	4.1	-	-	144	+ Extraordinary ability, now in a more road-friendly package - Price	★★★★★
KTM X-Bow R	165 F	£87,480	4/1984	296/6300	295/3300	816kg	369	3.9	-	-	144	+ Sharper handling, more power - Pity it's not even lighter, and cheaper	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Club Racer (S3)	183 F	'11-'15	4/1598	134/6800	118/4400	852kg	160	6.5	-	-	127	+ Even lighter, even more focused than a standard 1.6 Elise - Are you prepared to go this basic?	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Sport 220 (S3)	244 F	£41,695	4/1798	217/6800	184/4600	904kg	244	4.6	-	-	145	+ Perfect power-to-weight ratio - A bit short on creature comforts	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Sprint 220 (S3)	254 F	'18-'19	4/1798	217/6800	184/4600	878kg	251	4.5	-	-	145	+ Makes the most of its lightness - Heavyweight price	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S Club Racer (S3)	189 D	'13-'15	4/1798	217/6800	184/4600	905kg	244	4.6	-	-	145	+ Purist approach intensifies ability - Lightest, option-free spec requires commitment	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Cup 250 (S3)	279 F	£49,595	4/1798	245/7200	184/3500	931kg	267	3.9	-	-	154	+ As effective, enjoyable and essential as ever - Prioritises grip over adjustability	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Cup 260 (S3)	243 F	'18-'19	4/1798	250/7200	195/5500	926kg	282	4.2	-	-	151	+ Quickest Elise yet - Just 30 were built	★★★★★
Lotus Elise Sport 135 (S2)	040 D	'03	4/1796	135/6200	129/4850	726kg	189	5.4	-	-	129	+ One of our fave S2 Elises - Brakes need more bite and pedal feel	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S (S2)	104 F	'06-'10	4/1794	134/6200	127/4200	860kg	158	6.1	6.3	18.7	127	+ Brilliant entry-level Elise - Precious little	★★★★★
Lotus Elise 111S (S2)	049 F	'02-'04	4/1796	156/7000	129/4650	860kg	197	5.1	-	-	131	+ A genuinely useable Elise - Air-con? In an Elise?	★★★★★
Lotus Elise SC (S2)	131 F	'08-'11	4/1794	218/8000	156/5000	870kg	254	4.6	4.5	11.4	145	+ All the usual Elise magic - Supercharged engine lacks sparkle	★★★★★
Lotus Elise (S1)	235 F	'96-'01	4/1796	118/5500	122/3000	731kg	164	5.9	6.1	18.5	126	+ A modern classic - A tad impractical?	★★★★★
Lotus 3-Eleven	220 F	'16-'17	6/3456	410/7000	302/3000	925kg*	450	3.4	-	-	174	+ A fantastically exciting Lotus - If not exactly a groundbreaking one	★★★★★
Lotus 3-Eleven 430	248 F	'17-'19	6/3456	430/7000	325/4500	920kg*	475	3.2	-	-	180	+ A fitting send-off for a brilliant Lotus - Just 20 were made	★★★★★
Lotus 2-Eleven	126 F	'07-'11	4/1796	189/7800	133/6800	720kg	267	4.5	-	-	140	+ Not far off the supercharged 2-Eleven's pace - You want the supercharged one, don't you?	★★★★★
Lotus 2-Eleven Supercharged	123 F	'07-'11	4/1796	252/8000	179/7000	745kg	344	4.0	-	-	150	+ Impressive on road and track - Not hardcore enough for some	★★★★★
Lotus 340R	126 F	'00	4/1796	190/7800	146/5000	701kg	275	4.5	4.5	12.5	126	+ Hardcore road-racer... - that looks like a dune buggy from Mars	★★★★★
Maserati GranCabrio MC	185 D	£112,400	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1973kg	234	4.9	-	-	179	+ Most powerful GranCabrio yet - The GranCabrio is starting to show its age	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5.1.5 (Mk4)	230 F	£23,795	4/1496	129/7000	111/4800	975kg	134	8.3	-	-	127	+ Lightest MX-5 since the Mk1 - Lacks intensity	★★★★★



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MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (ON 1 FEBRUARY 2021)	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMPEE)	0-60MPH (UNCLAMPEE)	0-100MPH (100FT)	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Mazda MX-5 2.0 (Mk4, 184PS)	268 F	£28,395	4/1998	181/7000	151/4000	1030kg	178	6.5	-	-	136	+ At last, a more powerful factory MX-5 - It's still no fireball	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 RF 2.0 (Mk4, 184PS)	256 F	£30,295	4/1998	181/7000	151/4000	1073kg	171	6.8	-	-	137	+ As above, but with a retracting hard-top - Which adds weight	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 2.0 (Mk4)	228 F	'15-18	4/1998	158/6000	147/4600	1000kg	161	7.3	-	-	133	+ Brilliant basic recipe - The desire for stiffer suspension and more power	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 2.0i Sport Tech (Mk3.5)	212 F	'09-15	4/1999	158/7000	139/5000	1098kg	146	7.6	-	-	138	+ Handles brilliantly again; folding hard-top also available - Less-than-macho image	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 1.8i (Mk3)	091 F	'05-09	4/1798	124/6500	123/4500	1080kg	108	9.3	-	-	122	+ Gearchange, interior - Lost some of the charm of old MX-5s; dubious handling	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 1.8i (Mk2)	017 F	'98-05	4/1839	146/7000	124/5000	1065kg	140	8.5	-	-	123	+ Affordable ragtops don't get much better - Cheap cabin	★★★★☆
Mazda MX-5 1.6 (Mk1)	268 F	'89-97	4/1597	115/6500	100/5500	971kg	120	8.8	-	-	114	+ The original and still (pretty much) the best - Less than rigid	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG SLC43	222 D	£47,600	6/2996	362/5500	383/2000	1520kg	242	4.7	-	-	155	+ Twin-turbo V6 well-suited to baby roadster - But also highlights the chassis' age	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG SL63	228 D	£116,430	8/5461	577/5500	664/2250	1770kg	331	4.1	-	-	155	+ Effortless performance - Needs more involvement to go with the pace	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG GT Roadster	239 F	£111,360	8/3982	469/6000	465/1700	1595kg	299	4.0	-	-	188	+ An AMG GT with added fresh air - Ride and handling go slightly to pieces on UK roads	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG GT C Roadster	235 D	£140,660	8/3982	549/5750	501/1900	1660kg	336	3.7	-	-	196	+ As above but with more shove - Road noise can get wearing on long journeys	★★★★☆
Mercedes-AMG GT R Roadster	218 F	£178,675	8/3982	577/6250	516/2100	1635kg	359	3.6	-	-	197	+ Spectacular engine, engaging dynamics - Structural compromise of Roadster body	★★★★☆
Morgan 3 Wheeler	198 F	£31,140	2/1976	82/5250	103/3250	525kg*	159	6.0	-	-	115	+ Quirky, characterful, brilliant - Can become a two-wheeler if you push too hard	★★★★☆
Morgan Plus Four	279 F	£62,995	4/1998	255/5500	258/1000	1013kg*	256	5.2	-	-	149	+ Compelling blend of old and new - Busy, almost old-fashioned ride on bumpy roads	★★★★☆
Morgan Plus Six	269 F	£77,995	6/2998	335/6500	369	1075kg*	317	4.2	-	-	166	+ Rapid, exciting, and a bit of a hooligan - Interior could feel more special	★★★★☆
Morgan Plus 8 50th Anniversary Edition	253 D	'18-19	8/4799	367/6300	370/3600	1100kg*	339	4.5	-	-	155	+ V8 performance and sound, driver involvement - Getting flies in your teeth	★★★★☆
Morgan Aero 8	105 F	'01-10	8/4799	362/6300	361/3400	1180kg*	312	4.5	-	-	170	+ Glorious sound, view over bonnet, dynamics - Awkward-looking rear	★★★★☆
Morgan Aero GT	255 F	'18	8/4799	367/6300	370/3400	1180kg*	316	4.5	-	-	170	+ The ultimate Aero - The last with the naturally aspirated BMW V8	★★★★☆
Porsche 718 Boxster	224 D	£45,935	4/1988	296/6500	280/1950	1335kg	225	5.1	-	-	170	+ Chassis as good as ever - Four-cylinder's tuneless din would be hard to live with	★★★★☆
Porsche 718 Boxster S	222 F	£54,891	4/2497	345/6500	310/1900	1355kg	259	4.6	4.4	9.8	177	+ Still sensationally capable - Turbo four-cylinder engine lacks appeal of the old flat-six	★★★★☆
Porsche 718 Boxster GTS	249 T	'18-19	4/2497	360/6500	310/1900	1375kg	266	4.6	-	-	180	+ The best four-pot Boxster spec - Doesn't come cheap	★★★★☆
Porsche 718 Boxster GTS 4.0	271 D	£66,340	6/3995	394/7000	310/5000	1405kg	285	4.5	-	-	182	+ It's got the Cayman GT4 six-cylinder, minus 200rpm - Gearshift not as crisp as the GT4's	★★★★☆
Porsche 718 Spyder	272 F	£73,405	6/3995	414/7600	310/5000	1420kg	296	4.4	-	-	187	+ Essentially a drop-top Cayman GT4 - Including its long gearing	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster (981)	238 F	'12-16	6/2706	261/6700	206/4500	1310kg	202	5.8	-	-	164	+ Goes and looks better than the 987 Boxster - Shame about the electric steering	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster S (981)	186 F	'12-16	6/3436	311/6700	265/4500	1320kg	239	5.1	-	-	173	+ Boxster steps out of 911's shadow - But gets 911's less appealing electric steering	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster GTS (981)	203 D	'14-16	6/3436	325/6700	273/4500	1345kg	246	5.0	-	-	174	+ Superb dynamics, fantastic engine, great looks - Sport suspension is very firm	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster Spyder (981)	232 F	'15-16	6/3800	370/6700	310/4750	1315kg	286	4.5	-	-	180	+ An even faster, even more rewarding Boxster - Feedback trails the Cayman GT4's	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster S (987)	161 F	'05-12	6/3436	306/6400	266/5500	1355kg	229	5.3	-	-	170	+ Second-gen Boxster's as brilliant as ever - It's a typically Porsche redesign	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster Spyder (987)	277 F	'10-12	6/3436	316/7200	273/4750	1275kg	252	4.9	-	-	166	+ Lighter, more driver-centric Boxster - Collapsed-brolly roof not the most practical	★★★★☆
Porsche Boxster S (986)	070 F	'99-04	6/3179	256/6200	229/4600	1320kg	200	5.7	-	-	164	+ Added power over the non-S Boxster is seductive - Very little	★★★★☆
Porsche 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet (992)	262 D	£109,725	6/2981	444/6500	391/2300	1600kg	282	4.4	-	-	188	+ Performance, handling, useability - It's no lightweight; body not as stiff as the coupe's	★★★★☆
Porsche 911 Targa 4S (992)	277 D	£109,725	6/2981	444/6500	391/2300	1640kg	275	4.4	-	-	189	+ Distinctive; driving experience is barely touched - You can't get a rear-drive Targa	★★★★☆
Radical Rapture	274 F	£108,000	4/2261	360/6000	360/3500	765kg*	478	3.0	-	-	165	+ Unfiltered and utterly addictive - It's more at home on the track than the road	★★★★☆
Renault Sport Spider	231 F	'96-99	4/1998	148/6000	136/4500	930kg	157	6.5	-	-	131	+ Rarity; unassisted steering - Heavier than you'd hope; disappointing engine	★★★★☆
Rolls-Royce Dawn	222 D	£264,000	12/6592	563/5250	575/1500	2560kg	223	4.9	-	-	155	+ Effortless driving experience - Driver involvement not a priority	★★★★☆
Toyota MR2 (Mk3)	258 F	'00-06	4/1794	138/6400	125/4400	975kg	141	8.0	7.2	21.2	131	+ Tight lines, taut dynamics - Minimal luggage space	★★★★☆
TVR Tamora	070 F	'01-07	6/3605	350/7200	290/5500	1060kg	335	4.2	-	-	175	+ Well-sorted soft-top TVR - Awkward styling	★★★★☆
TVR Chimaera 5.0	258 F	'93-03	8/4997	320/5500	320/3750	1060kg	307	4.4	-	-	167	+ Gorgeous noise, tarmac-rippling grunt - Details	★★★★☆
TVR Griffith 4.3	068 F	'92-93	8/4280	280/5500	305/4000	1040kg	274	4.4	4.8	11.2	155	+ The car that made TVR. Cult status - Mere details	★★★★☆
TVR Griffith 500	009 F	'93-01	8/4997	320/5500	320/4000	1060kg	307	4.1	-	-	167	+ Gruff diamond - A few rough edges	★★★★☆
Vauxhall VX220	023 F	'00-04	4/2198	145/5800	150/4000	875kg	168	5.9	-	-	136	+ Absurdly good Vauxhall - The badge?	★★★★☆
Vauxhall VX220 Turbo	066 F	'03-05	4/1998	197/5500	184/1950	930kg	215	4.9	-	-	151	+ Nothing comes close for the money - Marginal everyday usability	★★★★☆
Vuhl 05	220 F	£59,995	4/2000	285/5600	310/3000	725kg	405	3.7	-	-	152	+ Impressive pace and quality - You can get a more thrills from a Caterham at half the price	★★★★☆

## COUPES / GTs



## OUR CHOICE

**Porsche 718 Cayman GT4.** With a naturally aspirated flat-six, a manual gearbox, extraordinary damping and fulsome feedback, the second GT4 is even better than the original and laughs in the face of turbocharged engines, automatic transmissions and monster power outputs.



## BEST OF THE REST

The **BMW M2 CS** (left) was our 2020 Car of the Year winner and runs the 2019 champ – the Cayman GT4 – incredibly close. The **Alpine A110** gives the regular **Porsche 718 Cayman** a true rival to worry about, the **Aston Martin Vantage** is a genuine 911 beater, and the **Lotus Exige** continues to go from strength to strength in every form.

Alfa Romeo 4C	209 F	'13-19	4/1742	237/6000	258/2200	895kg*	269	4.5	-	-	160	+ Carbonfibre tub, mini-supercar looks - Hot hatch engine, clunky gearbox	★★★★☆
Alfa Romeo 8C Competizione	120 F	'07-09	8/4691	450/7000	354/4750	1585kg	288	4.2	-	-	181	+ Looks, exclusivity, noise, balance - Cost more now than they did new	★★★★☆
Alpine A110	270 F	£48,140	4/1798	249/6000	236/2000	1103kg	229	4.5	4.6	10.8	155	+ Fast, fun and genuinely different - If only it had a manual gearbox	★★★★☆
Alpine A110S	268 D	£57,140	4/1798	288/6400	236/2000	1114kg	263	4.4	-	-	161	+ Firmer and faster - But not necessarily better	★★★★☆
Alpine A610 Turbo	273 F	'91-95	6/2975	247/5750	258/2900	1420kg	177	5.7	-	-	166	+ Better than the contemporary 911 Carrera - Rare then, rarer now	★★★★☆
Aston Martin Vantage	280 F	£124,400	8/3982	503/6000	505/2000	1530kg*	334	3.6	4.5	9.1	195	+ Performance that's a huge leap forward - Chassis struggles when really pushed	★★★★☆
Aston Martin Vantage AMR	268 F	£149,995	8/3982	503/6000	461/2000	1499kg*	341	4.0	-	-	195	+ Manual gearbox, more-focused chassis - For a hefty premium	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V8 Vantage (4.3)	251 F	'05-07	8/4280	380/7000	302/5000	1630kg	237	5.0	5.2	12.0	175	+ Gorgeous, awesome soundtrack - Can't quite match a 911 dynamically	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V8 Vantage (4.7)	169 D	'08-16	8/4735	420/7000	346/5750	1630kg	262	4.8	-	-	180	+ Still feels special - But also a little dated	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V8 Vantage S	168 F	'11-17	8/4735	430/7300	361/5000	1610kg	271	4.8	-	-	190	+ Keener engine, V12 Vantage looks - Slightly sluggish auto only	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V8 Vantage N430	218 F	'14-16	8/4735	430/7300	361/5000	1610kg	271	4.8	-	-	189	+ Malleable, involving - Never feels rampantly quick	★★★★☆
Aston Martin Vantage GT8	274 F	'16-17	8/4735	440/7300	361/5000	1530kg	292	4.4	-	-	190	+ Enough drama to fill a Netflix mini-series - Just 150 made	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V12 Vantage	264 F	'09-13	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1680kg	308	4.2	4.4	9.7	190	+ The car we hoped the V8 Vantage would be - Erm, a tad thirsty?	★★★★☆
Aston Martin V12 Vantage S	238 F	'13-17	12/5935	563/6650	457/5500	1665kg	344	3.9	-	-	205	+ Amongst the best Astons ever made - Old-school automated 'box (so get the manual)	★★★★☆
Aston Martin Vantage GT12	214 F	'15-16	12/5935	592/7000	461/5500	1565kg	384	3.5	-	-	185	+ The GT3-style Vantage we waited so long for - Only 100 made	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DB11 V8	253 T	£144,900	8/3982	503/6000	498/2000	1685kg	303	4.0	-	-	187	+ Potent and characterful engine; sharper chassis than V12 - Do we still need the V12?	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DB11	235 F	'17-18	12/5204	600/6500	516/1500	1800kg	339	3.9	4.0	8.1	200	+ A great GT - Suffers in outright handling terms as a result	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DB11 AMR	269 F	£174,995	12/5204	630/6500	516/1500	1795kg	357	3.7	-	-	208	+ A more potent, better controlled V12 DB11 - Still at its best when it isn't trying too hard	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DB9 GT	214 D	'15-17	12/5935	540/6750	457/5500	1785kg	307	4.5	-	-	183	+ More power, still has bags of character - Needs an eight-speed auto 'box	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DB9	178 F	'04-16	12/5935	510/6500	457/5500	1785kg	290	4.6	-	-	183	+ A great start to Gaydon-era Astons - Automatic gearbox could be quicker	★★★★☆
Aston Martin DBS	142 F	'07-12	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1695kg	306	4.3	-	-	191	+ Stupendous engine, gearbox, brakes - Pricey; can bite the unwary	★★★★☆
Audi TTS (Mk3)	261 D	£44,610	4/1984	302/5400	295/2000	1405kg	218	4.5	-	-	155	+ Exceptional grip and traction - Excitement fades after the first few corners	★★★★☆
Audi TTS RS (Mk3)	249 F	£53,905	5/2480	394/5850	354/1700	1450kg	276	3.7	3.5	8.7	155	+ Soundtrack; tremendous point-to-point pace - A bit one-dimensional in the long run	★★★★☆
Audi TTS (Mk2)	193 F	'08-14	4/1984	268/6000	258/2500	1395kg	195	5.4	-	-	155	+ A usefully quicker TT, with a great drivetrain - Still steers like a computer game	★★★★☆
Audi TT RS (Mk2)	158 F	'09-14	5/2480	335/5400	332/1600	1450kg	235	4.7	4.4	11.1	155	+ Sublime five-cylinder turbo engine - Rest of package can't quite match it	★★★★☆
Audi TT RS Plus (Mk2)	185 D	'12-14	5/2480	355/5500	343/1650	1450kg	249	4.3	-	-	174	+ Stokingly fast cross-country - Shockingly expensive for a TT	★★★★☆
Audi S5	252 F	'17-19	6/2995	349/5400	369/1370	1615kg	220	4.7	-	-	155	+ Chassis rewards commitment... - but doesn't offer a challenge. Plain engine, too	★★★★☆
Audi RS5	240 F	£68,985	6/2894	444/5700	442/1900	1655kg	273	3.9	3.6	9.0	155	+ Lighter, quicker; makes green paint look good - Lacks the character of the old V8	★★★★☆
Audi RS5	206 F	'10-16	8/4163	444/8250	317/4000	1715kg	263	4.5	4.3	-	155	+ Brilliant engine and improved chassis - Lack of suspension travel; inconsistent steering	★★★★☆
Audi R8 V8	201 F	'07-15	8/4163	442/7900	317/4500	1560kg	276	4.6	4.1	9.9	188	+ A true 911 alternative - Exclusivity comes at a price	★★★★☆
Bentley Continental GT V8	280 F	£151,800	8/3993	542/6000	568/2000	2165kg	254	4.0	-	-	198	+ Pace, quality, polish - Some rivals offer greater outright dynamic prowess	★★★★☆
Bentley Continental GT	255 F	£156,700	12/5950	626/5000	664/1350	2244kg	283	3.7	-	-	207	+ Astonishing agility for such a big, heavy car - Thirst	★★★★☆





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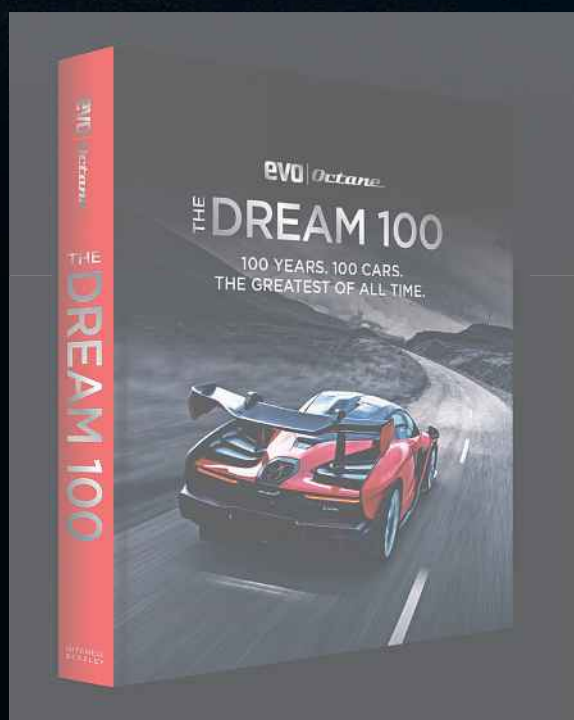


## MAKE &amp; MODEL

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (excl. VAT on MSRP)	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMOR)	0-60MPH (0-60)	0-100MPH (0-100)	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Bentley Continental GT V8	178 F	12-17	8/3993	500/6000	487/1700	2220kg	229	4.8	-	-	188	+ A proper driver's Bentley with decent economy - Makes the W12 seem pointless	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT V8 S	204 F	13-17	8/3993	521/6000	502/1700	2220kg	238	4.5	-	-	192	+ An even better driver's Bentley - Vast weight makes its presence felt in harder driving	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT	152 D	03-17	12/5998	567/6000	516/1700	2245kg	257	4.5	-	-	198	+ Near 200mph in utter comfort - Weight; W12's thirst	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Supersports	234 D	17	12/5998	700/6000	750/2050	2205kg	323	3.5	-	-	209	+ Massive performance, surprisingly agile - Styling and soundtrack far from discreet	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT3-R	203 D	14-17	8/3993	572/6000	518/1700	2120kg	274	3.8	-	-	170	+ The best-handling Continental of its generation - Expensive; it still weighs 2120kg	★★★★★
BMW 1-series M Coupé	277 F	11-12	6/2979	335/5900	369/1500	1495kg	228	4.9	-	-	155	+ Character, turbo pace and great looks - Came and went too quick	★★★★★
BMW M240i Coupé	229 D	£35,865	6/2998	335/6800	369/1520	1470kg	232	4.8	-	-	155	+ Adjustable and plenty of fun - Lacks finesse and precision	★★★★★
BMW M235i Coupé	225 F	14-16	6/2979	321/5800	332/1300	1455kg	224	5.0	5.2	12.7	155	+ Powertrain, chassis, looks, size - Limited-slip diff is an option, not standard	★★★★★
BMW M2	243 F	16-18	6/2979	365/6500	369/1450	1495kg	248	4.5	4.9	10.8	155	+ More progressive chassis balance than the M4 - Feels unsettled on rough tarmac	★★★★★
BMW M2 Competition	265 F	£49,805	6/2979	404/5250	406/2350	1550kg	265	4.4	-	-	155	+ A more capable and involving M2 - More expensive and heavier, too	★★★★★
BMW M2 CS	281 F	£75,355	6/2979	444/6250	406/2350	1550kg	291	4.2	-	-	155	+ evo Car of the Year 2020 - Such quality comes at a price	★★★★★
BMW M440i xDrive	282 D	£54,645	6/2998	369/5500	369/1900	1740kg	215	4.5	-	-	155	+ Punchy drivetrain with a chassis to match - That grille	★★★★★
BMW M4 (F82)	218 F	14-16	6/2979	425/5500	406/1850	1570kg	275	4.3	-	-	155	+ Ferociously fast - A handful on less-than-perfect or less-than-bone-dry roads	★★★★★
BMW M4 Competition (F82)	262 F	16-20	6/2979	444/7000	406/1850	1570kg	287	4.3	4.4	9.2	155	+ The car the M4 always should have been - Shame everyone specs DCT	★★★★★
BMW M4 CS (F82)	254 F	17-19	6/2979	454/6250	442/4000	1580kg	292	3.9	-	-	174	+ A further-honed M4 - It ain't cheap	★★★★★
BMW M4 GT5 (F82)	237 F	16	6/2979	493/6250	442/4000	1510kg	332	3.8	3.7	8.0	190	+ Vast improvement on lesser M4s - So it should be, given its price	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E92)	266 F	07-13	8/3999	444/8300	295/3900	1580kg	266	4.8	4.3	10.3	155	+ Fends off all of its rivals... - except the cheaper 1-series M Coupé	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E92)	262 F	10-11	8/4361	444/8300	324/3750	1530kg	295	4.4	-	-	190	+ One of the most focused M-cars ever - Good luck trying to find one	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E46)	266 F	00-07	6/3246	338/7900	269/5000	1495kg	230	5.2	5.1	12.3	155	+ One of the best BMWs ever. Runner-up in eCoty 2001 - Slightly artificial steering feel	★★★★★
BMW M3 CS (E46)	219 F	05-07	6/3246	338/7900	269/5000	1495kg	230	5.2	-	-	155	+ CSL dynamics without CSL price - Looks like the standard car	★★★★★
BMW M3 CSL (E46)	279 F	03-04	6/3246	355/7900	273/4900	1495kg	260	4.9	5.3	12.0	155	+ Still superb - Changes from the automated single-clutch 'box are... a bit... sluggish	★★★★★
BMW M3 Evolution (E36)	148 F	96-98	6/3201	317/7400	258/3250	1515kg	215	5.5	5.4	12.8	158	+ Performance, image - Never quite as good as the E30	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E30)	279 F	89-90	4/2302	212/6750	170/4600	165kg	185	6.7	6.7	17.8	147	+ The best M-car ever - Prices have got out of hand	★★★★★
BMW Z4 M Coupé	097 F	06-09	6/3246	338/7900	269/4900	1420kg	242	5.0	-	-	155	+ A real driver's car - You've got to be prepared to get stuck in	★★★★★
BMW M Coupé	263 F	98-03	6/3246	321/7400	261/4900	1375kg	237	5.3	-	-	155	+ Quick and characterful - Lacks finesse	★★★★★
BMW M840d xDrive	260 D	£76,270	6/2993	316/4400	501/1750	1830kg	175	4.9	-	-	155	+ Refinement, old-school GT credentials - Too big to enjoy its performance often	★★★★★
BMW M850i xDrive	256 F	£99,525	8/4395	523/5500	553/1500	1890kg	281	3.7	-	-	155	+ An impressive multi-role GT - But not a great entertainer	★★★★★
BMW M8 Competition	272 D	£123,435	8/4395	616/6000	553/1800	1885kg	332	3.2	-	-	155	+ A fast and fine grand tourer - Lacks that true M-car fizz	★★★★★
BMW M6 (F13)	218 F	12-18	8/4395	552/6000	501/1500	1850kg	303	4.2	-	-	155	+ Mighty ability, pace, technology - You'll want the Competition Package upgrade, too	★★★★★
BMW M6 (E63)	106 F	05-10	10/4999	500/7750	384/6100	1635kg	311	4.2	4.8	10.0	155	+ Awesome GT, awesome sports car - SMG gearbox now off the pace	★★★★★
BMW i8	210 F	£112,735	3/1499	369/5800	420/3700	1535kg	244	4.4	-	-	155	+ Brilliantly executed concept; sci-fi looks - Safe dynamic set-up	★★★★★
Chevrolet Camaro Z/28	220 F	14-16	8/7008	505/6100	481/4800	1732kg	296	4.2	-	-	175	+ Scalpel-sharp engine, great chassis (really) - Feels very stiff on UK roads	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette Stingray (C7)	197 F	13-19	8/6162	460/6000	465/4600	1496kg	312	4.2	4.4	9.4	180	+ Performance, chassis balance, supple ride - Body control could be better	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette Z06 (C7)	227 F	15-19	8/6162	650/6000	650/3600	1598kg	413	3.7	-	-	196	+ Mind-boggling raw speed; surprisingly sophisticated - Edgy when really pushed	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette Stingray Z51 (C8)	270 F	£64,995	8/6162	495/6450	470/5150	1530kg*	329	3.2	-	-	194	+ Stunning achievement for the first mid-engined Vette - There's untapped potential	★★★★★
Ford Mustang 2.3 EcoBoost	222 D	£38,035	4/2261	287/5600	332/3000	1655kg	176	6.4	-	-	145	+ Ninety per cent as good as the V8 - Missing ten per cent is what makes the Mustang	★★★★★
Ford Mustang 5.0 V8 GT	266 F	£41,430	8/4951	444/7000	393/4600	1743kg	259	4.9	-	-	155	+ 2018MY version gets improved dynamics - Still some way off Europe's finest	★★★★★
Ford Mustang Bullitt	255 D	£46,830	8/5038	453/7000	390/4600	176kg	259	4.9	-	-	163	+ Proper H8 sound and performance - Still feels big and heavy near the limit	★★★★★
Ford Mustang Shelby GT500	271 D	£72,900	8/5163	760/7300	625/5000	1916kg	403	3.3	-	-	180	+ A 760bhp Stang with a chassis to (almost) match its engine - Only on sale in the States	★★★★★
Honda Integra Type R (DC2)	259 F	£96,000	4/1797	187/8000	131/7300	1103kg	173	6.7	6.2	17.9	145	+ Arguably the greatest front-drive car ever - Too raw for some	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type P300	271 D	£54,060	4/1997	296/5500	295/1500	1520kg	198	5.7	-	-	155	+ Genuinely exploitable performance - Turbocharged four-cylinder lacks top-end verve	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type P450	-	£69,990	8/5000	444/6000	428/2500	1660kg	272	4.6	-	-	177	+ Strong and flexible supercharged V8 - Steering and chassis feel mismatched	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type R (RWD)	218 F	14-17	8/5000	542/6500	501/3500	1650kg	334	4.2	-	-	186	+ eCoty runner-up in 2014 - Bumpy and boisterous	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type R (P575 AWD)	271 D	£97,280	8/5000	567/6500	516/3500	1743kg	331	3.5	-	-	186	+ More composed than before; now with SVR power - Eye-watering price	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type SVR	224 D	16-19	8/5000	567/6500	516/3500	1705kg	338	3.7	-	-	200	+ A marginally better drive than the AWD R - Not by enough to justify the extra outlay	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR-S	168 F	11-14	8/5000	542/6000	502/2500	1753kg	314	4.4	-	-	186	+ Faster and wilder than regular XKR - The F-type R	★★★★★
Jannarely Design-1	279 F	£85,969	6/3498	321	274	950kg	343	3.9	-	-	135	+ Genuinely good sports car that stands out from the crowd - May be too quirky for some	★★★★★
Lexus RC F	226 F	£61,310	8/4969	470/6400	391/4800	1765kg	271	4.3	-	-	168	+ Great looks, noise, sense of occasion - Too heavy to be truly exciting	★★★★★
Lexus LC 500h	241 D	£76,595	6/3456	354	-	1985kg	181	5.0	-	-	168	+ Excellent comfort and refinement; fine chassis - Hybrid system hurts the fun factor	★★★★★
Lexus LC 500	231 D	£76,595	8/4969	470/7100	398/4800	1935kg	247	4.7	-	-	168	+ Glorious engine, rewarding chassis for a GT car - Numb steering, messy ergonomics	★★★★★
Lister Thunder	247 D	£139,950	8/5000	666/6000	720/5940	1650kg	410	3.2	-	-	208	+ Deceptively fast reworked F-type - Never feels as ferocious as the figures suggest	★★★★★
Lotus Exige S (V6)	209 F	12-15	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1176kg	298	3.8	-	-	170	+ Breathtaking road-racer; our joint evo Car of the Year 2012 - Gearshift not the sweetest	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Sport 350	221 F	£62,375	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1125kg	312	3.9	-	-	170	+ Further honed Exige, with vastly improved gearshift - Still not easy to get into and out of	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Sport 380	231 F	16-18	6/3456	375/6700	302/5000	110kg	343	3.7	-	-	178	+ Intense, absorbing and brilliantly capable - Perhaps not an everyday car	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Cup 380	240 D	17	6/3456	375/6700	302/5000	1105kg	345	3.6	-	-	175	+ An absolute riot; feels worth the £83k (new) price tag - Limited build numbers	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Sport 410	252 F	£82,675	6/3456	410/7000	310/3500	110kg	375	3.4	-	-	180	+ A first-rate swansong for this generation of Exige - Some may balk at the price	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Cup 430	253 F	£103,375	6/3456	430/7000	325/2600	1093kg	400	3.3	-	-	180	+ The ultimate Exige - Isn't cheap	★★★★★
Lotus Exige S (S2)	253 F	06-11	4/1796	218/7800	158/5500	930kg	238	4.3	-	-	148	+ Lightweight with a hefty punch - Uninspiring soundtrack	★★★★★
Lotus Exige (S1)	200 F	00-01	4/1796	192/7800	146/5000	780kg	247	4.6	-	-	136	+ Looks and goes like an Elise racer - A tad lacking in refinement	★★★★★
Lotus Evora	257 F	09-15	6/3456	276/6400	258/4700	1382kg	203	5.1	5.6	13.6	162	+ Sublime ride and handling, evo Car of the Year 2009 - The Evora S	★★★★★
Lotus Evora S	168 F	10-15	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1430kg	245	4.8	-	-	172	+ A faster and better Evora - But one which spars with the Porsche 911	★★★★★
Lotus Evora 400	216 F	15-18	6/3456	400/7000	302/3500	1395kg	299	4.2	-	-	186	+ Evora excitement levels take a leap - Gearbox still not perfect	★★★★★
Lotus Evora Sport 410	230 F	17	6/3456	410/7000	310/3500	1325kg	314	4.2	-	-	190	+ Even lighter and sharper Evora - Engine and gearbox behind the best at this price	★★★★★
Lotus Evora GT410	278 F	£85,675	6/3456	410/7000	295/3500	1361kg	306	4.2	-	-	186	+ Fully immersive driving experience - V6 has its limitations	★★★★★
Lotus Evora GT410 Sport	261 F	£88,675	6/3456	410/7000	295/3500	1361kg	306	4.2	-	-	186	+ As above, without the creature comforts - Too pared back for most tastes	★★★★★
Lotus Evora GT430	246 F	18	6/3456	430/7000	325/4500	1299kg	336	3.8	-	-	190	+ Genuine race-car feel on the road - It wasn't cheap, and just 60 were made	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo Sport	188 F	£93,145	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1880kg	245	4.8	-	-	186	+ A real sense of occasion to drive; wonderful engine - Rather long in the tooth	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo MC	239 D	£109,740	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1873kg	246	4.7	-	-	187	+ As above but with knobs on - Those knobs don't make it feel any younger	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo	114 F	07-17	8/4244	399/7100	339/4750	1880kg	156	5.2	5.5	12.7	177	+ Striking, accomplished GT - Doesn't spike the pulse like an Aston or 911	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo MC Stradale	193 F	11-17	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1800kg	256	4.5	-	-	188	+ Brilliant blend of road racer and GT - Gearbox takes a little getting used to	★★★★★
Mazda RX-8	122 F	03-11	2R/1308	228/8200	156/5500	1429kg	162	6.4	6.5	16.4	146	+ Never mind the quirkiness, it's a great drive - Wafer-thin torque output; thirsty	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG C43 Coupé	251 T	£50,010	6/2996	385/6100	383/2500	1675kg	234	4.7	-	-	155	+ Fast and instilled with a real sense of quality - Not enough emphasis on fun	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG C63 S Coupé (W205)	262 F	£78,078	8/3982	503/5500	516/2000	1745kg	293	3.9	-	-	180	+ Mouth-watering mechanical package - Light steering; hefty kerb weight	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Coupé (W204)	162 F	11-14	8/6208	451/6800	442/5000	1655kg	277	4.5	4.4	10.3	155	+ A proper two-door M3 rival - C63 saloon looks better to most	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Black Series (W204)	171 F	12-13	8/6208	510/6800	457/5200	1635kg	317	4.2	-	-	186	+ The C63 turned up to 11 - Too heavy; not as fiery as Black Series cars of old	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CLK63 AMG Black Series	277 F	07-09	8/6208	500/6800	464/5250	1760kg	289	4.2	-	-	186	+ AMG goes Porsche-hunting - Dull-witted gearshift spoils the party	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG S63 Coupé	251 D	£127,555	8/3982	604/5500	664/2750	1990kg	308	4.2	-	-	155	+ Near-silent progress meets full-blown riot - Don't go thinking it's a GTR	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG S65 Coupé	209 D	£188,550	12/5980	621/4800	731/2300	210kg	299	4.1	-	-	186	+ Almighty power, fabulous luxury - Nearly £60k more than the S63!	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG GT	227 D	£99,960	8/3982	469/6000	465/1700	1540kg	309	4.0	-	-	189	+ A true sports coupe that also does luxury - Takes time to reveal its talents	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG GT S	216 F	£113,260	8/3982	515/6250	494/1800	1570kg	333	3.8	-	-	193	+ Fantastic chassis, huge grip - Artificial steering feel; downshifts could be quicker	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG GT C	241 D	£129,260	8/3982	549/5750	501/1900	1625kg	343	3.7	-	-	196	+ As good at being a GT as it is a sports coupe - Difficult to drive fast and smoothly	★★★★★
Mitsubishi 3000GT	-	'90-'99	6/2972	282/6000	300/3000	179kg	167	5.8	-	-	159	+ Looks the business, loaded with gizmos - Doesn't do the business	★★★★★
Nissan 370Z	204 F	£29,870	6/3696	323/7									



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MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (£1000 IN 2010)	ENGINE CYL/CC	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH (CLAMOR)	0-60MPH (1/10 SEC)	0-100MPH (1/10 SEC)	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Nissan GT-R (2010MY)	252 F	'10-'12	6/3799	523/6400	451/3200	1740kg	305	3.0	-	-	194	+ More powerful version of the original - But they're not worlds apart to drive	★★★★★
Nissan GT-R (2008MY)	257 F	'08-'10	6/3799	473/6400	434/3200	1740kg	276	3.8	-	-	193	+ evo Car of the Year 2008 - You won't see 200mpg often	★★★★★
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R34)	265 F	'99-'02	6/2568	276/7000	289/4400	1560kg	180	4.8	4.7	12.5	165	+ Big, brutal, and great fun - Needs more than the standard 276bhp	★★★★★
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R33)	196 F	'97-'99	6/2568	276/6800	271/4400	1540kg	182	4.9	5.4	14.3	155	+ Early proof that Japanese high-tech could work (superbly) - Limited supply	★★★★★
Peugeot RCZ R	209 F	'14-'15	4/1598	266/6000	243/1900	1280kg	211	5.9	-	-	155	+ Rewarding and highly effective when fully lit - Dated cabin, steering lacks feel	★★★★★
Polestar 1	269 D	£139,000	4/1969	592/6000	737	2350kg	256	4.2	-	-	155	+ One of the most appealing hybrids yet - It's left-hand-drive only, and jolly expensive	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman	229 D	£44,074	4/1988	296/6500	280/2150	1335kg	225	5.1	-	-	170	+ Chassis remains a dream - Sounds like a Toyota GT86	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman T	270 F	£51,145	4/1988	296/6500	280/2150	1350kg	223	5.1	-	-	170	+ A further-honed 2-litre Cayman - Flat-four soundtrack still disappoints	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman S	249 F	£53,030	4/2497	345/6500	310/2100	1355kg	259	4.6	3.9	9.3	177	+ Faster and better to drive than ever - Bring earplugs	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman GTS	260 F	'17-'19	4/2497	360/6500	310/2100	1375kg	266	4.6	-	-	180	+ Cracking package of upgrades - Have we mentioned the engine...?	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman GTS 4.0	281 F	£64,480	6/3995	394/7000	310/5000	1405kg	285	4.5	-	-	182	+ Ninety per cent of the GT4's magic - Can feel a little too capable and polished at times	★★★★★
Porsche 718 Cayman GT4	277 F	£75,780	6/3995	414/7600	310/5000	1420kg	296	4.4	-	-	188	+ evo Car of the Year 2019 - Long gearing isn't ideal for road driving	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman S (981)	202 F	'13-'16	6/3436	321/7400	273/4500	1320kg	247	5.0	4.5	10.5	175	+ The Cayman comes of age - Erm...	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman GTS (981)	219 F	'14-'16	6/3436	335/7400	280/4750	1345kg	253	4.9	-	-	177	+ Tweaks improve an already sublime package - Slightly 'aftermarket' looks	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman GT4 (981)	265 F	'15-'16	6/3800	380/7400	310/4750	1340kg	288	4.4	-	-	183	+ evo Car of the Year 2015 (even though the 991 GT3 RS was there!) - Second-hand prices	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman S (987)	231 F	'06-'13	6/3436	316/7200	273/4750	1350kg	237	5.2	-	-	172	+ Still want that 911? - Yeah, us too	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman R (987)	158 F	'11-'13	6/3436	325/7400	273/4750	1295kg	255	5.0	-	-	175	+ Total handling excellence - Styling additions not to all tastes	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (992)	278 F	£82,795	6/2981	380/6500	332/1950	1505kg	257	4.2	-	-	182	+ Fast, composed and comfortable - We're waiting for the manual version	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (992)	282 D	£94,350	6/2981	444/6500	391/1700	1480kg	305	4.2	-	-	191	+ An immaculately polished machine - Lacks character unless wrung out	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera 4S (992)	261 F	£99,925	6/2981	444/6500	391/1700	1530kg	295	4.2	-	-	190	+ Terrifically exciting when driven hard - You'll reach some big numbers when doing so	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (991.2)	218 F	'16-'18	6/2981	365/6500	332/1700	1430kg	259	4.6	-	-	183	+ Forced induction didn't ruin the Carrera - Purists won't be happy	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera T (991.2)	264 F	'17-'18	6/2981	365/6500	332/1700	1425kg	260	4.5	-	-	182	+ Lightweight windows, no rear seats, an LSD... - Only 5kg lighter than a basic Carrera	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (991.2)	217 F	'16-'18	6/2981	444/6500	369/1700	1440kg	292	4.3	-	-	191	+ Blindingly fast - You'll want the sports exhaust	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera GTS (991.2)	238 F	'17-'19	6/2981	444/6500	406/2150	1450kg	311	4.1	-	-	193	+ Everything a 911 Carrera should be - Costs nearly £20k more than a basic Carrera	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (991.1)	201 F	'12-'15	6/3800	394/7400	324/5600	1415kg	283	4.5	4.3	9.5	188	+ A Carrera with supercar pace - Electric steering robs it of some tactility	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (997.2)	121 F	'08-'11	6/3800	380/6500	310/4400	1425kg	271	4.7	-	-	188	+ Poise, precision, blinding pace - Feels a bit clinical	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (997.1)	249 F	'04-'08	6/3824	350/6600	295/4600	1420kg	246	4.6	-	-	182	+ evo Car of the Year 2004 - Do your homework on potential engine issues	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (996, 3.4)	249 F	'98-'01	6/3387	300/6800	258/4600	1320kg	231	5.2	-	-	174	+ The first evo Car of the Year, and it still stacks up today - Might feel a smidge dated	★★★★★
Rolls-Royce Wraith	205 D	£240,768	12/6592	624/5600	590/1500	2360kg	260	4.6	-	-	155	+ Refinement, chassis, drivetrain - Shared componentry lets cabin down	★★★★★
Subaru BRZ	248 F	£31,995	4/1998	197/7000	151/6400	1230kg	163	7.6	-	-	140	+ Fine chassis, great steering - Weak engine, not the slide-happy car they promised	★★★★★
Toyota GT86	266 F	£27,830	4/1998	197/7000	151/6400	1240kg	161	7.6	6.9	16.5	140	+ More fun than its Subaru BRZ cousin - Same lack of torque, poor interior quality	★★★★★
Toyota GR Supra	269 F	£54,340	6/2998	335/5000	369/1600	1495kg	228	4.3	-	-	155	+ Better than its BMW Z4 cousin - Not better than an M2 Competition	★★★★★
Toyota MR2 (Mk1)	237 F	'84-'89	4/1587	122/6600	105/5000	977kg	127	8.2	-	-	124	+ Mid-engined fun comes no more affordable - Finding a good one will take time	★★★★★
TVR Sagaris	265 F	'05-'07	6/3996	406/7000	349/5000	1078kg	383	3.7	-	-	185	+ Looks outrageous - 406bhp feels a touch optimistic	★★★★★
TVR Tuscan S (Mk2)	076 F	'05-'07	6/3996	400/7000	315/5250	1100kg	369	4.0	-	-	185	+ Possibly TVR's best ever car - Aerodynamic enhancements	★★★★★
TVR Cerbera Speed Six	004 F	'98-'04	6/3996	350/6800	330/5000	1130kg	315	4.4	5.0	11.4	160+	+ Accomplished and desirable - When it's running	★★★★★

## SUPERCARS / HYPERCARS



### OUR CHOICE

**McLaren 765LT.** Runner-up at evo Car of the Year 2020, where it finished ahead of the Lamborghini Huracán Evo RWD and Ferrari F8 Tributo, the 765 melds mind-boggling pace with a remarkably talented chassis and sublime steering to deliver another unforgettable Longtail experience.



### BEST OF THE REST

The **Lamborghini Huracán Evo RWD** (left) is Sant'Agata's V10 model at its most desirable, while the **Ferrari F8 Tributo** takes Maranello's mid-engined V8 line to a new state of the art. The **Audi R8 V10** remains a corking entry-level supercar, and the latest **Porsche 911 Turbo S** is the most accomplished of its kind for a very long time.

Aston Martin DBS Superleggera	264 F	£225,000	12/5204	715/6500	664/1800	1770kg	410	3.4	-	-	211	+ Broad spread of talents - It's not really 'Superlight'	★★★★★
Aston Martin DBS Superleggera Volante	273 F	£247,500	12/5204	715/6500	664/1800	1863kg*	390	3.6	-	-	211	+ Dazzling looks, immense performance - Width and weight bring compromises	★★★★★
Aston Martin Vanquish S (Mk2)	260 F	'17-'18	12/5935	595/7000	465/5500	1739kg	348	3.5	3.9	8.3	201	+ Noise, poise, drama and charm - Not as rounded as the DB11	★★★★★
Aston Martin Vanquish S (Mk1)	110 F	'05-'07	12/5935	520/7000	425/5800	1875kg	282	4.8	4.9	10.1	200	+ Vanquish joins the supercar greats - A tad intimidating at the limit	★★★★★
Aston Martin One-77	179 F	'10-'12	12/7312	750/6000	553/7600	1740kg	438	3.7	-	-	220+	+ The engine, the looks, the drama - Gearbox hates manoeuvring; only 77 were made	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 RWD	273 F	£117,325	10/5204	533/7900	398/6400	1595kg	340	3.7	-	-	199	+ More affordable than a 4WD R8 - But not more entertaining	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10	261 F	£131,130	10/5204	562/8100	413/6300	1660kg	344	3.4	-	-	201	+ Beats the 992 Carrera - Could be the last of its kind	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 Performance	256 D	£144,130	10/5204	611/8250	428/6500	1595kg	389	3.1	-	-	205	+ Stunning V10; approachable performance - Optional Dynamic steering feels unnatural	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 RWS (Mk2)	254 F	'17-'19	10/5204	533/7800	398/6500	1590kg	341	3.7	-	-	199	+ The first rear-wheel-drive Audi for 40 years - Drives largely like its 4WD counterpart	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 (Mk2)	234 F	'15-'19	10/5204	533/7800	398/6500	1640kg	330	3.5	-	-	198	+ All the R8 you really need - You can't get a manual gearbox	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 Plus (Mk2)	250 F	'15-'19	10/5204	602/8250	413/6500	1580kg	387	3.2	2.9	6.3	205	+ Timeless drivetrain, huge performance - Sometimes seems ordinary at steady speeds	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 (Mk1)	254 F	'09-'15	10/5204	518/8000	391/6500	1620kg	325	4.1	3.9	8.4	194	+ Real supercar feel - The V8 is cheaper, and still superb	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 Plus (Mk1)	190 F	'13-'15	10/5204	542/8000	398/6500	1570kg	351	3.8	-	-	198	+ An R8 fit to take on the 458 and 12C - Firm ride may be too much for some	★★★★★
Bugatti Chiron	244 F	£252.5m	16/7993	1479/6700	1180/2000	1995kg	753	2.5	-	-	261	+ Backs up the numbers with feel and emotion - Limited top speed(!)	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron 16.4	134 F	'05-'11	16/7993	987/6000	922/2200	1888kg	531	2.5	2.8	5.8	253	+ Superbly engineered four-wheel-drive quad-turbo rocket - Er, lacks luggage space?	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Super Sport	151 F	'10-'11	16/7993	1183/6400	1106/3000	1838kg	654	2.5	-	-	258	+ Was once the world's fastest supercar - Limited to 258mph for us mere mortals	★★★★★
Bugatti EB110	078 F	'91-'95	12/3500	552/8000	451/3750	1618kg	347	3.6	-	-	213	+ Superbly engineered four-wheel-drive quad-turbo rocket - It just fizzled out	★★★★★
Ferrari Roma	278 D	£170,984	8/3855	611/5750	560/3000	1570kg	395	3.4	-	-	199+	+ Not far off being a front-engined F8 - Choosing between a Roma and an F8	★★★★★
Ferrari F8 Tributo	281 F	£203,476	8/3902	710/8000	568/3250	1435kg	503	2.9	-	-	211	+ Ferrari's best series-production V8 ever - The next one could be a hybrid	★★★★★
Ferrari F8 Spider	276 D	£225,897	8/3902	710/8000	568/3250	1400kg*	515	2.9	-	-	211	+ As above, with a folding hard-top - Some may prefer McLaren's 720S Spider	★★★★★
Ferrari 488 GTB	228 F	'15-'19	8/3902	661/6500	561/3000	1475kg	455	3.0	-	-	205+	+ Staggeringly capable - Lacks a little of the 458's heart and excitement	★★★★★
Ferrari 488 Pista	262 F	£253,715	8/3902	710/8000	568/3000	1385kg	521	2.9	-	-	211+	+ Searingly fast and effortlessly capable - Takes a while to fully appreciate it	★★★★★
Ferrari 488 Pista Spider	263 F	£278,850	8/3902	710/8000	568/3000	1485kg	486	2.9	-	-	211	+ As above, but with wind in your hair - As above	★★★★★
Ferrari 458 Italia	221 F	'09-'15	8/4497	562/9000	398/6000	1485kg	384	3.4	3.2	6.8	202+	+ An astounding achievement - Paddleshift only	★★★★★
Ferrari 458 Speciale	274 F	'13-'15	8/4497	597/9000	398/6000	1395kg	435	3.0	-	-	202+	+ evo Car of the Year 2014 - If you don't own a regular 458, nothing	★★★★★
Ferrari F430	254 F	'04-'10	8/4308	483/8500	343/5250	1449kg	339	4.0	-	-	196+	+ Just brilliant - Didn't you read the plus point?	★★★★★
Ferrari 430 Scuderia	274 F	'07-'10	8/4308	503/8500	347/5250	1350kg	378	3.6	3.5	7.7	198	+ Successful F1 technology transplant - Likes to shout about it	★★★★★
Ferrari 360 Modena	163 F	'99-'04	8/3586	394/8500	275/4750	1390kg	288	4.5	-	-	183+	+ Worthy successor to 355 - Not quite as involving as it should be	★★★★★
Ferrari 360 Challenge Stradale	274 F	'03-'04	8/3586	420/8500	275/4750	1280kg	333	4.1	-	-	186	+ Totally exhilarating road-racer - Automated single-clutch 'box dates it	★★★★★
Ferrari F355 Berlinetta	231 F	'94-'99	8/3496	374/8250	268/6000	1350kg*	281	4.7	-	-	183	+ Looks terrific, sounds even better - Are you kidding?	★★★★★
Ferrari 348 GT Competizione	274 F	'93	8/3404	316/7200	239/5000	1180kg*	276	5.0	-	-	175	+ Utterly absorbing, with exceptional dynamics - Steering a little woolly	★★★★★
Ferrari 812 Superfast	275 F	£262,963	12/6496	789/8500	529/7000	1630kg	492	2.9	3.1	6.2	211	+ Incredible engine - Finding opportunities to exploit it	★★★★★
Ferrari 812 GT	280 F	£230,000	12/6496	789/8500	529/7000	1645kg*	487	3.0	-	-	211+	+ A brilliant return for the front-engined V12 Ferrari Spider - There won't be many more	★★★★★
Ferrari F12 Berlinetta	275 F	'12-'17	12/6262	730/8250	509/6000	1630kg	455	3.1	-	-	211+	+ 730bhp isn't too much power for the road - Super-quick steering is an acquired taste	★★★★★
Ferrari F12tdf	230 F	'17	12/6262	769/8500	520/6250	1520kg	514	2.9	-	-	211+	+ Alarmingly fast - Doesn't flow like a 458 Speciale	★★★★★
Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano	275 F	'06-'12	12/5999	611/7600	448/5600	1690kg	368	3.7	3.5	7.4	205	+ evo Car of the Year 2006 - Banks are getting harder to rob	★★★★★
Ferrari 599 GTO	161 F	'11-'12	12/5999	661/8250	457/6500	1605kg	418	3.4	-	-	208+	+ One of the truly great Ferraris - Erm, the air con isn't very good	★★★★★
Ferrari 575M Fiorano Handling Pack	200 F	'02-'06	12/5748	508/7250	434/5250	1688kg	298	3.7	4.2	9.6	205+	+ Fiorano pack makes 575 truly great - It should have been standard	★★★★★
Ferrari 550 Maranello	275 F	'96-'02	12/5474	478/7000	420/5000	1690kg	287	4.4	-	-	199	+ Everything - Nothing	★★★★★
Ferrari GT4 Lusso T	246 D	'17-'20	8/3855	602/7500	560/3000	1865kg	328	3.5	-	-	199	+ Effortless, comfortable GT - Misses the richer soundtrack of the V12	★★★★★
Ferrari GT4 Lusso	264 F	'16-'20	12/6262	680/8000	514/5750	1920kg	360	3.4	-	-	208	+ Rear-wheel steering increases agility - Not as engaging as other Ferraris	★★★★★





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## MAKE &amp; MODEL

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE NO.	PRICE (ON ROAD IN £)	ENGINE CV/L	BHP/RPM	LB FT/RPM	WEIGHT	BHP/TON	0-62MPH SEC	0-60MPH FEET	0-100MPH FEET	MAX MPH	EVO RATING	
Ferrari FF	194 F	'11-'15	12/6262	651/8000	504/6000	1880kg	347	3.7	-	-	208	+ Four seats and 4WD, but a proper Ferrari - Looks divide opinion	★★★★★
Ferrari 612 Scaglietti	090 F	'04-'11	12/5748	533/7250	434/5250	1875kg	289	4.0	4.3	9.8	199	+ Awesomely capable grand tourer - See above	★★★★★
Ferrari SF90 Stradale	277 F	'13-'15	8/3990	986/7500	-	1570kg*	638	2.5	-	-	211	+ Hugely impressive series-production hypercar - Hybrid turbo V8 no match for a V12	★★★★★
Ferrari LaFerrari	203 F	'13-'15	12/6262	950/9000	664/6750	1574kg	413	3.0	-	-	217+	+ Perhaps the greatest Ferrari ever - Brakes lack a touch of precision on track	★★★★★
Ferrari Enzo	275 F	'02-'04	12/5999	651/7800	485/5500	1365kg	485	3.7	3.5	6.7	217+	+ Intoxicating, exploitable - Cabin detailing falls short of a Zonda or F1's	★★★★★
Ferrari F50	275 F	'95-'97	12/4699	513/8500	347/6500	1230kg*	424	3.9	-	-	202	+ A better driver's Ferrari than the 288, F40 or Enzo - Not better looking, though	★★★★★
Ferrari F40	275 F	'87-'92	8/2936	471/7000	426/4000	1100kg*	437	4.1	-	-	201	+ Brutally fast - It's in the dictionary under 'turbo lag'	★★★★★
Ford GT	253 F	\$450,000	6/3497	647/6250	550/5900	1385kg*	475	2.8	-	-	216	+ Everything it does on track - Too many of the things it does on the road	★★★★★
Ford GT	200 F	'04-'06	8/5409	550/6500	500/3750	1583kg	353	3.9	-	-	205	+ evo Car of the Year 2005 - Don't scalp yourself getting in	★★★★★
Honda NSX	270 F	£144,765	6/3493	573	476/2000	1776kg	328	2.9	3.0	6.9	191	+ Blisteringly quick and brilliantly engineered - Limited range on a full tank	★★★★★
Honda NSX (NA2)	188 F	'97-'05	6/3179	276/7300	224/5300	1410kg	196	5.7	-	-	168	+ The original useable supercar - 276bhp sounds a bit weedy today	★★★★★
Honda NSX-R (NA2)	100 F	'02-'03	6/3179	276/7300	224/5300	1270kg	221	4.4	-	-	168	+ evo Car of the Year 2002 - Hard to find in the UK	★★★★★
Jaguar XJ220	157 F	'92-'94	6/3498	542/7200	475/4500	1470kg	375	3.7	-	-	213	+ Britain's greatest supercar... - ...until McLaren built the F1	★★★★★
Koenigsegg One:1	202 F	c£2.0m	8/5065	1341/7500	1011/6000	1360kg	1002	2.9	-	-	273	+ One of the most powerful cars we've tested - It's sold out. We couldn't afford one anyway	★★★★★
Koenigsegg Agera R	180 F	'11-'14	8/5032	1124/7100	885/2700	1435kg	796	2.8	-	-	273	+ As fast and exciting as your body can handle - It's Veyron money	★★★★★
Koenigsegg CCRX Edition	118 F	'08-'10	8/4800	1004/7000	796/5600	1280kg*	797	2.9	-	-	250+	+ One of the world's fastest cars - Spiky power delivery	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán Evo RWD	281 F	£164,400	10/5204	602/8000	443/6500	1389kg*	440	3.3	-	-	202	+ The most complete Huracán yet - Prescriptive driver modes still frustrate	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán Evo	264 F	£198,307	10/5204	631/8000	442/6500	1422kg*	451	2.9	-	-	202+	+ Performante engine, trick chassis - Badly needs an 'Ego' mode for road driving	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán Evo Spyder	269 F	£218,137	10/5204	631/8000	442/6500	1542kg*	416	3.1	-	-	202	+ Drop-top driving enhances that epic V10 - Being mistaken for a King's Road poser	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán RWD	229 F	'16-'19	10/5204	572/8000	397/6500	1389kg*	385	3.4	-	-	199	+ More seductive than the 4WD Huracán - Feels like there's more to come	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán	209 D	'14-'19	10/5204	602/8250	413/6500	1422kg*	430	3.2	-	-	201+	+ Defies the numbers: incredible point-to-point pace - Takes work to find its sweet-spot	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán Performante	242 F	'17-'19	10/5204	631/8000	442/6500	1382kg*	464	2.9	-	-	201+	+ The realisation of the Huracán's ever elusive potential - Kitchen-worktop carbonfibre	★★★★★
Lamborghini Huracán Performante Spyder	253 D	'18-'19	10/5204	631/8000	442/6500	1507kg*	425	3.1	-	-	201+	+ As above, but even louder for the driver - Not for the shy and retiring	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo LP550-2 Balboni	138 F	'09-'10	10/5204	542/8000	398/6500	1380kg*	399	3.9	-	-	199	+ Mad, rear-wheel-drive Lambo - Limited numbers	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4	180 D	'08-'13	10/5204	552/8000	398/6500	1410kg*	398	3.7	-	-	202	+ Still a missile from A to B - Feels a little dated next to some rivals	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo LP570-4 Superleggera	152 F	'10-'13	10/5204	562/8000	398/6500	1340kg*	426	3.4	3.5	-	202	+ Less weight and more power than original Superleggera - LP560-4 runs it very close	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo	094 F	'03-'08	10/4961	513/8000	376/4250	1430kg*	364	4.0	4.3	9.4	196	+ On a full-bore start it spins all four wheels. Cool - Slightly clunky e-gear	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador	194 F	'11-'17	12/6498	690/8250	509/5500	1575kg*	445	2.9	-	-	217	+ Most important new Lambo since the Countach - Can feel a little clumsy	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador S	246 F	£271,146	12/6498	730/8400	509/5500	1575kg*	471	2.9	-	-	217	+ A more agile, more connected Aventador - Synthetic steering	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador S Roadster	251 D	£301,754	12/6498	730/8400	509/5500	1625kg*	456	3.0	-	-	217	+ As dynamic as the coupe - Fiddly and (very) expensive roof	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador SV	216 F	'15-'17	12/6498	740/8400	509/5500	1525kg*	493	2.8	-	-	217+	+ More exciting than the standard Aventador - ISR gearbox inconsistent	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador SVJ	282 F	£360,000	12/6498	759/8500	531/6750	1525kg*	506	2.8	-	-	218	+ A significant step on from the SV - Have we mentioned the gearbox?	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador SVJ Roadster	268 D	£387,987	12/6498	759/8500	531/6750	1575kg*	490	2.9	-	-	218	+ Increased exposure to that V12 - Next time it'll have electric assistance	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago LP640	275 F	'06-'11	12/6496	631/8000	487/6000	1665kg*	385	3.8	-	-	211	+ Compelling old-school supercar - You'd better be on your toes	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago LP670-4 SV	200 F	'09-'11	12/6496	661/8000	487/6500	1565kg*	429	3.3	3.2	7.3	212	+ A supercar in its truest, wildest sense - Be prepared for stares	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago	089 D	'01-'06	12/6192	572/7500	479/5400	1650kg*	351	4.0	-	-	206	+ Gorgeous, capable and incredibly friendly - V12 feels stressed	★★★★★
Lamborghini Diablo 6.0	275 F	'00-'02	12/5992	543/7100	457/5500	1625kg*	343	3.9	-	-	208	+ Best-built, best-looking Diablo of all - People's perceptions	★★★★★
Lexus LFA/LFA Nürburgring	200 F	'10-'12	10/4805	552/8700	354/6800	1480kg	379	3.7	-	-	202	+ Absurd and compelling supercar - Badge and price don't quite match	★★★★★
Lotus Esprit Sport 350	171 F	'99-'01	8/3506	349/6500	295/4250	1299kg	274	4.3	-	-	175	+ Lotus's pukka V8-powered supercar - Weight of that V8 makes it more intimidating	★★★★★
McLaren 540S	250 F	£127,890	8/3799	533/7500	398/3500	1311kg*	413	3.5	3.2	6.4	199	+ An excellent junior supercar - The 570S is still better to drive	★★★★★
McLaren 570S	229 F	£149,000	8/3799	562/7500	443/5000	1452kg	393	3.2	-	-	204	+ A truly fun and engaging sports car - McLaren doesn't call it a supercar!	★★★★★
McLaren 570GT	261 F	£157,000	8/3799	562/7500	443/5000	1498kg	381	3.4	-	-	204	+ Blurs the line between grand tourer and supercar brilliantly - 570S is more involving	★★★★★
McLaren 600LT	257 F	£185,500	8/3799	592/7500	457/5500	1356kg	444	2.9	-	-	204	+ evo Car of the Year 2018 - There's no glovebox	★★★★★
McLaren 600LT Spider	273 F	£201,500	8/3799	592/7500	457/5500	1404kg	428	2.9	-	-	201	+ All the brilliance of the coupe - And all the acoustic sophistication	★★★★★
McLaren 620R	268 F	£250,000	8/3799	611/7500	457/5500	1386kg	448	2.9	-	-	200	+ A true 911 GT3 RS rival - The GT3 RS has a more scintillating engine	★★★★★
McLaren GT	271 F	£163,000	8/3994	612/7500	465/5500	1530kg	406	3.2	-	-	203	+ Fiery performance; refinement - Don't expect a 720S to emerge on a great road	★★★★★
McLaren 720S	262 F	£208,600	8/3994	710/7250	568/5500	1419kg	508	2.9	2.9	5.6	212	+ evo Car of the Year 2017 - Favours precision over emotion	★★★★★
McLaren 720S Spider	261 F	£237,000	8/3994	710/7250	568/5500	1468kg	491	2.9	-	-	212	+ Every bit as ballistic as the coupe - But a fraction less precise	★★★★★
McLaren 765LT	281 F	£280,000	8/3994	754/7500	590/5500	1339kg	572	2.8	-	-	205	+ Intense, extreme, insane - How much do you value your driving licence?	★★★★★
McLaren 650S	196 F	'14-'17	8/3799	641/7250	500/6000	1428kg	456	3.0	-	-	207	+ Better brakes, balance and looks than 12C; more power too - Which all comes at a price	★★★★★
McLaren 675LT	248 F	'15-'17	8/3799	666/7100	516/5500	1328kg	510	2.9	-	-	205	+ Fun and blisteringly fast; a true rival for the 911 GT3 - A touch showy, perhaps	★★★★★
McLaren 12C	264 F	'11-'14	8/3799	616/7500	442/3000	1434kg	435	3.3	-	-	207	+ Staggering performance, refinement - Engine noise can be grating	★★★★★
McLaren Senna	252 F	£750,000	8/3999	789/7250	590/5500	1198kg*	669	2.8	-	-	211	+ Astounding performance, stellar presence - Only 500 being made	★★★★★
McLaren P1	276 F	'13-'15	8/3799	903/7500	664/4000	1490kg	616	2.8	-	-	217	+ Freakish breadth of ability - At its mind-bending best on track	★★★★★
McLaren P1	228 F	'94-'98	12/6064	627/7500	479/4000	1138kg	560	3.2	-	-	240	+ Still the most single-minded supercar ever - The air con was a bit weak	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG GT R	2611	£148,595	8/3982	571/6250	516/2100	1575kg	372	3.6	3.3	7.1	198	+ Fun and blisteringly fast; a true rival for the 911 GT3 - A touch showy, perhaps	★★★★★
Mercedes-AMG GT R Pro	269 F	£188,345	8/3982	571/6250	516/2100	1561kg	376	3.6	-	-	198	+ A GT R fine-tuned for the track - A 911 GT3 RS has the edge	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG	264 F	'10-'15	8/6208	563/6800	479/4750	1620kg	335	3.9	4.1	8.4	197	+ Great engine and chassis (gulling doors too!) - Slightly tardy gearbox	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Black Series	204 F	'13-'15	8/6208	622/7400	468/5500	1550kg	408	3.6	-	-	196	+ Stunning engine, superb body control - Be careful on less-than-smooth roads...	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren	228 F	'03-'07	8/5439	617/6500	575/3250	1693kg	370	3.8	-	-	208	+ Zonda-pace, 575-style drivability - Dreadful brake feel	★★★★★
Noble M600	186 F	c£200,000	8/4439	650/6800	604/3800	1198kg*	551	3.5	3.8	7.7	225	+ Spiritual successor to the Ferrari F40 - It's a bit pricey	★★★★★
Pagani Huayra	185 F	c£1m	12/5980	720/5800	731/2250	1350kg*	542	3.3	-	-	224	+ Joint evo Car of the Year 2012 - Engine isn't as nape-prickling as the Zonda's	★★★★★
Pagani Zonda S T3	096 F	'02-'05	12/7291	555/5900	553/4050	1280kg*	441	3.7	-	-	220	+ evo Car of the Year 2001 (in earlier 7.0 form) - Values have gone up a fair bit since then	★★★★★
Pagani Zonda F	186 F	'05-'06	12/7291	602/6150	575/4000	1230kg*	497	3.6	-	-	214+	+ Everything an Italian supercar ought to be - Looks a bit blingy next to a Carrera GT	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (991.2)	256 F	'17-'19	6/3996	493/8250	339/6600	1413kg	355	3.9	-	-	198	+ Almost impossible to criticise - Wasn't the easiest car to place an order for	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Speedster (991.2)	263 F	'19	6/3996	503/8400	347/6250	1465kg	349	4.0	-	-	192	+ Essentially a topless GT3 - Only 1948 were made	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (991.2)	278 F	'18-'20	6/3996	513/8250	347/6000	1430kg	364	3.2	-	-	193	+ Even better than the 991.1 RS - Demand exceeded supply	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT2 RS (991.2)	257 F	'18-'19	6/3800	690/7000	553/2500	1470kg	477	2.8	-	-	211	+ A proper, angry turbocharged Porsche - Limited availability	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (991.1)	206 F	'13-'16	6/3799	468/8250	324/6250	1430kg	333	3.5	-	-	196	+ evo Car of the Year 2013 - PDK only	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (991.1)	223 F	'15-'16	6/3996	493/8250	339/6250	1420kg	353	3.3	3.0	7.1	193	+ Sensationally good to drive - The Cayman GT4 is even better	★★★★★
Porsche 911 R (991.1)	229 F	'16	6/3996	493/8250	339/6250	1370kg	366	3.8	-	-	200	+ evo Car of the Year 2016 - Limited availability	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (997.2)	182 F	'09-'11	6/3797	429/7600	317/6250	1395kg	312	4.1	4.2	9.2	194	+ Even better than the car it replaced - Give us a minute...	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (3.8, 997.2)	248 F	'10-'11	6/3797	444/7900	317/6750	1370kg	329	4.0	-	-	193	+ We named it our favourite car from the first 200 issues of evo - For people like us, nothing	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS 4.0 (997.2)	274 F	'11-'12	6/3996	493/8250	339/5750	1360kg	368	3.8	-	-	193	+ evo Car of the Year 2011 - Unforgiving on-road ride; crazy used prices	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT2 RS (997.2)	204 F	'10-'13	6/3600	611/6500	516/2250	1370kg	453	3.5	-	-	205	+ More powerful than a Carrera GT. Handles, too - Erm...	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (997.1)	182 F	'07-'09	6/3600	409/7600	298/5500	1395kg	298	4.3	4.3	9.4	192	+ Runner-up at evo Car of the Year 2006 - Ferrari 599 GTBs	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (997.1)	112 F	'07-'09	6/3600	409/7600	298/5500	1375kg	302	4.2	-	-	193	+ evo Car of the Year 2007 - A chunk more money than the already brilliant GT3	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (996.2)	221 F	'03-'05	6/3600	375/7400	284/5000	1380kg	272	4.5	4.3	9.2	190	+ evo Car of the Year 2003 - Chassis a bit too track-focused for some roads	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (996.2)	068 F	'04-'05	6/3600	375/7400	284/5000	1360kg	280	4.4	-	-	190	+ An even more focused version of the superb GT3 - Limited supply	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT2 (996.2)	072 F	'04-'06	6/3600	475/5700	472/3500	1420kg	338	4.0	-	-	198	+ Revisions made it even more of a star than the 456bhp 996.1 GT2 - Care still required	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (996.1)	266 F	'99-'01	6/3600	360/7200	273/5000	1350kg	271	4.8	4.5	10.3			





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# BuyaCar Buying Guide: Ferrari 488 GTB

A low-mileage 488 can be a Ferrari bargain, and BuyaCar can help you find one

**P**ORSCHE'S 911 MIGHT BE THE BEST-known recipient of constant evolutionary improvement, but Ferrari's mid-engined V8 line is equally worthy of recognition. Ever since the much-maligned 348 of the 1989-95, Maranello has tirelessly tweaked and evolved its core model into one of the world's best supercars.

The F8 Tributo has recently taken over that mantle from its 488 predecessor, but the 488 was a perfect example of this evolutionary path, being a careful reworking of the 458 that had come before. Meeting the needs of both emissions regulations and customers seeking ever greater performance, Ferrari took the step of turbocharging the 458's follow-up, while also carefully tweaking the car's electronics to make it more useable than ever.

What the 488 undoubtedly lost in aural appeal

(it had the misfortune of following the 458 Speciale with its shrieking naturally aspirated motor) it gained in usability, with a miraculous ability to smother bumps with its Bumpy Road mode, and an even more mind-bending ability to let a distinctly non-heroic driver carve fourth-gear drifts on track thanks to the latest iteration of Side Slip Control.

The 488 GTB was, as you'd hope, rather beautiful too, and was joined first by a Spider and then by a more track-focused variant, the Pista, but even in basic form it secured fourth place in 2015's *evo* Car of the year test – one better than its F8 successor managed in 2020.

The relentless pace of development means that as some gravitate towards the newer F8, the 488's position in the used market begins to shift, too.

Ferrari caters for buyers of older models with long

warranties, comprehensive service plans and more besides, but for further peace of mind and ease of transaction there's also the option to buy through BuyaCar, with its HPI checks, 14-day money-back guarantee and preferred delivery dates.

What did we find? A 2017 488 Spider in Rosso Dino – another step in the spectrum towards orange from the TV-friendly Rosso Scuderia – with a subtle charcoal leather and Alcantara cabin, contrasting yellow brake calipers and tasteful silver-painted wheels. Having covered only 295 miles since 2017 it's effectively new, but at £190,095 including a £300 contribution, or £2716 per month, it undercuts a brand-new zero-options F8 Spider by a good £35,000. You're not losing out much in terms of the way it drives either. Put a private registration on there and few will be any the wiser...

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## Morgan to Montlhéry

*How subterfuge and guile saved the day on a photoshoot at the former home of the French Grand Prix*

ISSUE 145 OF EVO (JULY 2010) WAS dominated by the McLaren F1, celebrating 20 years of the famous three-seater. But this meant a feature celebrating a record-breaking three-wheeler flew a little under the radar. However, driving a Morgan Aero SuperSports to Montlhéry remains one of my most memorable road trips. Largely because it was very nearly a complete waste of time.

The old circuit lies to the south of Paris and I remember it being a lovely sunny summer's drive down from Calais. Photographer Matt Howell and I decided that we would avoid the autoroutes and stick to the D and N classifications, blasting along the mostly straight roads with the side-exit exhausts growling away. We got lost because we were using a map. We also spent some time in a Carrefour car park trying to disassemble and pack away the two removable roof sections.

All of which meant that it was early evening when we arrived at L'autodrome de Linas-Montlhéry. Thoughts of making the most of the lovely 'golden hour' light died with the abruptness of a race engine, however, when we saw the entrance. It was clearly not like those other historic French circuits Reims and

Le Mans, which you can freely wander around large portions of. This had a tall fence with some aggressive barbed wire, while the entrance was barred by a red and white pole and a guard with a military flavour. Turns out the place had been France's equivalent of Millbrook (with which it actually merged in 2020) for the last 50 years and was used for manufacturer and military testing. Guests were about as welcome as a dog in a cattery.

*Merde* was, I think, the *mot juste*, and my French didn't extend much beyond that. Still, I rolled up my GCSE linguistic sleeves and strolled over to the youngish chap wearing khaki. It wasn't the most flowing of conversations, but I let him make the running and made sure to smile and nod in what I thought were the right places. As such, I didn't tell a lie, I perhaps just failed to furnish him with the truth...

You see, he thought that the splendidly curvaceous car we had arrived in was part of some filming that was already taking place on the circuit that evening. So he let us in. Matt and I expected to hear a shout from behind us as we drove in, but none came. We had no idea how long we'd have before we were discovered, but we tried to steer clear of any

CCTV and make the most of the opportunity.

'I'd barely heard of the place before we went there,' recalls Matt, 'but I remember being blown away by the scale of it. It was magnificent and rather monumental.'

It's an 8-mile circuit in total, but we stuck mostly to the area around the banked oval, where a Morgan three-wheeler had broken speed records in the 1920s (and now famous as the scene of Ken Block's *Gymkhana 3*, which was filmed there later in the same year we visited). In an hour Matt managed the incredible feat of shooting enough to fill a nine-page feature. Any other people we saw in the distance we gave a cheery but nonchalant wave to on the principle of looking like we were meant to be there.

Once the photos were in the bag we hid the memory cards in case we were stopped, then took a drive around the rest of the circuit, at which point we stumbled upon the film set that our friendly guard had assumed we were part of. Not daring to stop, we simply breezed right through the middle. You can't sneak when you're propelled by a 4.8-litre V8, so we waved at the catering truck, smiled at the stars and nodded to the director before hoping to hell that nobody raised the alarm before we made it back to the exit.

We could see the guard was on the phone as we approached the barrier and thoughts of breakfast in the Bastille vied with calculations as to what percentage of the car would fit under the striped pole. Then, miraculously, the barrier lifted. About a mile later we began to laugh and I think we chuckled most of the way to Calais.



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 X5M/X6M F85 » 730+BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
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 M135i / M235i » 410+BHP  
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 C43 / E43 / GLC43 AMG » 480+BHP  
 C63 / 63S 4.0T AMG » 624+BHP  
 C63 6.3 AMG » 530+BHP  
 C63 AMG 5.5 Bi-TURBO  
 (ALL MODELS) » 700+BHP  
 55 AMG KOMPRESSOR » 600+BHP  
 S65 » 780BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
 SL65 / BLACK SERIES » 720BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
 220 CDI (ALL MODELS) » 230BHP  
 250 CDI (ALL MODELS) » 260BHP  
 C300E » 350BHP  
 CLS400D / E400D » 400BHP  
 350 CDI (ALL MODELS) » 315BHP

### ALL 2019 RANGE ROVERS AVAILABLE

RR 50SC / SVO / SVR STAGE1 » 600+BHP  
 RR 50SC / SVO / SVR STAGE2 » 650+BHP  
 2.2 D (ALL MODELS) » 220+BHP  
 2.0 TD4 / SD4 (ALL MODELS) » 225 / 265BHP  
 VELAR 30Si6 » 420BHP  
 RR 4.4 TDV8 » 395 BHP  
 RR TDV6 / SDV6 3.0D » 305 / 350 BHP  
 DEFENDER 2.2 » 180BHP

### PORSCHE

992 TURBO S » IN DEVELOPMENT  
 992 CARRERA / S » 570+ BHP  
 991.2 GT2 RS » 780+BHP  
 991 TURBO / S (ALL MODELS) » 750+BHP  
 991 GT3 RS 4.0 » 525/540 BHP  
 997 CARRERA GTS » 435 BHP  
 991.2 CARRERA / S -  
 (ALL MODELS) » 500+BHP  
 991.2 CARRERA GTS -  
 (ALL MODELS) » 540+BHP  
 997 TURBO 3.6 » 625+ BHP  
 996 TURBO/GT2 » 670+ BHP  
 997 GT2 RS » 670+ BHP  
 997 TURBO / S 3.8 INC PDK » 611 BHP  
 997.2 GT3 RS » 480 BHP  
 996 TURBO/GT2 » 600+ BHP  
 BOXSTER / CAYMAN 718S / GTS » 420+BHP  
 BOXSTER / CAYMAN 718 » 380+BHP  
 BOXSTER / CAYMAN 981 GT4 » 430+BHP  
 BOXSTER / CAYMAN 981 GTS » 375+BHP  
 CAYENNE TURBO 4.8 -  
 (ALL MODELS) » 650+ BHP  
 CAYENNE 4.2 DIESEL » 450+ BHP  
 CAYENNE / MACAN 3.0 DIESEL » 320+ BHP  
 MACAN 3.0T S » 445+BHP  
 MACAN TURBO 2.9T » 525+BHP  
 PANAMERA 971 4.0 TURBO » 700+ BHP  
 PANAMERA 971 4.0T SE HYBRID » 800+ BHP  
 PANAMERA 971 2.9T HYBRID » 650+ BHP

### EXOTIC / MISC

WRAITH / DAWN » 720+BHP  
 FERRARI 488 PISTA » 780+BHP  
 FERRARI 488 » 750+BHP  
 FERRARI PORTOFINO » 680+BHP  
 FERRARI LUSSO T » 710+BHP  
 FERRARI CALI T » 680BHP  
 FERRARI F12 » 780+BHP  
 FERRARI 430 » 525 BHP  
 MCLAREN MP4 /650S » 720 BHP  
 MCLAREN 675LT » 750BHP  
 MCLAREN 570/S » 680+BHP  
 MCLAREN 600LT » 680+BHP  
 MCLAREN 720S » 840+BHP  
 MCLAREN SENNA » 875+BHP  
 AVENTADOR » 750+BHP  
 HURACAN LP610 » 650BHP  
 BENTLEY 4.0 T V8 » 700+BHP  
 BENTLEY GT W12 » 700+BHP  
 BENTLEY SUPERSPORT 2018 » 780+BHP  
 BENTAYGA V8 DIESEL » 510+BHP  
 BENTAYGA V8 40T » 700+BHP  
 BENTLEY GT 2020 V8 40T » 700+BHP  
 MASERATI 3.0S PETROL » 470 BHP  
 MASERATI 3.0 DIESEL » 312 BHP

### FURTHER OPTIONS

As well as installing the above engine tunes, we are able to further individualise your car with additional features. Some of which are shown here. Contact us for further details.



Exhaust tuning  
(Cracks & pops)



Customized  
driving modes



Gearbox  
tuning



Sport dials  
calibration



Exhaust  
butterfly control



**MORE  
BHP  
EQUALS  
LESS  
RPM  
EQUALS  
MORE  
MPG**

  
 DESIGNED IN THE UK  
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# NEW CUPRA FORMENTOR.

LET YOUR HEART CHOOSE FOR ONCE.

YOU CAN CHOOSE THE STRAIGHT PATH, LIKE ALWAYS.  
IT'S EASIER, LESS TROUBLE. OR YOU CAN CHANGE  
COURSE AND CHOOSE ANOTHER WAY, ONE THAT YOU'D  
NEVER HAVE THOUGHT TO TAKE. AND IF THAT FEELS  
RIGHT, THE NEW CUPRA FORMENTOR IS FOR YOU.

DRIVE ANOTHER WAY.

Official fuel consumption for the CUPRA Formentor range mpg (litres/100km):  
31.4 (9.0) – 44.8 (6.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 143-203 (g/km).

Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. Data correct at December 2020.

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