



CAR and DRIVER ROAD TEST

SHELBY MUSTANG GT 350H

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Let Hertz Put You
In the GT 350's Seat

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Seriously, the alliance between Shelby and Hertz has eliminated the necessity of owning a sports car. Now the enthusiast can have his cake and eat it too. Rates vary according to locale: in the New York area it was a moderate \$17 per day (or \$70 per week) and 17 cents per mile. Hertz wouldn't rent us one when there was snow on the ground; said they didn't have snow tires for it. (New York has a law that says you get towed off the roads in a "snow emergency" if you don't have approved snow tires.)

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the new high-performance automatic transmission, although a limited number will be available with 4-speed manual transmissions for the do-or-die purists. Said *puristi* will have to join the Hertz Sports Car Club, the qualification for membership being a demonstration of your ability to operate a manual gearbox. Hertz then gives you a little card, so the next time you want to rent a stick shift Shelby Mustang, you just flash your smile and your HSSC card.

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race the car as a Group 2 sedan; the 1000 examples Shelby will produce for Hertz fulfill the FIA's minimum production requirement.

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high-performance, 271-horsepower Mustangs are delivered to the Shelby American factory near Los Angeles International Airport, where they are rebuilt to GT 350 specifications. Wide-base wheels and 130-mph 7.75 x 15 Goodyear Blue Streaks are fitted, as are trailing arms at the rear, a one-inch anti-sway bar at the front, and Koni's all around. The front suspension geometry is altered, the steering speeded up, and a chassis brace is installed across the engine compartment between the upper shock mounts. The front brakes are 11-inch Kelsey-Hayes discs with heavy-duty pads; the rear brakes are 10 x 3-inch drums (3/4-inch wider than stock) with sintered metallic linings. Finned, cast aluminum rocker covers and sump are bolted on, as is a high-riser intake manifold and a big 4-barrel carb with 1.7-inch venturis and center-pivot floats so it won't cut out in turns. This, along with fabricated steel headers and low-restriction mufflers, boosts the horsepower figure by 35, to 306 @ 6000 (vs. stock 271 @ 6000), and the torque from 312 lbs.-ft. @ 3400 to 329 lbs.-ft. @ 4200. Final touches include the rear brake scoops, a new hood



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Last year, one staffer characterized one of the first GT 350s as a "brand-new clapped-out race car" and likened it to a World War II fighter plane. For '66 the car has been considerably refined, though it's still a tough, for-men-only machine, requiring strong arms to twist the steering wheel, strong legs to push the pedals, and strong kidneys to survive the ride. The exhaust pipes, which used to end just ahead of the rear wheels (stock-car style, and right under your ear) have been lengthened and rerouted to terminate aft of the rear axle. This change has made the noise level more bearable, and almost solved the problem we mentioned last year of exhaust fumes seeping into the cockpit. The

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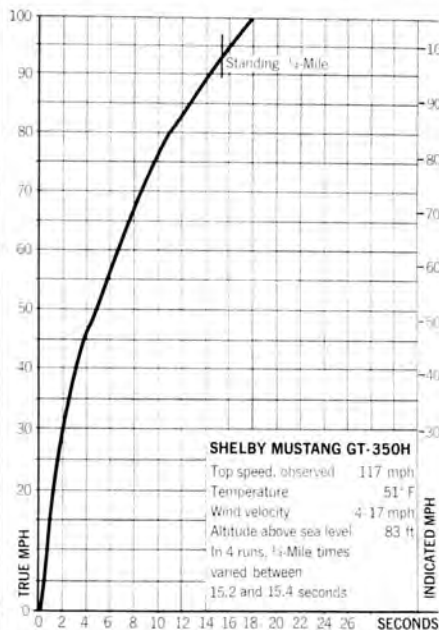


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Manufacturer: Shelby American, Inc.
6501 W. Imperial Highway
Los Angeles, Calif.
Price as Tested: \$17/day or \$70/week, plus
17¢/mile

ACCELERATION

Zero To	Seconds
30 mph	2.1
40 mph	3.1
50 mph	4.9
60 mph	6.6
70 mph	8.9
80 mph	10.8
90 mph	14.2
100 mph	17.9
Standing ¼ mile	93 mph in 15.2



ENGINE

Water-cooled V-8, cast iron block, 5 main bearings
Bore x stroke . . . 4.00 x 2.87 in, 101.6 x 72.9 mm
Displacement 289 cu. in, 4727 cc
Compression ratio 10.5 to one
Carburetion Single 4-barrel, 1.7-in venturis
Valve gear, Pushrod-operated ohv, solid lifters
Power (SAE) 306 bhp @ 6000 rpm
Torque 329 lbs-ft @ 4200 rpm
Specific power output 1.05 bhp per cu. in,
64.4 bhp per liter
Usable range of engine speeds, 800-6000 rpm
Electrical system, 12-volt, 55 amp-hr battery,
Fuel recommended Super premium
Mileage 6-12 mpg
Range on 16-gallon tank 96-192 miles

DRIVE TRAIN

Transmission . . . 3-speed automatic with torque converter

Gear	Ratio	Overall	mph/1000 rpm	Max mph
Rev	2.80	10.29	-7.0	-42
1st	2.46	9.57	7.9	47
2nd	1.46	5.68	13.4	80
3rd	1.00	3.89	19.5	117
Final drive ratio			3.89 to one	

CHASSIS

Platform steel frame, semi-integral steel body
Wheelbase 108.0 in
Track F: 57.0, R: 57.0 in
Length 181.6 in
Width 68.2 in
Height 51.2 in
Ground Clearance 5.3 in
Curb Weight 2884 lbs
Test Weight 3158 lbs
Weight distribution front/rear 52/48%
Pounds per bhp (test weight) 10.9

Suspension F: Ind., upper wishbone, lower control arm and drag strut, coil springs, anti-sway bar
R: Rigid axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, trailing arms

Brakes, F: 11.3-in Kelsey-Hayes discs, R: 10 x 3-in drums, 408 sq in swept area
Steering Recirculating ball
Turns, lock to lock 4.0
Turning circle 4.0 ft
Tires and wheels 7.75 x 15 Goodyear Blue Streaks on 6JK rims

CHECK LIST

ENGINE

Starting Very Good
Response Excellent
Noise Fair
Vibration Very Good

DRIVE TRAIN

Clutch action —
Transmission linkage Good
Synchromesh action —
Power-to-ground transmission Very Good

BRAKES

Response Very Good
Pedal pressure Poor
Fade resistance Very Good
Smoothness Good
Directional stability Good

STEERING

Response Good
Accuracy Good
Feedback Good
Road feel Good

SUSPENSION

Harshness control Fair
Roll stiffness Very Good
Tracking Excellent
Pitch control Very Good
Shock damping Very Good

CONTROLS

Location Good
Relationship Good
Small controls Good

INTERIOR

Visibility Good
Instrumentation Good
Lighting Good
Entry/exit Good
Front seating comfort Very Good
Front seating room Very Good
Rear seating comfort Fair
Rear seating room Poor
Storage space Very Good
Wind noise Fair
Road noise Fair

WEATHER PROTECTION

Heater Excellent
Defroster Excellent
Ventilation Good
Weather sealing Good
Windshield wiper action Very Good

QUALITY CONTROL

Materials, exterior Very Good
Materials, interior Fair
Exterior finish Very Good
Interior finish Fair
Hardware and trim Fair

GENERAL

Service accessibility Very Good
Luggage space Fair
Bumper protection Fair
Exterior lighting Very Good
Resistance to crosswinds Very Good



SHELBY MUSTANG (Continued from page 70)

seats. A carry-over feature is the use of USAF-style, three-inch-wide seat belts with-metal-to-metal buckles and quick release mechanisms, just like the racing cars.

The changes for '66 have made the GT 350 more civilized, and we still think it's a great sports car in the classic tradition, but there are some aspects of Shelby's metamorphosis that we criticize. Prime among them is the car's interior appearance—which, after all, is what the driver spends most of his time looking at. It looks too much like any run-of-the-mill Mustang that half-a-million average Americans are using for utility transportation.

We also found fault with the rear seats and quarter windows. Construction of both was rough-and-ready, and in poor condition after only 5000 miles. The upholstery was beginning to tear, the trim was starting to come loose, and rain leaked around the plexiglass window. The rear seats are none too comfortable, but, surprisingly, better than the last notchback Mustang we drove. But it's sports car, not a bloody bus, and besides, few of our complaints would bother the man who only rented the car.

The staff was most impressed with the looks of the GT 350H. It makes any stock Mustang look sick, particularly with those oversize tires and stylized wheels. We were also favorably impressed with the overall performance and general roadability of the car. The engine is lively and responsive, and does a much better job of getting its power to the ground than any of the six "Super Cars" we tested in the March issue.

The automatic transmission felt a bit like the one used in the Ford Fairlane GT/A of our "Super Car" test, but better on part-throttle acceleration. Shelby American modifies this transmission to shift at 5500 rpm at full throttle, although the driver can hold it in each of the three gears with the shifter. Our shifts were made at 6000 rpm, and the acceleration times compare favorably with those for the 4-speed. Starting without wheel-spin, the automatic actually has an edge on the 4-speed up to about 45 mph. Wheelspin can be induced by "pumping up" the converter (using brake and throttle simultaneously), but even then the tires have the situation well in hand—there's no fish-tailing or useless clouds of smoke. Shifts are crisp and clean, probably faster than anybody but a drag racer could achieve with a manual. Fuel

economy doesn't seem to suffer much, and it loses only two miles an hour of top speed. Flat-out, the car has a high, hammering note. At highway speeds, the changing pitch of the automatic shift jangled some people's nerves. The idle is lumpy, but in a way that promises good things to come.

Good things do come for the driver of a GT 350. Its cornering ability is a lovely mixture of the beast getting the better of you and you keeping hold of the tiger's tail. The taut suspension, well-controlled geometry, and big tires suffice to keep it on the road at insane speeds, and when it starts to slide, you can wrestle the slide in the direction of your choice. Its steering characteristic is pretty neutral, tending toward understeer. Driven too deep and too fast into a corner, the car can be "saved" by backing off (which scrubs off speed), by giving it part throttle (which squats the tail down for a better bite), or by full throttle (which gets the tail out and tightens up the turning radius). If steering with your right foot gets boring, you can always give the steering wheel a wrench to make the front end perform appropriate maneuvers. Needless to say, the GT 350 is more fun to drive than anything since the Mini-Cooper S. Maybe more fun than the Mini; at least when you floor the Mustang, it *moves*.

The level of creature comfort on long trips is amazingly high. There is a screw adjustment for the seat back rake angle which we unbolted to let the seat flop as far backward as it would go. Head-, foot-, and hip-room are good, but the door is a little close to the shoulder. The trunk space would be pitifully inadequate, except that the rear seats fold down to provide a huge luggage platform. Even with the seat up, there's a shelf under the rear window, like the VW's. Vision all around is excellent, as is the heater (it was one of the few cars in recent memory that could warm up its occupants on a sub-zero morning within five minutes of starting), but there was one thing we worried about constantly: the NASCAR style hood pins. The normal latching mechanism is removed, so the pins are the only thing holding the lid down. When some little brat steals the pins as souvenirs, you have to start looking for a 3/8-inch twig. Moral: When driving a GT 350 through treeless country, run over any kid who even looks at your automobile with envy. And for sure, they all will. **cjd**