

## Jaguar XF Saloon

### WhatCar? verdict



**For:**

The XF looks wonderful, has a fabulous cabin and svelte road manners. Worthy winner of the 2008 Car of the Year.

**Against:**

The low-speed ride is a little firm and there are no small-capacity tax-saving engines



### On the road verdict

#### Performance



There's brisk and there's fast

There are V6 and V8 petrol and diesel engines, all with a six-speed automatic gearbox. Heading the range is a supercharged 4.2-litre V8 that's decidedly quick, though not in a brash way. The normal 4.2 V8 is less urgent at low revs but still very brisk above 3000rpm. The 3.0 V6 gives more reasonable fuel bills, but the lean and clean 2.7 V6 diesel is our pick.

#### Ride and handling



Wonderful. Just a hint of firmness at low speed

Jaguar has an amazing ability to produce cars that are as sharp as a tack to drive, but as smooth as molten chocolate to ride in. There's a bit of firmness at low speeds, but it's not jarring, and once you're going at a decent pace, the XF displays a terrific balance of control and suppleness. The supercharged car has electronically controlled damping that makes it better in both disciplines.

#### Refinement



Outside world? What outside world?

To say there's no noise inside the XF would be a lie. You can hear the V8s gurgling and growling at times. What Jaguar has done is to expel unwanted noise, such as from the road, wind or other traffic. The six-speed auto gearbox shifts smoothly most of the time, but in sport programme, there are definite steps in the downshifts when braking hard.

### Ownership verdict

#### Buying



Large engines mean fairly high costs

Unlike Jaguars of old, the XF is not a cheap car when compared with the opposition, and the absence of small-capacity four-cylinder petrol and diesel engines means running costs and company car tax bills are quite high. The XF is good value, though, because of the high standard specification.

#### Quality



Fine materials nicely assembled

From the stitched leather dash and door cappings to the aluminium and wood furnishings and the blue mood lighting, the XF looks expensive and stands comparison with all but the very best. The company's reliability seems to be right up there, too: in the most recent JD Power survey, Jaguar finished a very creditable fifth.

#### Safety and security



A full house

The XF has all that's expected and more - not only does it protect its occupants with systems to help you avoid accidents and others to minimise the effects of one, but it also looks after pedestrians by using a bonnet that springs up in the event of a collision. There's no shortage of security kit, either, so your investment should be well protected.

### In the cabin verdict

#### Behind the wheel



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Good to look at; easy to use

You're reminded of just how modern this car is every time you look at the dash. From its theatrical start-up procedure to its lighting and materials, it's like no other Jag. Despite this, it's all so easy and instinctive to use. The driving position is good, too, but visibility is restricted from several angles.

### Space and practicality



Slope of the roof cuts headroom

You can't have a coupe-like roofline without sacrificing some headroom, while the transmission tunnel makes it a car for two in the back rather than three. Only the tallest adults will suffer, though, and legroom is fine. There's also a proper boot - a minimum of 500 litres, with fold-down rear seats so you can enlarge it.

### Equipment



All included in the price

Jaguar has given us a no-holds-barred specification list that leaves little to be added and explains the XF's comparatively high pricing. You don't just get the expected (wood, leather, air-con) either: modern features such as touch-screen sat-nav with voice controls and iPod connectivity are also in there.

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