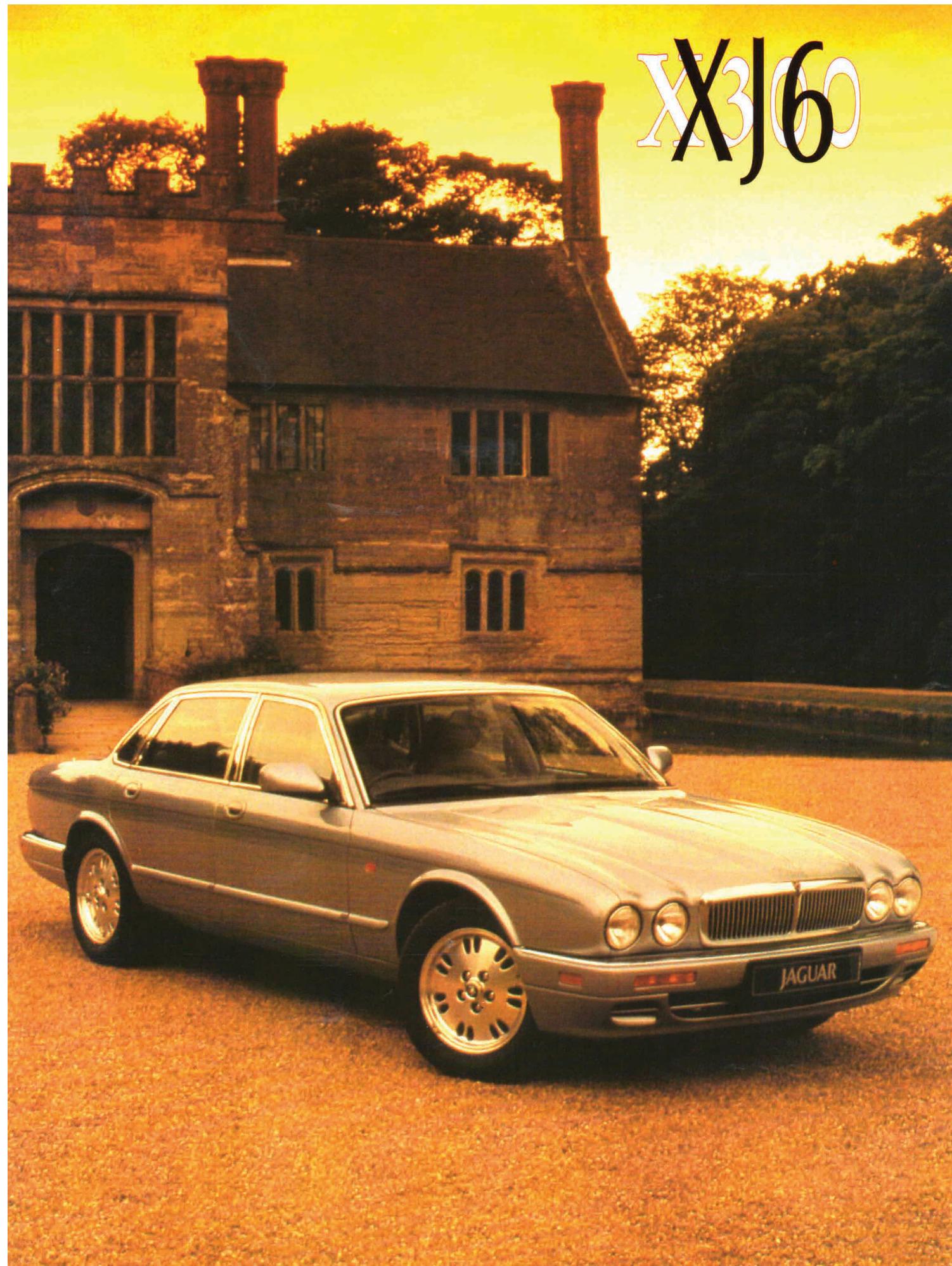


## Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997



# XJ90 Prototype

## Jaguar XJ90 (1988-1991)

The Jaguar XJ90 was conceived as a new saloon to take over from the XJ40-generation XJ6. It was designed to modernise the model line-up without alienating faithful customers.

Only in the last few years have images and photos of the XJ90 prototype come to light, and we can now see that the final car wouldn't have looked a million miles away from what we ended up with, the X300/X308.

After the XJ40, what became the X300 was not supposed to happen, as Jaguar's intention was to launch a brand new saloon (XJ90) with a new V8 engine.

The XJ90 took shape very rapidly. In many ways the XJ90 was a facelifted XJ40 four-door saloon. Early styling

proposals revealed a promisingly sleek-looking car, with minimal fussiness, and a beautiful set of proportions.

As the programme progressed, some of the car's more dramatic details were lost, and a more resolved – and familiar looking – design began to win through, ably led by Design Director Geoff Lawson and driven by Senior Design Manager Fergus Pollock.

The XJ90 was a little taller than the XJ40, but with a particularly handsome front end and profile, which had the essential Jaguar haunches aft of the rear doors. As a result of the additional height, especially in the roofline, the car's longer wheelbase was well disguised – good news for those who demanded a Jaguar to be elegant looking.

Former Jaguar Technical Director Jim Randle in a 2004 interview said that when the CEO Bill Hayden saw it, he said he was going to have an orgasm! But everything hit a stone wall in 1991. The V8 was not ready, and would not be so until after the X300's successor, the XJ X308. The car had to be stopped and after I left, they took the centre section of XJ40 and put the nose and tail of XJ90 on, and that became the car (X300/308) that then ran on.

Stuart Spencer, who was still there after Randle left, and worked on the programme, said that he created another XJ90 clay model, this time using the middle section of an XJ40. Management decided to close the shut lines on the doors etc, fit a new sliding roof cassette and make several other exterior panel changes – we may as well have gone with XJ90. Geoff and Fergus were very annoyed.

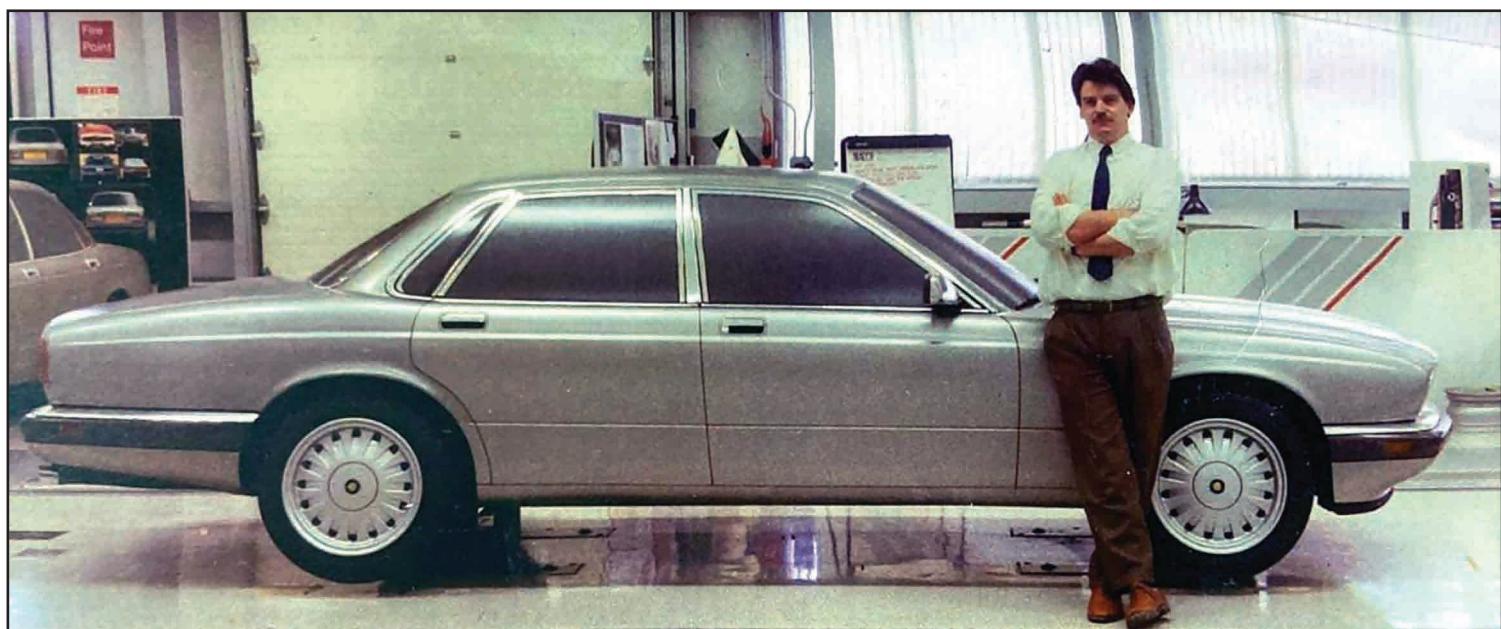
Although the Jaguar XJ90 ended up hitting the cutting-room floor, much of it ended up living on in the X300/X308-generation Jaguar XJ, launched in 1994, and it could be argued that not building it was money well saved, given how successful the X300/X308 became, and how it was developed so successfully during its production run.

In many ways, the XJ90 previewed the X350-generation Jaguar XJ, which appeared in 2003.

*Editor: Information for this article was sourced from AROnline and other sources.*



*Senior stylist Geoff Lawson (far left) standing next to Fergus Pollock, who was the Senior Design Manager on the XJ90 project*



*Former Senior Design Manager Fergus Pollock with an XJ90 clay model*

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

## X300, XJ Classic in The Making

Although only produced for a few years, the XJ X300 has since become one of the most respected cars in Jaguar's history.

This sleek limousine was launched in October 1994 at the Paris Motor Show and released as a 1995 model year. The last X300 was built on July 2nd 1997 with over 90,000 built.

## Design

Although the XJ40 was technically advanced, it never aroused the same emotions as the previous three generations of the XJ saloon. What the company needed was a car that would appeal to both the traditional Jaguar buyer, many of whom had been alienated by the XJ40, while still appealing to the younger, more sporting driver. The X300 did all this and more, achieving that rare feat of a facelift proving more cohesive and elegant than the original design. With good proportions, proven underpinnings and near bulletproof engines, the basic idea was stunningly simple; re-skin the XJ40

in the style similar to that of the Series 3 XJ6, refine the powertrain even further and, for the younger market, provide a sporting variant with real performance. In practice a huge amount of work was needed to get the detailing right and ensure that the new car developed an identity and character of its own rather than becoming a mere caricature of the past.

Below the curvaceous new lines lay a largely unmodified late XJ40 body structure. The biggest changes were at the front and rear to accept the new lamp housings. One small but important difference is the smooth transition from the rear pillar to the top of the rear wing (instead of the awkward plastic trim piece needed on the XJ40 – a clear example of the advances in manufacturing processes between 1986 and 1994). Other new features were the use of colour matched oval door handles in place of the earlier square edged chrome type. The door mirrors too were more flowing, with painted or chrome covers according to model, while the leak prone recess

between the rear lamps for the number plates was replaced with a shallow depression in the boot lid and a much simpler plinth. The roof, door structures, floorpan, sills and glass, all expensive to redesign remain essentially unchanged from the XJ40.

## Exterior

The mostly flat bonnet of the XJ40 was replaced with a fluted, curvaceous design that accentuated the four separate round headlamps. Rear wings were reshaped to accommodate the new wrap-around rear light clusters. Also, the separate black-rubber bumper bar of the XJ40 is gone and replaced with a fully integrated body-coloured bumper.

The Jaguar "leaper" hood mascot was installed only on cars for non-European markets.

## Engine - AJ16

Both the 3.2 and 4.0 AJ6 engines used in the XJ40 were substantially revised for the XJ X300 saloon. Designated the "AJ16", both featuring a revised



*The late Geoff Lawson in 1994 with an XJ12 X300 after the model was crowned 'The Most Beautiful Luxury Car in The World' by Italian Judges assembled in Milan for the 'L'Automobile più Bella del Mondo' awards. The body lines chosen by Design Director Geoff Lawson and Stylist Keith Helfet strongly resemble the architecture of the predecessor (XJ40), but the new car looked more conservative with its low and long streamlined body and curvaceous new lines. (Geoff Lawson won numerous awards for his designs at Jaguar). Photo: Jaguar Cars.*

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

fuel injection system, coil-on-plug distributorless ignition, new engine management systems, revised piston design (that eliminated some vibration) and an almost completely redesigned head featuring a stiffer casting, thinner, lighter valves, new camshafts and a lightweight magnesium cam cover. The engine was overall more efficient and quieter together with a rise in power and torque.

Although the more powerful 4.0 litre engine produced 250bhp, the 3.2 litre was no slouch with a credible 220bhp, ensuring a top speed of around 225kmh (140mph).

The big news however was the Eaton supercharged 4.0-litre engine fitted to the XJR, now a mainstream model and with the emphasis firmly on performance rather than classic luxury. The XJR boasted enough performance to eclipse even the mighty V12. The 4.0 litre XJR was tuned more for low down torque than outright power but its 6.6 second 0-60 acceleration time was still only one tenth of a second behind the hand built TWR XJR-S of only a few years before.

The AJ16 engines have proved overtime to be almost bullet proof and easily handle the extra load incurred by the supercharger. With proper maintenance, they easily run 400 to 500,000 km.



1995 XJR supercharged AJ16 engine producing 326 hp (243 kW; 331 PS) and 378 lb·ft (512 N·m) with the use of an Eaton M90 supercharger and an air-water intercooler.

## Engine – V12 6.0 Litre

The V12 cars did continue though for those customers who preferred near silent acceleration to the turbine like whine of a supercharger and could afford the increased running costs.

The V12 engine was also updated with a revised cylinder head and distributorless electronic engine management system. The top aluminium cover in the engine's valley was redesigned to house two packs of three coils each, with each coil having

two high-tension terminals for a total of twelve. These coil-packs were driven by two Denso ignition modules. The crankshaft in the V12 was switched from a forging to a chill casting.

A visibly significant chromed pipe connecting the left and the right banks of the V12 in the XJ40 platform (intended to vent and route the crankcase blow-by gas to the intake plenum) was changed to an almost invisible design at the top centre of the engine underneath a plastic cover that also hides fuel rails and coil-packs.



This Carnival Red XJ Sports rolled off the line on July 2nd 1997 and is the very last X300 built. It was immediately transferred to the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust. In 2020 the UK "Classic Jaguar" magazine took the car for a test drive to see what an almost new (1,039km) X300 felt like. Although a 3.2 litre model, they commented that it was no slouch and was capable of 140mph (220kmh). Photo "Classic Jaguar".

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

## Transmission

The six-cylinder X300 cars used either a ZF four-speed automatic gearbox (4HP-22 on the 3.2 L and 4HP-24 on the 4.0 L), or a Getrag 290 five-speed manual. The 4HP-22 automatic is mechanically controlled while the 4HP-24 is electronically controlled, allowing 4.0-litre models to offer 'normal' and 'sport' modes on a switch by the gear lever.

All V12-equipped cars were built with the GM 4L80-E automatic.

Although the Getrag manual gearbox was standard on the supercharged six-cylinder, almost all XJRs were built with the optional GM 4L80-E four-speed automatic transmission.

## Suspension and Brakes.

Underneath, the suspension layout remained basically unchanged, given that the new cast iron rear wishbones were introduced on the last XJ40's.

Self-levelling rear suspension was no longer available, but there were new bespoke Bilstein dampers for the sporting models. Brakes reverted to vacuum boosting, and while the calipers remained ATE, the rear discs became ventilated with larger discs fitted to the front of V12 and supercharged cars.



*The 6.0L V12 engine was updated for the X300 and fitted with distributorless electronic engine management systems. Between 1971-1997 the V12 engine bay became progressively 'tidier'.*

A new traction control system, fitted to the XJR and V12 cars used the ABS system to brake a slipping wheel while an electric motor simultaneously pulled back on the accelerator cable to reduce throttle.

## Interior

A good deal of late XJ40 structure remained, with similar seats, only slightly modified door trims and standardisation of the Daimler dash casing with its deeper wood panelling. The seats were updated to have a more rounded profile, wood trim was updated with bevelled edges, and the steering wheel was redesigned.

The centre console was however completely redesigned to house the digital controls for the new Nippondenso climate control system, while, for trip computer operation, the keypad alongside the steering wheel disappeared in favour of a much simpler push button on the end of the indicator stalk.

The X300 was the first Jaguar saloon to include an industry standard OBD2 (on board diagnostics) connector beneath the dashboard, a full six years before they became mandatory.



*P60-SOV was the very last V12 engined car built (17 April 1997). From 1971 a total of 161,583 V12-engined cars were made. For many years, Jaguar was the only company in the world to offer a four-door saloon car with a V12 engine. (Photo from "Jaguar World" Spring 2019).*

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

## Long Wheel Base (X330)

While in its later years a stretched XJ40 had become available to special order, for the X300 the longer wheelbase became a regular option in mid-1995, with the cars built on the main production line and available with every engine except the supercharged 4.0 litre, with many 3.2 litre LWBs built for the chauffeur trade.

The LWB added an extra 6 inches (150 mm) for rear seat occupants and an extra inch (25mm) of headroom. There were two X330 variants, one with five seats and one with four, which featured a raised centre console between the two adjustable rear seats.

## Safety Equipment

Standard safety equipment for the XJ range included dual front airbags and ABS, while the XJR model was further equipped with traction control.

## 1997 - XJ upgrades

From February 1997, the XJ range was fitted with a security system which included an engine immobiliser, remote control alarm, glass breaking and odometer sensor, battery tamper protection and security shielded locks. Inside, the rear seat bench was restyled and the centre rear seat gained a three-point, inertia reel seatbelt.



*Early X300 cars were built without a front passenger glove-box and pockets on the front of the seats, due to space constraints caused by the introduction of a front-passenger airbag.*

### Models

#### ◊ XJ6

The base model in the range was the XJ6, which featured the 3.2 litre version of the AJ16 with steel wheels and hub caps.

The model came with electric window, mirrors and antennas, glass heating, windshield and front headlights, audio system with eight speakers, central lock, remote control of the boot and fuel lid, driver's seat with electrical adjustments, velour salon (with leather sidewalls seats), finished with wood.

Alloy wheels, leather upholstery and air conditioning were all extra-cost options. Later, the 4.0 L version of the AJ16 was offered in the XJ6.

Externally, the XJ6 can be distinguished by a combination of chrome edging windows and black racks.

#### ◊ Sovereign

The Sovereign model also used the AJ16 engine (in either capacity) and came equipped with luxury features as per the XJ6 - plus alloy wheels, cruise control, Nippon Denso air conditioning,



*This particular car was built as a one off to demonstrate a possible successor to the outgoing Daimler DS 420 limo. The car was stretched by eight inches in the front doors, and five inches in the rear doors, with the roof being approximately two inches higher in the crown area, to maintain the proportions of the car. Mechanically, the car was identical to the standard 4.0L Daimler Six. It got as far as a fully road-going prototype and used frequently by Chief Executive of Jaguar, Nick Scheele until shelved as it was too big to be assembled efficiently.*

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

leather cabin, front seats with electric adjustments, with memory in three positions for seats and for external mirrors, electric steering column and heated mirrors.

The Sovereign came with chromed trim in various locations: on the radiator grille, rear light cluster surrounds, windscreens and rear window surrounds, rain gutters, window frames and boot-lid plinth.

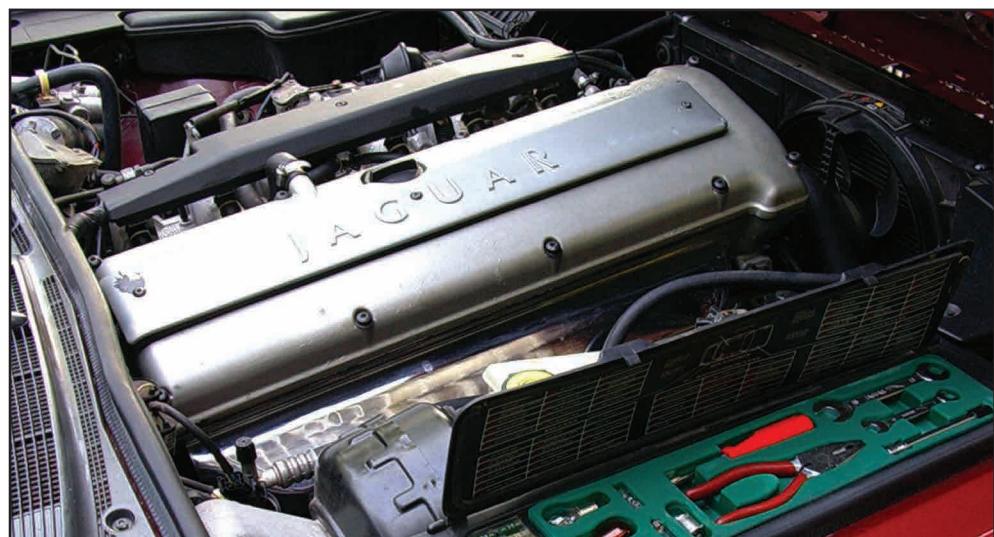
## ◊ Sport

To attract younger buyers, Jaguar offered a "Sport" model with wider 8-inch 'Dimple' alloy wheels, revised seats, and stiffer suspension. The Sport kept the matte-black window surrounds from the base model, and is identified by "Sport" badges on the B-pillars and "XJ Sport" badging on the rear. It was offered with either the 3.2 litre or 4.0 litre engine.

The sports suspension and wider wheels were also available as an option on the XJ6 and Sovereign SWB/LWB models.

## ◊ Executive

Aimed at a younger market segment, the Executive model was introduced for the 1997 model year and featured leather trim, a wood/leather steering wheel, wide wheels (similar to the "Sport" model), and air conditioning. It was treated as a run-out specification for the XJ6.



4.0 litre AJ16 engine with 10% more power than its AJ6 predecessor. Also showing is the built in toolkit - the first since the 1951 Mark V. Photo: Club Member Andrew Byles.

## ◊ XJR (X306)

The XJR was introduced as a high-performance sport model, and it was Jaguar's first-ever supercharged road car.

Compared to the XJ6, the XJR was distinguished by its 17-inch alloy wheels, firmer suspension, climate control air conditioning, leather upholstery, front fog lights, driver's seat memory settings and alarm. The XJR was also fitted with a limited slip rear differential.

Cosmetically, the XJR differed from the standard cars with a body-coloured

grille surround, mesh grille insert, body-coloured boot-lid plinth, larger exhaust outlets, special five-spoke "Sport" alloy wheels, and "XJR" badging. Rain gutters and window surrounds were matte black.

## ◊ XJ12 and Daimler Double Six

The XJ12 model featured the same trim level of the Sovereign with leather upholstery and front fog lights. It was visually differentiated by the rear boot-lid "XJ12" badge, a "V12" badge on the passenger-side dashboard wood trim, a "V12" badge on each B-pillar, and a



This one-off Daimler Corsica convertible, named after a 1931 Daimler drophead coupe, was built in 1996 to commemorate the Centenary of the Daimler motor car in 1996. It was based on the SWB Daimler Double-Six saloon and seats four. The Daimler Corsica prototype is owned by the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, who commissioned it to operate as a fully functional road-legal car.

# Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1995-1997

gold-coloured Jaguar crest at the top of the radiator grille surround.

While the similar Daimler Double Six came with 225/60-16 tyres on 7-inch wheels and comfort suspension as standard, the XJ12 came with 225/55-16 tyres on 8-inch-wide wheels and sports suspension, which explains the height difference between the two models.

## ◊ Daimler Century

In 1996, the Century model was introduced to commemorate the centennial of the Daimler name. The Century was equipped with all features and upgrades available on the X300 cars, plus chromed wheels, special exterior paint, and electrically adjustable rear seats. Only a 100 of each were built (Century Six & Century Double Six).

## X300 Review -*Auto Express*

**Verdict** - If looks alone influence your car buying decisions, the XJ's curves will have already seduced you. It's a stunner. Inside, there's still a fight between traditional and modern, but leg and headroom are improved - although both are cramped for a car of this size, as is

the boot. But on the road, the X300 is a delight. The steering has more weight and precision than before, while the ride is unsurpassed. What's more, the handling is much improved. In terms of value for money, you can't beat it. You'll get a lot of car for the money.

## Sales Price (New)

The X300 was keenly priced when new. In the UK, in the final year of sale the range started just shy of £30,000 - a sum that would have bought an entry level XJ6 back in 1968. The XJR topped the Jaguar badged model at £47,500 while the Daimlers ranged from £52,000 for the Six to a staggering £66,500 for the long-wheelbase Double-Six, more than twice the cost of the entry level Jaguar!

In Australia the XJR sold for \$165,000.

## Collectability

These days the X300 is revered by many enthusiasts as one of today's top modern-classic buys, renowned for its value for money as well as being one of the most durable Jaguars of the last thirty years. However, there is still a

need to buy carefully - high mileage isn't necessarily a problem, but a service history is a must. Low-mileage cars do come onto the market and inevitably command a premium, especially the XJR and Daimler models.

## Sales & Production

The X300 sold readily with new and returning customers flocking to get their hands on what BBC's *Top Gear* had described as, "Probably the best car in the World" - praise that led to more than 92,038 examples being built, despite such a short career, as by 1997 the aesthetically similar XJ8 was waiting in the wings, bringing eight-cylinder power to the XJ line-up for the first time ever.

If you own an XJ X300, or thinking of buying one, spare the time and watch the following 7-minute video: [Jaguar XJ \(X300\) Promo Video 1995.](#) ■

**Editor-** *Thank you to club members for providing photographs for this feature.*



*Jaguar's Browns Lane production line. Here a Daimler Double-Six XJ X300 is receiving its final check prior to distribution.*

# Jaguar XJ (X300) Buyer's Guide (By Classics World)

## BUYING AN X300

### Bodywork

The X300 fares quite well against the dreaded 'tin-worm', but they're getting on in years now and aren't immune to the effects of our climate. Check for corrosion in the front chassis legs as well as the lower corners of the doors, the rear wheel-arches, the inner wings and the footwells.

It also pays to check the bumper mounts, which are made from alloy and can corrode to the point of the bumper falling off, and for damage to the plastic sunroof tracks (where fitted). The latter can shatter if a large enough piece of grit becomes caught, necessitating a major strip out to replace them.

It might sound strange, but always check that the boot will unlock/open via the key; with the boot lock incorporated into the central locking, the key mechanism is almost never used until someone presses the valet button, disconnecting the electric release. This setting can only be reversed by using the black master key in a lock that is often seized solid.

### Engine & Cooling System

The six-cylinder AJ16 was fitted to all six-cylinder X300s, with the 216bhp 3.2-litre engine mechanically identical to the 245bhp 4.0-litre unit other than a 19mm shorter stroke. Compared to the older AJ6 unit, the AJ16 gained a stronger cylinder block and head, lighter valve-gear and a new engine management system with sequential injection and coil pack ignition.

While the engine has no major weaknesses, the hydraulic upper timing chain tensioner can fail. It's not expensive or hard to change but, if neglected, can damage the slipper against which the chain runs, eventually necessitating a full stripdown of the front of the engine. At worst it may allow the chain to skip teeth on the camshafts, causing valve piston contact and most likely lunching the engine. Listen for a brief rattle on start-up from cold to identify this issue. Another problem is the build-up of carbon on the back of the valves, reducing performance and increasing the likelihood of pre-ignition.

Also check the cooling system. The thermostat housing and the back of the water pump can just about disintegrate.



*With Ford funding, Jaguar updated its XJ40 into the car many reckoned it could have been from the start. Here's what to look for when buying an X300.*

Look for swollen hose ends and green-tinted corrosive build-up. Also examine the hoses, especially the lower radiator item as there have been some dubious quality replacements on the market in the past.

The supercharged engine in the XJR is really no less reliable than the standard unit, just a little more awkward when work is needed. For instance, the throttle body is located under the intercooler and only accessible with the car raised up in the air.

The 6.0-litre V12 cars are rare, with only 3400 made. The motor carried over largely unchanged from the XJ40, but it did also switch to coil packs for ignition. These engines are capable of huge mileages but can really suffer when neglected, so check the service record scrupulously. Also ensure all the plugs are of the same age and type (some garages change only the easy to reach ones) and above all ensure the coolant is at the correct strength, the hoses/radiator are in good condition and that there are no signs of weeping from anywhere.

You can't overheat a V12 and get away with it, as the valve seats will loosen and may drop later with no warning, usually destroying the engine. Also start the engine from cold, listening for the faint rumble that warns of main bearing wear.

### Exhaust System

All X300s came with stainless exhausts, so many will have been replaced by now. On six-cylinder cars the cast iron manifolds are prone to cracks; they are expensive to replace and hard

to weld. V12 manifolds on the other hand are more likely to suffer from broken downpipe studs as the threads corrode and downpipe/catalysts must be removed to replace the lower wishbone bushes – a reasonably common job.

### Transmission

Four different transmissions were used: the four-speed ZF in both electronic (dual mode) and mechanical forms, fitted to the 4.0-litre and 3.2-litre naturally aspirated cars respectively, the Powertrain (formerly Hydramatic) 4L80E fitted to the V12 and XJR, and the Getrag 290 five-speed manual gearbox available on all six-cylinder cars.

The ZF boxes are extremely reliable if they are serviced regularly, so check for the all-important receipts and ensure they change smoothly on the test drive, with a distinct change between normal and sport modes on 4.0-litre cars. The Powertrain auto has also proven reliable, but can develop a distinct whine in first and reverse as the miles climb. This won't affect longevity, but the noise can be an issue for some drivers.

The Getrag is both strong and refined, but be aware that they will become noisy with age and the parts supply is restricted to seals, bushes and mounts only. There have also been issues with the dual mass flywheels failing and they are no longer available new – fortunately the conventional flywheel and clutch from a late XJ40 will fit.

### Rear End

A noisy rear axle isn't uncommon on high-mileage cars as the differential's

# Jaguar XJ (X300) Buyer's Guide (By Classics World)

internal bearings wear. Replacing them means a full axle stripdown but the axle seems to get slightly whiney and then not get any worse for the next 100,000 miles, so if it doesn't bother you unduly then simply live with it.

All the same it's worth checking for leaking pinion seals and for perishing of the rubber coupling at the rear of the prop-shaft. Since the Jaguar design uses the driveshafts as the upper suspension link, it's important that the universal joints, wheel bearings and differential output bearings are all free of play. It can all be replaced but it's costly doing it all at once.

## Suspension, Steering and Brakes

The basic suspension layout is largely the same as that fitted to the XJ40, though problems tend to occur at higher mileages with the X300. At the front end, check for split subframe mounts and corrosion in the subframe itself, as well as worn upper and lower wishbone bushes which allow the arm to move off-centre on its pivot. The lower ones can be a problem as the factory spring compressor is needed and, as mentioned, V12 cars need the catalysts to be removed first.

Ball joints tend to last well, but wheel bearings often need replacing at 80,000–100,000 miles. Dampers can also feel tired by 100,000 miles although sometimes it's just the soft upper mounting bushes, which will cause a knocking when they fail.

A loose feeling from the rear end will often be down to the big rubber/aluminium subframe mounts failing, while a clunk can be due to worn spherical bushes where the dampers mount to the lower wishbone. A creak from the rear can simply be the foam isolators at the top of the springs, which can be cured with a squirt of lubricant. Also check the subframe itself for corrosion, as we've seen breakages before.

Steering-wise, racks will eventually leak past the end seals into the gaiters and start to split in the rubber mounts, while most external leaks are caused by the high-pressure pipe chafing through on the engine mount bracket.

As for the brakes, it's all pretty conventional, with electronic ABS and sliding single-piston callipers all round. It's a very reliable system overall, but disc/pad wear will be much heavier than on earlier Jaguar models and it pays to check carefully as a full overhaul will cost several hundred pounds in parts alone. All cars feature ABS, with any problems usually down to the sensors or corroded or dirty trigger rings.

## Interior & Trim

This was the last Jaguar model to have its seats manufactured in-house with the rest of the interior, and they've proved to be resilient, with side bolster wear on high mileage sports trim the only real gripe. As with previous XJs, the headlining will eventually start to sag

as the foam backing breaks down; DIY headlining kits are available but we'd recommend a professional trimmer due to the complexity of the moulding it's glued to.

## Air Conditioning

The air conditioning can suffer from blocked heater matrixes, seized coolant valves and failed pump motors (the heater circuit has its own electric pump). Fortunately, all are relatively easy to sort, but recommissioning a system that has been left idle can be expensive.

## Electrics

Meanwhile, the X300's electrics have proven remarkably durable – certainly when compared to earlier XJ40s. Clock and heater/air-conditioning displays will fade over time but can be repaired while the electrically adjustable steering column (where fitted) can eventually strip its gears, so be sure to check it.

## Jaguar XJ (X300): Our Verdict

The X300 was very well regarded when new, with the XJR labelled as "probably the best saloon car in the world" and "the goal of every luxury car maker" by the contemporary motoring press.

Nowadays it's often more highly prized than its X308 successor – it's certainly cheaper to run in extremely durable six-cylinder guise and avoids the issue with Nikasil-coated bores on pre-2001 model year X308s, as well as being a bit more traditional "Jaguar" than the more Ford-influenced later car.

And with prices still affordable, the X300 makes a tempting choice as a modern classic that you can use all year round.

Information for this story sourced from Classics World (11 June 2025). Words: Paul Wager and Images: Paul Walton.



A good deal of the late XJ40 interior remained, with similar seats, only slightly modified door trims and a redesigned steering wheel. However, the centre console was completely redesigned to house the digital controls for the new Nipppondenso climate control system.



To watch the video on what to look for when buying an XJ X300 goto: [X300 Buyers guide](#)