



JAGUAR XK COUPE PORTFOLIO

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I Felt a lucky guy when Jaguar loaned me their XK Portfolio 2+2 coupe. It is a car I've always wanted to drive because it is a beautiful, sleek, sophisticated grand tourer with the heart of a true sports car.

Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder, and some may think there are better looking motors out there, but to me this is a car worth lusting after.

The exterior changes for the XK are highlighted by a distinctive front end design, LED rear lights and a stylish lower rear body valance. Revised body-coloured side power vents also give the car an air of aggression.

Get behind the wheel and you immediately notice the start button which throbs red, like a heartbeat. Then there's the JaguarDrive Selector - a rotary shift control which rises into your hand as the car is started. From there, automatic transmission functions are selected by turning the control with the fingertips. It couldn't be simpler. On the road, the sheer might of the 5.0-litre V8 engine is obvious. While maximum speed for my test car was under electronic control at 155mph, the power mated to its lightweight aluminium body made for an impressive 0-60mph in 5.2 seconds. It combines effortless high-performance with top levels of control, and you get all this while encapsulated in a superbly crafted, new-fashioned, luxury interior.

The simplified model range for the new XK comprises three choices - XK, XK Portfolio and supercharged XKR with optional Speed and Black Packs. Each has its own specific choices of trim, colour and fine detail, but every one has the same underlying sporting character and clear emphasis on efficient performance, luxury and craftsmanship.



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Max speed: 155 mph
0-62 mph: 5.2 seconds
Combined mpg: 25.2
Engine layout: 5000cc/V8
Max. power (bhp): 385 at 6500 rpm
Max. torque (lb.ft): 380 at 3500 rpm
Price: £67,500



Now, you don't buy this sort of car for fuel efficiency - you buy it for its power, luxury and status - but I found the XK's average fuel consumption of 25.2mpg not bad at all for such a beast. Even more surprising is the big cat's CO2 figure of 264g/km. That is seven percent better than the equivalent figures for the Mercedes-Benz SL500!

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One of the best bits about my time with the XK test car was listening to the deep V8 rumble on start up and under acceleration. Jaguar knows how much consumers love that bit of the 'ownership experience', and so the XK's exhaust 'sound track' has been deliberately enhanced to provide a deeper and more powerful character. It certainly works - heads turned every time I started the car!

One of the worst bits about the car was shoe-horning my wife and two children into it. The 2+2 tag just about works, but only if the other two people are under the age of four! But, let's face it, the XK is not intended to be a family car. Sadly, every test car has to go back, but even turning the engine off for the last time on the XK was fun. On pressing the glowing 'off' button the JaguarDrive Selector smoothly returned to its park position, disappearing into the car as though it had never existed. Brilliant stuff! Boys and their toys or what?