



### An XJ-S loves long runs.

could happily use for long trips can be bought for ●x2000-4000, and if you don't mind the occasional reliability hiccup you can buy one for half that. Go much cheaper, though, and you are definitely into risky territory and can expect significant problems, bills, or both. Many cars are coming to the end of their life and being scrapped, so avoid becoming the last owner of a wreck, unless you are happy to buy a succession of ultra-cheap cars and discard each as it breaks down. If you want to maximize the chances of your bargain car actually lasting for a year, buy carefully and use the information in this book.

### Restore or replace?

High value Jaguars are often bought as projects and rebuilt before finally being put back on the road. This can be done with an XJ-S, but the logic is less persuasive, since a complete running car is not that expensive. Also, a full restoration inevitably costs more than the finished car is worth, whereas buying a runner means you enjoy the car from day one.

### Servicing

Servicing frequency depends on usage, including periods of storage. Typical intervals are as follows:

<b>Job</b>	<b>Interval</b>
Basic oil change	3000 miles
Annual service	6000 miles or 12 months
Major service	18,000 miles or 3 yearly?
Adjust valve clearances	24,000 miles or 4 yearly
Other?	As needed

## 4 Relative values

– which model for you?



### Models

Discounting certain specials, there are three basic body shapes and two basic engines to choose from, although the last cars used modernised versions of each engine. The most common XJ-S is the Coupé, with the Convertibles next and Cabriolets rarest. Prior to Jaguar making its own Convertibles in 1989, a fair number of American Coupés were very attractively converted in 1988 by Hess & Eisenhardt, and by UK coachbuilders Lynx, Banham, and Avon. The unique three-door Lynx Eventer estate version also comes up for sale occasionally. Parts for specials can be extremely hard to obtain, however, such as the tailgate for the Lynx and petrol tank and rear windows for H & E cars.

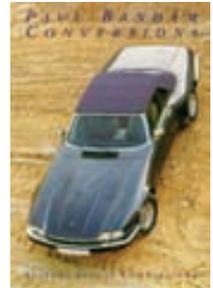
For year-round use the Coupé is hard to beat, but for high days and holidays Convertibles are superb, being also extremely civilized to drive with the fully-lined top up. The Cabriolets, once a stop-gap model, are now being snapped up for offering true top-down thrills with arguably neater looks than the hardtop, and less scuttle shake than the full Convertible. The choice of 6 or 12 cylinders is mostly an emotional and financial issue, since even the sixes are rapid – especially in manual form.

The earliest cars, with narrow black bumpers and no cabin wood, look the most sporting; they were also the only V12s offered with manual gears from the factory (circa 350 cars were so equipped), and tend to go to collectors and people who value the purity of design, provided they can live with the fuel bills. The later, plusher HE cars are a better daily proposition, and in face-lift form also have reasonably long-lasting, zinc-coated bodies.

The limited number of available Cabriolets means they are becoming sought-after: a genuinely practical car, they do need close inspection for body problems. The face-lift cars divide opinion: some consider them the neatest, sleekest of all versions, whilst others regard them as little more than a bland Americanised version of a true classic. In terms of creature comforts, however, they had the most standard equipment.



**6.0L XJR-S: rare, fast and expensive.**



**Paul Banham special – hard to price.**



**Guy Salmon cars – turkey or triumph?**



**Sills frequently corrode.**



**Carefully check converted Coupé sill reinforcement.**

Cabriolets and Convertibles are present, and pay special attention to the front and rear lower corners of the door aperture. Jack the car at the rear jacking point near the radius arm mount. The heavy rear suspension hangs from and strains the body in the angle of the door to open up any cracks that are hidden when the car is on its wheels. Repeat for the front jacking point. Be very picky about rust in these areas and probe any repairs carefully.

### **Bonnet and inner wings**

The XJ-S bonnet tends to rust along the front edge, but is generally okay. Use

Ex 4 Gd 3 Av 2 Po 1

eyes and fingers to look for evidence of accident repair or an engine fire. Inner wings should be free of corrosion at the front bottom corner where they meet the chassis rails, along the top edge where they attach, and especially around the top shock absorber mounts. Chassis rails should be undamaged and not creased or patched from an accident.



**Look around bonnet edges for rust.**

**Bad upper wing channel corrosion.**

### **Bootlid**

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Rust starts inside the plinth and main pressing, and the reversing lamp holder. The bottom edge corrodes due to



**Boot plinth can hide problems.**



**Leaking quarterlight seal.**

## Body seals

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XJ-S refinement is due to effective sealing of closures (which is less good on Convertibles). Check that all rubber seals are present and functional, and Furflex aperture trim is properly attached to keep out dust and noise. The transverse scuttle seam just ahead of the wipers has a rubber noise/water seal across the car. Front wheelarch filler panels have similar edge seals to prevent

front sill and wing cavity corrosion, but these sometimes fit badly.

Window channel felt glass seals should be snug to prevent wind whistle or window rattle. The horizontal external window wiper seals and felt internal strips should be supple to avoid scratching the window when raised or lowered. Face-lift cars have frameless doors and should seal well.

## Wheels and tyres

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Standard XJ-S wheels are 15- or 16-inch diameter alloys, usually of Kent design on pre-HE, Starfish on HE, Pepperpot on 3.6, Lattice, five spoke or Speedline on others and various special designs. Sometimes, XJ saloon wheels are fitted but the offset is different, so check for fouling on brakes, wheels or wheelarches. Don't drive an XJ-S with old tyres. Original sizes give the best ride and speedometer accuracy and must be the correct rating and condition for such a heavy, fast car.



**Rare bolt-on wire wheels.**



**Rare aerodynamic TWR wheels.**

## Exhaust

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All XJ-S cars used twin exhausts with characteristic tailpipe trims. The system is large and expensive, especially on V12s, so check for condition and attachment. Check that the rear silencers clear the bodywork recess and over-axle pipes clear suspension components. Loose manifold to down pipe joints can often be rectified by tightening any loose nuts, but other hissing or blowing noises could indicate a failed gasket or stripped studs, etc. Because of limited access, manifold leaks are significantly harder to repair on V12s.

to the point where a thicker head gasket is required to restore normal compression. HE V12 engines that have been run slowly for weeks can emit alarming smoke when revved hard, but this should clear after a few minutes and not recur during the test. Remember that 'slow' for a V12 is still in excess of many speed limits, so revving and holding in first or second gear, rather than top, is recommended for these 'Italian tune-ups.'



Too shiny for some, but clean!

USA spec with air injection.



**Transmission** Ex 4 Gd 3 Av 2 Po 1

Most XJ-Ss are automatics, with either the trusty GM three speed gearboxes or later 4-speed switchable version. These give little trouble provided transmission fluid is kept clean and topped up (check for brown discoloration and a burnt smell). The first to second change is imperceptible on a good automatic and happens at slow speeds usually, with the second to third change occurring soon afterward on light throttle, but available on kickdown. Check for torque lock-up

Awkward hoses on an AJ6.