

7 Fifteen minute evaluation

– walk away or stay?



Road test

Ensure you have adequate insurance cover – it is vital you road test any car you are considering purchasing. This should be agreed with the owner prior to viewing. Ask them, if practical, not to warm the engine, allowing you to start it from cold.



A road test is vital to get a feel for the car, and to help identify any issues.

From the driver's seat, ensure all the usual controls you will need are working correctly: electric seat adjustment, steering wheel, mirrors, and pedals. These cars have keyless ignition so you must have the key fob with you in the car to start it. With your foot on the brake pedal, push the starter button allowing the engine to cycle. Drop the driver's window so you can listen to the engine. Listen for rattles or other noises from the under-bonnet area, or for blows from the exhaust system. Engine rattles on start-up could be attributable to worn timing dampers. If the engine has no 'zest' when starting this could be just down to a poor battery.

If there are no error messages, there isn't a lot of information on the instrument pack to help identify problems.





Check the overall condition of paintwork on the inside of doors and sills.

Moving to the side of the car, check again in detail that there are no undulations or minor dents which could prove difficult and costly to rectify. It's also worth checking for the usual chips around the edges of the doors where they have been caught against walls and other vehicles. Even touching up can be expensive if done correctly by an expert.

Next, open the doors and check the condition of the paintwork inside, which should be as good as it is externally. Particularly note that the identification sticker is still on the B post passenger (nearside) area. This shows key information about the car and should never be removed – if it appears to have been removed and then refitted, this could be a sign of large amounts of paintwork having been carried out, extensive bodywork repairs, or something more sinister (see Chapter 11).

As the rear wings protrude slightly, and some will have rubber extensions fitted to the wheelarches to accommodate wider wheels and tyres, check these areas are in good condition.

At the rear of the car look for bad scuffs, or cracking due to minor impact. The rear bumpers and edges of all panels can accumulate a build-up of road debris, and, of course, stone chips, so check all areas. Apart from the bumper/spoiler/valance, all these panels are aluminium, but check the plastic areas for cracks and other damage. The Convertible's flat aluminium boot lid can easily be cratered if someone has pressed down hard on the top as they close the lid, or from putting heavy objects on it.

That brings us back to the matter of aluminium corrosion – a form of oxidation. The cause is interaction between the alloy panels and rubber seals in close proximity, or poor preparation at the factory, and it normally shows only on the



Look for disturbed stickers on the A and B posts.

conditions such as going through a tunnel. One common issue relates to the 'fire on ground studs' (there is one in each wheelarch by the damper). These studs corrode due to their position (road dirt ingress), and eventually fall off! The stud is the main ground point for the headlight on the same side, so the entire light will stop working. Jaguar supplies new studs which can be fitted to the body with no welding (just like a large pop rivet). LED bulbs featured in the rear light units, and, if any of these LEDs are not illuminating, this could be an MOT failure, necessitating replacement of the whole light unit.



Check that the HID headlights work, as they are very expensive to replace.



The later type light units fitted to XKs from 2011. A totally different design, incorporating running lights.



Ensure rear light units are not damaged, as the edges are sharp and easily cracked if they have been previously removed.

Exhaust, wheels and tyres

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All XK exhausts are durable stainless steel and should present no problems. Some sellers may well have fitted aftermarket systems so it is worth checking for any excessive noise levels that detract from the general refinement of the car, and for badly-fitting systems. Exhaust heat shields have been known to become insecure, eventually dropping on to the exhaust system, causing rattling. All the exhaust tailpipes have chrome finishes, and it is a sign that previous owners have taken care if these are clean and polished rather than left to go rusty.

Alloy wheels were standard on all models, with a proliferation of different styles with 18in, 19in and 20in diameters. The important thing to check is that they all match, not just in style but also in size! Such wheels are vulnerable to damage



Check exhaust systems for rattles from loose brackets. Aftermarket systems can sometimes create annoying resonances.



The J-gate style transmission system of the 4.2-litre engine models.



The JaguarDrive system used on all 5.0-litre models.

should not be harsh. If there are any signs of a sluggish change or harsh changes, this needs investigating.

The gearbox is identified as a 'sealed for life' unit, but in reality needs regular oil and filter changes – not a DIY job – gearbox temperatures have to be maintained, and special equipment is required to extract the old oil and insert the new oil. The oil



Earlier XKs have a type of differential that was later changed. To replace these is an extremely expensive job as it affects the entire driveline.

sump of the gearbox incorporates the filter and both are replaceable items, not reusable. If buying a car with over 80,000 miles on the clock, it is worth asking the owner if an oil/filter change has been done.

An issue relates to the earlier 4.2-litre XKs which used rear axle differentials supplied by Visteon. If they leak badly or become noisy, they cannot be replaced with the same unit, as it is no longer available. The later Dana differential needs to be fitted, which needs a full kit including propshaft and driveshafts.

Brakes and steering

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The brakes and steering are not only very reliable, but are also particularly effective. Given good driving conditions, the rack and pinion steering system will last over 200,000 miles without replacement or concern.

The all-round disc brakes system is also an excellent one. If the brakes pull to one side on application, or you feel a judder through the pedal, it is a sure sign that the discs are warped and near the end of their life. Even if there isn't the opportunity to remove the road wheels, the condition of the discs can be checked, in many cases, through the alloy wheels. Corrosion around the edges, and grooves in the

16 The Community

– key people, organisations and companies in the Jaguar XK world



These XKs have long been aspirational cars, and still have a strong following. With the number produced over a relatively short period, there are now cars to suit most enthusiasts' pockets.

The franchised Jaguar dealer network still maintains many of these cars, and are happy to continue looking after the older examples, and Jaguar Cars still supplies the majority of parts required. There is now a strong network of Jaguar independent specialists, who also maintain these vehicles, and spares businesses, already well known for the supply of parts for classic Jaguars, are now also catering for these XKs. There are also a few authorised dismantlers, who can supply refurbished secondhand parts.

The cars are very well supported by Jaguar marque clubs and internet sites, so there is ample opportunity to find out more from existing owners, and seek advice when required. And finally, even though these cars are still relatively new, some insurance companies are already treating them as cherished vehicles, so allowing owners to obtain reasonable car insurance.

Clubs

The Jaguar Drivers' Club

18 Stuart Street,
Luton,
Bedfordshire LU1 2SL
Tel: +44 (0)1582 419332
www.jaguardriver.co.uk

The oldest of the Jaguar marque clubs based in the UK catering for all models with a monthly magazine, insurance scheme and a good overseas network.

The Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club

Abbeywood Office Park,
Emma Chris Way, Filton,
Bristol BS34 7JU
Tel: +4 (0)1179 698186
www.jec.org.uk

The world's largest Jaguar club catering for all models with a special Forum and technical seminars for XK owners. 140pg full colour monthly magazine, insurance schemes, technical advice, specialist tools supply and hire plus events, tours and runs.

Join a club. In this instance, the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club runs regular seminars on models (including the X-150), at which you can learn a lot.

