

4 Relative values

– which model for you?



This chapter will attempt to give an idea, expressed as a percentage, of the relative values of individual models in good, useable condition. Continental and US cars may not follow the same pattern as those in the UK, so consult current magazine price guides for an up-to-date valuation in those markets.

The Capri has a fairly compressed range of values at the moment, with the rarity of earlier models unable to command the higher prices often found with other marques. The RS models, which are so far ahead of the ones listed here in value, and so rarely available, have been excluded from this list.

Mk3 280 Brooklands 100%

A combination of end-of-the-line limited edition, high specification and usability, plus being the youngest and, theoretically, the least worn out and rusty, all combine to put the Brooklands at the top of the value pile. Probably the ultimate expression of the Capri. Beware of fakes, however, as it's not unknown for lesser cars to be disguised to increase their appeal and worth. Do your homework on fixtures, fittings and chassis numbers, and speak to a club expert before parting with your money.



The last of the line and the most expensive are the 280 'Brooklands.'

Mk3 2.8i 60%

Like the Brooklands, age and usability are in its favour, with the added bonus of being more widely available. You can save a lot of money and still enjoy the Capri experience as long as you can forego the cachet of a limited run.

Mk1 3-litres are fine cars with great period charm.

Mk1 3-litre GT 55% (E plus 5%)

Purity of the original concept, combined with useable power, even on today's roads, is a compelling mix. The higher spec trim and extras of the E command a premium.



7 Fifteen minute evaluation

– walk away or stay?



Having found a possible purchase, asked all the necessary questions over the phone, and assembled your inspection equipment, you should now find yourself confronting a Capri in the metal. The most important thing is to make sure that your heart doesn't rule your head, so keep calm and consider just how long you have had to work to save the money (usually a sobering thought). It should be possible to eliminate obvious heaps very quickly, hence this 15 minute examination, by the end of which you will know if the car warrants further time and effort, in which case, some of these areas will be revisited and checked in greater detail. It's important that just as much care is taken when looking at a 1980s Capri, as they can rot just as badly as older versions.

Exterior

First impressions count, but don't fall for shiny paintwork, look instead at how the car sits; there should be no signs of sagging, particularly at the rear where weak springs are fairly common, and in some cases these may even be broken. Continue the general assessment by looking down the length of the car, tilting your head until the light catches the panels which will throw poorly filled areas into sharp relief. The Capri is fairly slab-sided so any bodged repair work should readily show up. Pay particular attention to the wings (fenders), the bottom of the doors and the rear wheelarches. Check around the front and rear screens for flaking, bubbling, scabby paint, or any attempts to disguise rust. Lift the screen rubber and see if there are signs of the car having had a re-spray with the glass left in: check the scuttle carefully whilst you are at it.

At the front, have a look all over the wings as rust can erupt at the trailing edge, around the lights, behind the wheel, at the join to the front and slam panel, the lower valence and the inner wings. Replacement panels are expensive and hard to find for earlier cars, so expect to find filler in any, or all of the locations listed, but at the moment limit yourself to a general impression.



Let the light reflect off the sides to show up any defects.



The scuttle rots, so expect to find filler or blistering paint.

sure that the thermostat is functioning properly, and the coolant is circulating as it should. If you think there is a question mark over circulation, turn off the engine and check that the radiator is hot all over, but be careful not to burn your hands! These checks are important for all models, but essential for V6-equipped cars where the cooling system may be struggling.

Brakes

4 3 2 1

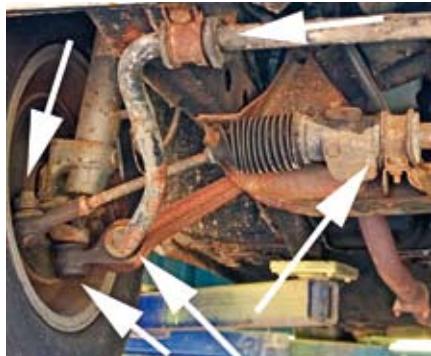
Front discs should be checked for scoring, wear and rust. They're also prone to warping which will show up during the test drive. Calipers seize thanks to internal corrosion from unchanged brake fluid and from damaged dust seals; replacement is straightforward and they're fairly cheap. Check solid brake lines for rust throughout the car, although the ones at the back are the most vulnerable. Flexible hoses should be examined for splitting or other signs of deterioration, or even contact with other components. Brake back plates should show no sign of leaks from either the top, around the cylinder mounts, or at the bottom, which would indicate fluid leaking internally.



Check brake pipes for corrosion.



The anti-roll bar bushes and the bottom ball joints are prime candidates for wear.



There is a lot to check in the hub area.

Hubs, steering joints & rack

4 3 2 1

With the car jacked up grasp a wheel at the top and bottom (6 o'clock position) and pull it in and out. Any play will be either the ball joints or wheel bearings. Get someone to apply the brake whilst you repeat the exercise: if the play has gone then it's the bearings, which will need adjustment or replacing. Try spinning the wheel to see if you can hear them grinding, rotating it very slowly by your fingertips may reveal roughness, too. If the play is still there then it must be caused by wear in the bottom ball joint.

Continue rocking the wheel and have a look for play in the top of the suspension strut; a small amount is inevitable, but anything more means new bushes. Move your hands to the sides (9.15 position) and wiggle once again; movement felt now will be in the track rod ends or the rack, with the former being the most likely

and the engine started, plus check out all available paperwork for the car that interests you. It may be possible to have the car jacked up to check suspension, steering, etc, so take advantage of any opportunity to examine the vehicle as closely as possible.

Bidding

Auctions are exciting, especially when several people are after the same car, and it's all too easy to get swept along in the euphoria of it all. So, before you start down this potentially expensive road, decide on the maximum amount you're willing to pay and stick to it. If you're unfamiliar with auction procedure get there early, register to bid, then settle back and watch how other people do it. When your car arrives, bid early so the auctioneer knows where you are, he/she will keep coming back to see your reaction to other bids. If it's time to duck out make it very clear, a vigorous shake of the head should be enough. If you win, your card number will be taken and you will have to go and pay your deposit. If the car you want fails to sell as it has not reached its reserve, it may still be worth going to the office and registering your interest, as the auctioneers may contact the owner with your offer to see if they wish to sell at that price.

Successful bid

With the car secured and paid for, the next issue is getting it home. If you cannot drive the vehicle (no insurance or MoT, for example), either hire a trailer or arrange for one of the many transport firms to shift it for you; the auction office should have a list of suitable companies. Some sales also offer immediate short term insurance cover but this is rarely the most cost-effective way of dealing with the problem; a phone call to your usual broker will almost certainly result in something cheaper.

Internet auctions

There are undoubtedly bargains to be had via internet auction sites, but the overriding rule is never to buy anything unless you've seen it in the metal, or it's so cheap that any spares gleaned from the car would be worth more than you paid. As usual, distance comes into play here, so try and limit your search to an area close to home. Once again, it's possible to get carried away so set a limit and don't be tempted beyond it in the last few minutes of the auction when things hot up. It's very hard to get your money back if you are misled and, unfortunately, there are also cases of outright fraud, so be careful.

Auctioneers

Barrett-Jackson	www.barrett-jackson.com
Bonhams	www.bonhams.com
British Car Auctions	www.british-car-auctions.co.uk
Cheffins	www.cheffins.co.uk
Christies	www.christies.com
Coys	www.coys.co.uk
H&H	www.classic-auctions.co.uk
RM	www.rmauctions.com
Shannons	www.shannons.com.au
Silver	www.silverauctions.com
eBay	www.ebay.com/www.ebay.co.uk

13 Do you really want to restore?

– it'll take longer and cost more than you think



The idea of restoring a car is very tempting on many levels, especially if you do it yourself, whether it's the sense of achievement in having saved a Capri from the scrap man, the acquiring and exercising of new skills, better use of your time rather than hours glued to the idiot's lantern or, last but not least, the chance to save some hard earned money.

Bear in mind, however, that the Capri's relatively low market value is in direct conflict with the high cost of repair panels needed to rescue a rusty car, so it's always better to buy the best car that you can afford. If you do opt to do it yourself, even if it's only a few parts of the car, be ruthless in assessing your abilities: can you successfully chop out rot and replace it with new steel without distorting some vital section? Will your paintwork come up to scratch? How many engines have you successfully rebuilt? The skills needed to sort out these problems



Do you have the skills to carry out major restoration work?

can be acquired, but have you enough spare time to do that? Have you got the space, the tools – or enough obliging friends – to lend them to you? Finally, it's very easy to underestimate just how much time is needed to restore a car properly, so have a chat with someone who has done a Capri already. If they're honest they'll likely tell you that it's best to double the amount of time and money you think it will take to see the car completed. This list of potential troubles is not an attempt to put you off, but note that the small ads in magazines are usually well padded with adverts for 'unfinished projects,' and you don't want your dream to end up that way, particularly as it usually entails a financial loss to boot.

The time factor associated with a DIY restoration can be cut down by doing a rolling restoration, but this has its own inherent problems, as jobs do not always conveniently fit into the slots you have allocated for them, and part-restored cars that look a mess tend to attract unwanted attention on today's roads. Paintwork doesn't fit this scenario very well either, so this at least would really have to be done in one go, unless you want to deal with soggy filler, peeling primer and ingrained dirt on every panel.

If you decide to have a professional do the work, the process is potentially just as troublesome, and will most definitely be expensive, as restoration is labour intensive and will almost certainly cost you far more than the market value of the car. If your Capri needs a respray, for example, are you happy with just a flat off, spot prime and top coat, or are you expecting a full glass out, bare metal job? Unless you make your exact requirements crystal clear and commit them to paper, there is always the