

## 2 Cost considerations

– affordable, or a money pit?



### Purchase price

No XJ40 should be more expensive than the cheapest new micro car on the market, but offer a lot more style and safety. They are probably the cheapest Jaguars of all, and even the best cars are comparatively affordable. However, as the saying goes, “there is nothing more expensive than a cheap Jaguar,” so buy the very best you can afford. Those who want a really good



**6.0L: not quite as thirsty as the Spitfire V12.**

car should look at the top of the market and seek out immaculate examples at specialist independent Jaguar dealers, to have a reliable and durable vehicle from the start. Good dealers are choosy and turn away dozens of XJ40s for every top car accepted for resale.

If you just want to try a Jaguar to see if the bug bites, it is possible to find a good car privately, but this book or a knowledgeable friend will be essential to avoid buying a bad example. There is little point paying for a project car or non-runner, since these are often worth little more than scrap value, and are useful more as a parts car or source of cheap upgrades than a ‘fixer-upper.’

### Affordable to run?

For XJ40s to be used regularly it is important to include fuel, servicing, consumables and insurance when deciding whether the car will be affordable to run. Modern cars



**Great value luxury.**

offer solid cars for resale, although Jaguar club advertisements also contain many good private sales. Not surprisingly, the more you pay the better the car – especially from long-established Jaguar specialists with reputations to protect. The cars are often eligible for some kind of warranty cover that can be worth taking out, which is rarely possible to arrange with a private seller.



**Traders normally reject poor cars.**

Dealers usually also offer finance, which is another good reason for using them if you want to buy a higher-priced car. However, if you need finance just to buy the car, be sure your budget can stretch to repair, service and fuel costs.

The dealers buy and sell through trade auctions and you can do the same, where usually a 24 hour warranty is supplied (see Chapter 10). For the very cheapest cars, private sales are normally best – especially from long term owners or fellow enthusiasts who have looked after the car with pride. Avoid major work or rebuild projects unless you know what you are doing.

When phoning an advertiser, simply ask about ‘the car,’ to see if they are selling more than one. This doesn’t guarantee they are a trader, but it’s a strong indication. Once you have discussed the car, ask how long they have owned it and what papers they have. Good ownership involves significant maintenance, so they should have either receipts for parts if they have done work themselves, or bills from a service shop. Dealers may know less about a car but should have some documentation.

### **Condition (body/chassis/interior/mechanicals)**

Query the car’s condition in as specific terms as possible – preferably citing the checklist items described in Chapter 9.

### **Viewing arrangements**

It’s always preferable to view at the seller’s business or private home, not at the roadside or a car park. A private seller’s name and address should be on the car’s documents, so beware excuses for why they aren’t. Have at least one viewing in daylight and preferably dry weather to check the paint and body properly. If you have to view in wet weather use the opportunity to check for screen leaks or wet boot or interior carpet.

## 9 Serious evaluation

– 60 minutes for years of enjoyment



You need to inspect your lead candidate car(s) thoroughly to decide on purchase and price. Tick the appropriate box for each check and total the points. Be realistic where bodywork is concerned and vigilant for V12 engine faults.

Ex 4 Gd 3 Av 2 Po 1

### Overall stance

If the car has self-levelling suspension, ask that it be left overnight before you arrive, to see if the rear rises slightly on start-up. Once running (or at any time if no SLS is fitted) an XJ40 should sit flat and level front to back and side to side, or very slightly higher at the rear, especially with low fuel load (check the gauge). The heavy V12 can sag at the front also, and thus be level, but low. Note that cars with SportsPack suspension or low-profile tyres on standard wheels will sit lower.

On level ground the bottom of the front subframe should be about 160mm above ground with 215 width tyres and 155mm with 205s. An easier but less precise method is to measure from the top of the wheelarch through the centre of the wheel to the ground. Unladen with half a tank of petrol, a normal car will sit around 660-665mm high at this point, and again, level or slightly higher at the rear.



Bryan Neish's perfectly level Sovereign.

### Body panels

Ex 4 Gd 3 Av 2 Po 1

A good XJ40 should have undistorted panels with even shut lines and the doors following the body contours not sticking out at the base. Look for filler bulges along the bottom of doors or wings and around the headlamps, arches and sills. Feel the wheelarch returns for rough metal or double thickness or seams from repairs, especially at the lower front area of the rear sills. Loose or missing mud shields in the front wheelarch can hide rot, so clean and inspect by torchlight. The area around the filler flap can suffer badly and the radiator support crossmember is an inspection fail if unsound, but may not be visible with the undertray in place.

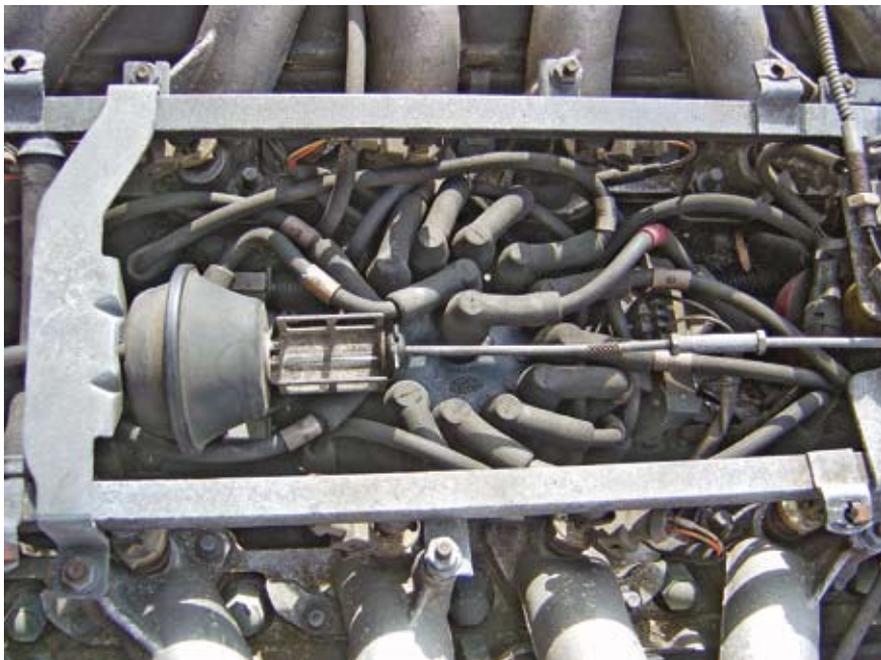


Slightly higher at the rear is OK.

Hans Goerlitzer's perfect panel gaps.



Advance retard and timing are taken care of by the ignition ECU. The Marelli system in the 6.0L is also much more than merely a trigger system, although because of the unusual twin-track rotor and cap design, you should always use original Marelli components to avoid the very rare chance of one bank cutting out and starting a catalyst fire. Note that some engine diagnostics and other electrical issues such as blown fuses can be checked using the Vehicle Condition Monitor (VCM) console on the right of the steering wheel. Full instructions and code meanings are beyond the scope of this book but can be found on [www.jag-lovers.org](http://www.jag-lovers.org) and in the Jaguar manuals.



**Check for genuine Marelli parts on V12s.**

### **Evaluation procedure**

Add up the total points. Score: **100 = perfect; 75 = good; 50 = average; 25 = buyer beware!** Cars scoring over 70 should be completely useable and require the minimum of repair, although continued maintenance and care will be required to keep them in condition. Cars scoring between 25-51 will require serious restoration (at much the same cost regardless of score). Cars scoring between 52-69 will require very careful assessment of necessary repair/restoration costs in order to reach a realistic value.

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# 13 Do you really want to restore?

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



XJ40 cars are sufficiently modern that it is probably easier, cheaper and quicker to search out a good example than try to rectify significant faults on a poor car. There will be plenty to keep you occupied even on a good car, but setting out to repair a car that is already in need of major work is certainly not cost-effective and unlikely to be especially satisfying either, unless you obtain the car for very little, or you want to learn your way around Jaguars.



**It is best to buy a good car initially.**

Restoring an XJ40 is nothing like repairing a simple older car, as there are lots of electronic component and circuit faults which can't be diagnosed, much less repaired, without specialist knowledge and some equipment. This puts them in a different class to simpler cars from an earlier era which are never likely to disappoint an owner due to spiralling costs or complexity of repair. If you have never restored a car before, you would be well-advised to learn the necessary skills on something simpler and cheaper and of lower performance potential.

Because XJ40s are 'aspirational' purchases for some, a lot of cars are bought on emotion, which have an apparently clean exterior that hides a rotten body smartened up to sell. If you already have such a car, or have decided to buy one in need of work, or even know where you can obtain one for free, ask yourself whether it makes sense. The cars are rarely, if ever, worth what they cost to restore so it normally makes far more sense to buy one in decent condition and avoid major work. By the same token, you should think twice before taking on a car with, for example, a great and inviting interior or engine but terminal rot below the waistline. One look into the leather and wood interior of a clean car can cause buyers to be



**Can you handle a sea of warning lights?**