

Jaguar XKR

By Jim Mc Cauley

Jaguar's sporting XK range comprises a trio of engine options in either coupé or convertible bodystyles. Common power unit is the company's 5.0 litre V8 with a power output that varies from 385PS to 550PS.



Test choice was the mid-range XKR Coupé – its supercharger helping to take the power of the standard naturally aspirated engine to 510PS. This catapults the car to 60mph from rest in 4.6 seconds with its maximum speed capped at 155mph.

Compared to the brutality of the range-topping XKR-S, the power delivery in the XKR is much more refined and better delivered to the tarmac. There is a sense of being in unison with the car as opposed to facing the challenges of the XKR-S.

On home soil, the car copes superbly with twisting B roads, but ultimately there are frustrations as even a 70mph limit and fractured traffic flow constrain the car's potential. The 6-speed ZF automatic 'box steps authoritatively through the gears while competent chassis support is provided by a new computerised suspension system which can predict and respond to cornering roll rate according to the driver's steering inputs. The XKR also features an electronic differential which varies the torque delivered to each driven wheel according to conditions to maintain optimum traction and cornering stability. Gear selection is via the now traditional Jaguar central selection disc with steering wheel mounted paddles providing manual choice if desired.

Cabin is heavily leather clad with neat contrasting stitching which contributes to the car's sporting appeal, and two occasional rear seats provide minimal space to enable the car to be badged as a 2+2.

As expected, equipment levels are extremely high with safety provision extending to a pop-up bonnet which automatically rises to increase pedestrian protection in the event of contact. But despite the comprehensive specification there are sufficient options in terms of driving dynamics, exterior features and interior trim to allow owners to specify an individual model which would obviously extend the purchase price beyond its listed £78,550.





Externally, the XKR is distinguished by its bonnet air vents with ‘Supercharged’ script, a revised front spoiler, a boot finisher and 20-inch Nevis-style wheels.