

Jaguar Saloon Cars

A monthly series - Part 11

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S-Type V6 3 Litre (1998-2007)

With the introduction of the S-Type in 1998, Jaguar returned to the mid-sized car market for the first time in thirty years. The S-Type was designed in a retro Jaguar style which was a motoring trend in vogue at the time and was built on a Ford derived platform shared with the Lincoln LS. The new Jaguar AJ-V6 engine was also Ford based with the modular engine block being fitted with Jaguar designed cylinder heads and electronics. Although Jaguar developed the S-Type to compete with the mid-sized cars from BMW and Mercedes Benz, most buyers tended to be XJ owners downsizing to a smaller Jaguar. As a consequence, the average age of an S-Type owner was older than anticipated and the failure of the S-Type to attract younger converts from other makes directly contributed to the introduction of the X-Type. However, the S-Type was by no means a failure in itself and updates introduced during the production life saw the car successfully remain in production for 8 years. When the X350 XJ series was introduced in 2003 being a much larger car overall to the outgoing X308, the S-Type established a niche of its own. In 2002, a 2.5 litre V6 option was introduced, followed in 2004 by the new AJD-V6 2.7 litre diesel.



S-Type V8 4 Litre(1998-2007)

The V8 powered S-type was a very good performer and appealed to the Jaguar owner seeking performance but in a smaller package than an XJ8. A Sport version was introduced in 2001 with both interior and exterior trim adapted to create a more performance focus. Power options remained as standard, but a higher specification was offered for accessory options. In 2002 real performance arrived in the form of the all new S-Type R.

Powered by the new 4.2 litre supercharged engine designed for the new XJ to be launched the following year, the S-Type R which sported the trade mark mesh grille, was all muscle with performance matching that of the XJR and XKR.

An all new interior design was created with a new dashboard and centre console transforming the S-Type's interior ambience considerably. 2004 saw further improvements with the introduction of an aluminium bonnet to reduce weight and adaptive cruise control was introduced for the first time.



X-Type 3.0 Litre (2001 -2009)

The X-Type, codenamed X400, was Jaguar's first compact executive car since the Jaguar 2.4 litre saloon of 1955.

The four-door X Type was in production from 2001 to 2009 and initially offered as four-wheel drive only mated to the new Jaguar AJ-V6 2.5 litre and 3.0 litre engines. The X-Type was essentially designed in Detroit and presented to the reluctant designers and engineers at Jaguar's Whitley design centre.

Based lightly on a modified Ford Mondeo platform, it shared 15 to 20% of the Mondeo design and components which whilst not received well by some enthusiasts of the marque was the first significant exercise in part sharing of a production Jaguar; a practice adopted by Rolls-Royce and Bentley with their respective parent organisations.

Ford no doubt adopted this process to reduce costs, but the concept makes good economic sense given the high cost of car manufacturing. Jaguar's objective was to achieve annual sales of 100,000 with the car, partly by taking market share from established German rivals and partly by expanding the market segment in Jaguar's key markets.

The X-Type was Jaguar's best-selling model during almost all its production run, but sales did not meet expectations, peaking at 50,000 in 2003 with a total production run of 355,000 units sold when production ceased in 2009.



X Type 2.1 Litre (2002 -2006)

The X-Type range was expanded further in 2002 with the introduction of the 2.1 litre V6 petrol and 4-cylinder 2.0 litre diesel engines. These smaller engines broke new ground for Jaguar being front wheel drive as it was considered that the all-wheel drive systems would reduce the overall performance to less than acceptable levels.

To provide improved torque and performance the diesel engine was complemented with a larger 2.2 litre variant from 2005.

The 2.1 litre X-Type engine was a Jaguar design based on a modified 3 litre V6. Whilst not overly endowed with torque, the 2.1 litre is a free revving relying on a high rev range rather than low down torque. It is still a spritely performer of near identical acceleration and top speed to the BMW 318i with which it was aimed to compete.

Whilst the X Type was not initially received well by some enthusiasts of the marque it grew in popularity with the luxury SE, later badged as a Sovereign, of all engine variants being sought after as a daily drive thus preserving more expensive collectable Jaguars.



X Type Estate Car (2005 -2009)

The X-Type range was further enhanced in 2005 with the introduction of the estate car, once again breaking new ground for Jaguar. These wagons became instantly popular especially in all wheel drive form and greatly enhanced the acceptance of the X-Type. Offered with all engine variants and trim levels the estate car provides excellent stowage space paving the way for future wagons such as the XF Sport Brake released in 2012. The X-Type design was ideally suited for modification as an estate car and exercise previously carried out on the XJ40 platform but not put into production.

Jaguar clearly saw that whilst the demand for a large wagon based on the XJ platform would not be sufficiently popular with potential customers, there was a definite opportunity to build a family sized wagon to compete with the BMW 3 Series and Audi A4. Although the X-Type was to be sold in the highest numbers of any Jaguar, the market sector intended for the X-Type was the younger drivers who opted for BMW and Audi. Ironically the main market for the X-Type was that of older drivers downsizing from XJ models. No replacement was planned when X-Type production ceased in 2009.

