



CAR and DRIVER ROAD TEST

JAGUAR XK-E 2+2

The 2+2 stands right up there with the 3.8-S sedan as one of the most desirable Jags ever built



The 2+2 version of Jaguar's super-sexy XK-E is the most useful and up-to-date car of its type produced in England today. The Ferrari 330/GT 2+2 is faster and more sophisticated, and the BMW 2000CS coupe is much more commodious, but this Jaguar is definitely Britain's top contender in the almost-four-passenger GT category. And, what's more, compared to most of its peers in this league, its price is quite a bargain, too.

Until we'd lived with the Jaguar 2+2 for awhile, our favorite Jag was the 3.8-S sedan, because it was the only car they built that gave us GT performance in a package large enough to accommodate human bod-

ies of American dimensions. The two-place XK-E, alas, made only a token attempt to fit us into its tight little cockpit, and lanky Americans had to assume some pretty uncomfortable positions if they were to enjoy full use of their arms and legs while driving one.

Until very recently, Jaguar test cars have been nearly impossible to obtain, and for almost a year we had only the word of our British correspondent, Bill Gavin, to assure us that the 2+2 XK-E had changed all that business about cramped interiors. Finally, he was proved right. Jaguar's headquarters people in New York volunteered a beautifully prepared 2+2, finished in gleaming yel-

low with chrome wheels and a black interior, and sent us out into the streets to play. Within two blocks it was apparent that this was a better Jaguar.

We happen to view all Borg-Warner automatic transmissions with disgust and loathing, and our test car featured a four-speed manual gearbox as a result. The combination of the updated 4.2-liter engine and the all-synchro gearbox that Jag developed as a companion piece make the car fast, very responsive, and as flexible as foreign policy. We drove straight to our garage, admired the Jag for a moment, then charged up to the office to tell everybody how much we liked it.

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Some of our contemporaries in the world of car magazines have carped mildly about the lack of adequate leg room for the rear-seat passengers, but never mind, you guys, the average driver spends the bulk of his time in the front seats anyway, and wonderful things have happened there. They increased the wheelbase from 96 to 105 in. to make room for the rear seat, but what they *really* did was make room for the front seat. Eureka! Leg room! And again, to make allowances for rear-seat passengers, they raised the roofline a couple of inches, increased the height of the windshield, and—amazing!—you can drive it without scrunching down to see the passing scenery or to avoid whacking your

head on the roof as you cross the frost-heaves and railroad tracks. It's comfortable!

Make no mistake, it still incorporates enough traditional Jaguar touches to keep it from pure perfection—like the utter lack of sufficient interior ventilation, the rear suspension that smites you sharply at the base of the spine with every bump and expansion strip, and the outside door handles that fit so flush to the body that you can't get your fingers into them to open the doors. But nobody's perfect, right? This car has progressed so far beyond anything we dreamed possible from its builder ten years ago that it seems like a major breakthrough. It doesn't even overheat in traffic, and we didn't

have to pour cold water over the intake manifold to start it even once!

The 2+2's added length and height make it look a little ungainly from some angles—the windshield seems terribly vertical, and the side glass becomes very tall and flat-looking, relative to the lower half of the bodywork. The top and the bottom don't quite match somehow, but the overall effect is only marginally less spectacular than in the case of the closely-coupled two-seater XK-E. People still drop everything to ogle the car, and it got compliments wherever it went—despite the fact that this basic shape has been on the streets now for over five years.

The engine design is at least as



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old as Georgie Jessel, but it doesn't seem to make any difference. It just gets stronger and smoother and more reliable every time they bore it out some more or make another detail refinement. It weighs too much, and its stroke is too long, and it costs too much to fix, but when it's propelling you down the road at anything over seventy-five you are quite willing to believe that it's the newest, most modern power-plant in the industry.

They rate its horsepower as 265 at 5400, but those are very strong British horses. It pulls and responds like it had many more than the stated figure. The boring-out from 3.8 to 4.2 didn't change the horsepower figure, but it did increase torque from 260 lbs./ft. at 4000 to 283 lbs./ft. at the same rpm. And torque, let's not kid ourselves, is still the name of the game in most enthusiast-driving situations. Whatever it is, the engine winds easily to its 5500 redline, and seems delighted to run at the high end of its rpm range forever.

The Jag's classic dohc straight-six engine first came to these shores in 1949 as the powerplant in the XK-120—which arrival was probably the most important automotive event for the enthusiast community in the last thirty years. It was 3.4 liters, and they advertised 160 horsepower and 132 miles per hour. Those two facts made it the most talked-about car of the age. We'd all seen an MG or two, but none of us had ever seen anything so tiny, so sexy, that would go so fast. Nobody who loved cars back in those days will ever forget the time he saw and heard his first XK-120.

That engine grew in fame and horsepower during the early Fifties, powering a succession of Le Mans winners, not to mention a series of Jaguar production models that seemed to get fatter and less interesting in direct proportion to their model numbers. It seemed finally that everybody absolutely adored the D-type racing car but wanted very little to do with the XK-150 series street machines. The air was filled with rumors that the D-type would become Jaguar's next production sports car, and it almost did.

A 262-horsepower XK-SS was an-

(Continued on page 112)



We sampled the automatic (above) and the 4-speed manual box and preferred the latter.



The rear seat accommodates children best; the 2+2's advantage is more driver leg room.

JAGUAR XK-E 2+2

Importer: Jaguar Cars, Inc.
32 East 57th St.
New York, N.Y. 10016

Number of dealers in U.S.: 425

Vehicle type: Front-engine, rear-wheel-drive, 2+2-passenger sports car, all-steel monocoque chassis with front sub-frame.

Price as tested: \$6517.50

(Manufacturer's suggested retail price, plus Federal excise tax, dealer preparation and delivery charges; does not include state and local taxes, license or freight charges)

Options on test car: Chrome wire wheels, white-wall tires, radio, outside mirror

ENGINE

Type: Water-cooled 6-in-line, cast iron block, aluminum 12-port head, 7 main bearings
Bore x stroke... 3.63 x 4.17 in, 92.1 x 106 mm
Displacement... 258 cu in, 4235 cc
Compression ratio... 9.0 to one
Carburetion... 3 x 1-bbl SU HD8
Valve gear... Chain-driven double overhead camshafts
Power (SAE)... 265 bhp @ 5400 rpm
Torque (SAE)... 283 lbs/ft @ 4000 rpm
Specific power output... 1.03 bhp/cu in, 62.7 bhp/liter
Max. recommended engine speed... 5500 rpm

DRIVE TRAIN

Transmission... 4-speed manual, all-synchromesh
Clutch diameter... 10.0 in
Final drive ratio... 3.54 to one

Gear	Ratio	Mph/1000 rpm	Max. test speed
I	3.38	6.9	38 mph (5500 rpm)
II	1.86	12.5	69 mph (5500 rpm)
III	1.28	18.2	100 mph (5500 rpm)
IV	1.00	23.3	128 mph (5500 rpm)
R	3.38		N.A.

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Wheelbase... 105.0 in
Track... F: 50.0 in, R: 50.0 in
Length... 184.3 in
Width... 65.3 in
Height... 50.1 in
Ground clearance... 5.5 in
Curb weight... 3025 lbs
Test weight... 3440 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R... 50.0/50.0%
Lbs/bhp (test weight)... 12.9
Battery capacity... 12 volts, 55 amp/hr
Alternator capacity... 440 watts
Fuel capacity... 16.8 gal
Oil capacity... 9.0 qts
Water capacity... 19.2 qts

SUSPENSION

F: Ind., unequal-length upper and lower wishbones, torsion bars, anti-sway bar
R: Ind., lower trailing arm and lateral link, halfshafts acting as upper links, coil springs, anti-sway bar

STEERING

Type... Rack and pinion
Turns lock-to-lock... 2.5
Turning circle... 41 ft

BRAKES

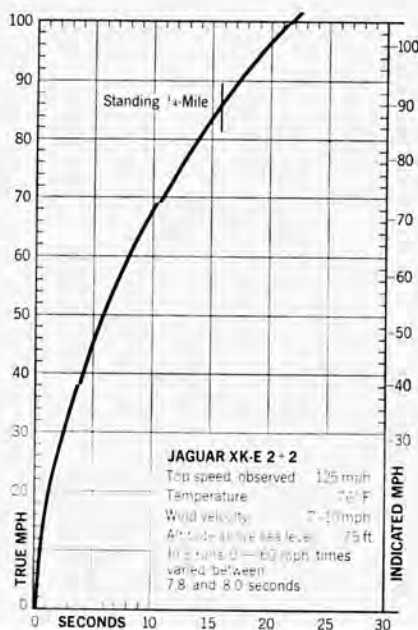
F: Dunlop 11.0-in discs
R: Dunlop 10.0-in discs
Swept area... 461 sq in

WHEELS AND TIRES

Wheel size and type... 5.5J x 15-in, chrome wire with knock-off hub
Tire make, size and type... Dunlop 6.40-15 RS5 (2-ply nylon tubeless)
Test inflation pressures: F: 30 psi, R: 35 psi
Tire load rating... 1080 lbs per tire @ 24 psi

PERFORMANCE

	Seconds
Zero to 30 mph	2.4
Zero to 40 mph	4.1
Zero to 50 mph	6.2
Zero to 60 mph	7.8
Zero to 70 mph	10.8
Zero to 80 mph	13.8
Zero to 90 mph	17.5
Zero to 100 mph	22.0
Standing 1/4-mile	15.9 sec @ 86 mph
80-0 mph	271 ft (79 G)
Fuel mileage	12-17 mpg on Premium fuel
Cruising range	204-289 mi



CHECK LIST

ENGINE

Starting... Good
Response... Very Good
Vibration... Very Good
Noise... Good

DRIVE TRAIN

Shift linkage... Fair
Synchro action (man.)... Fair
Clutch smoothness (man.)... Very Good
Drive train noise... Good

STEERING

Effort... Good
Response... Very Good
Road feel... Excellent
Kickback... Good

SUSPENSION

Ride comfort... Fair
Roll resistance... Good
Pitch control... Good
Harshness control... Fair

HANDLING

Directional control... Excellent
Predictability... Good
Evasive maneuverability... Very Good
Resistance to sidewinds... Very Good

BRAKES

Pedal pressure... Good
Response... Good
Fade resistance... Very Good
Directional stability... Very Good

CONTROLS

Wheel position... Good
Pedal position... Good
Gearshift position... Good
Relationship... Very Good
Small controls... Good

INTERIOR

Ease of entry/exit... Fair
Noise level (cruising)... Good
Front seating comfort... Good
Front leg room... Very Good
Front head room... Very Good
Front hip/shoulder room... Very Good
Rear seating comfort... Fair
Rear leg room... Poor
Rear head room... Fair
Rear hip/shoulder room... Poor
Instrument comprehensiveness... Very Good
Instrument legibility... Very Good

VISION

Forward... Excellent
Front quarter... Very Good
Side... Very Good
Rear quarter... Fair
Rear... Fair

WEATHER PROTECTION

Heater/defroster... Fair
Ventilation... Very Poor
Weather sealing... Good

CONSTRUCTION QUALITY

Sheet metal... Excellent
Paint... Very Good
Chrome... Very Good
Upholstery... Very Good
Padding... Excellent
Hardware... Excellent

GENERAL

Headlight illumination... Excellent
Parking and signal lights... Good
Wiper effectiveness... Fair
Service accessibility... Fair
Trunk space... Poor
Interior storage space... Fair/Poor
Bumper protection... Poor



(continued from page 67)

nounced in 1957, a street-equipped D-type, and a dozen or so got into the hands of well-known Jaguar owners and enthusiasts before the project stopped abruptly. A fire at the factory was the official reason for the short happy life of the XK-SS, but there were many who figured that the factory had conceived the XK-SS only to use up all of its unsold D-type chassis and other odd bits, and the occurrence of fire was just a happy coincidence.

Came 1961, however, and the patience of America's corps of die-hard Jaguar enthusiasts was rewarded with the introduction of the XK-E. The E-type was a stretched XK-SS with independent rear suspension and a good deal more creature comfort, provided you stood less than five feet, ten inches tall. The XK-E was powered with a 3.8-liter version of the same old 3.4, probably the most successful, most race-proved powerplant in the history of sports cars and road racing.

The 3.8 was then bored out to 4.2 for use in the Mark X (now simply called the "4.2") sedan and later in the XK-E. The only Jaguar model still using the smaller version is the 3.8 sports sedan line.

The all-independent suspension of the two-place XK-E has been retained, apparently without modification. Inasmuch as the taller 2+2 has a substantially higher center of mass than its two-seated sister, there is a noticeable increase in roll—including a hint of roll-steer not evident in earlier IRS-equipped Jags.

Varying the throttle opening in a long, fast corner will result in a somewhat abrupt change of roll attitude coupled with a simultaneous (and equally abrupt) change in steer characteristic. Under virtually any "normal" high speed touring conditions, the handling of the 2+2 ranges between predictable understeer and neutral-steer, but really spirited cornering produces oversteer . . . and when the limit of adhesion is exceeded, the tail goes first.

The tires on our test car were the latest version of the Dunlop Road Speed (RS), and we weren't crazy about them. They were almost as harsh as radial-ply tires would have been, without any of the radial's built-in advantages in directional stability and a broadened range of useful cornering power—advantages that are particularly beneficial to design-compromises like the Jaguar 2+2. Dunlop SP radial-ply tires are available as an option, and at least two British

magazines tested cars that were so equipped, and in both cases found them to be excellent.

All of the Jag's controls are very positive and very precise. After a few miles of familiarization, the driver finds that there's a direct one-to-one relationship between input and result. Yank hard on the steering wheel and the car alters course like a cow pony. Twitch the wheel gently and the change is more minute, but just as accurate. Same thing with the brakes—the pedal pressure is a little stiff for a routine 20-mph stop at a traffic light, but the enthusiast-driver is going to be a lot more interested in how it stops on a bad road from a high speed. And that's pretty damned good. It's thoroughly gratifying to observe that increased pressure on the old brake pedal will always produce decreased stopping distances—for as many hard stops as any sane man could possibly want to make.

Long-time Jaguar people will no doubt enjoy all of the good things we've pointed out about the 2+2, but the thing that'll really send them into flights of ecstasy will be the new transmission and its shift linkage. It still hasn't reached the super-smooth, super-accurate level of the Hurst units American drivers have become accustomed to, but it is as good as most German cars—BMW, Porsche, Mercedes—which is to say one hell of a lot better than anything they ever had before. The gearbox is a great deal quieter than before, and the presence of a synchronized first, after all these years, effectively removes one of the traditional sources of frustration.

The driver and front-seat passenger will find it much easier to enter and exit because the 2+2 has much wider doors than the regular XK-E. Again, this was done to facilitate the loading and unloading of rear-seat passengers, but the benefits are most enjoyed by those in the front. The rear seat and environs are so cramped anyway that there simply isn't any easy way to get in and out. Children can ride back there, but adults will find it less suitable.

The front seats are firm, and they offer good support in all directions. There is a two-position adjustment for rake—a little flip-over latch that offers a choice of nearly bolt-upright or almost-reclining. We experimented with both settings and felt that the upright position was best for fast driving on twisty roads, and reclining was most useful on long, straight expressways.

The instrument panel features a

large, round, well-lit speedometer and tach, but it is a maze of switches and knobs and dials, and at least one staff member was put off by its baffling complexity. It is hard to sort through all that handsome British hardware to find the item you want at the moment—especially when you haven't lived with the car long enough to know it by heart—but we feel that this would pose no serious problem for the owner, since he'd no doubt find his way around after a month or so.

The only major flaw in the 2+2 interior that will affect front and rear occupants equally is the appalling lack of adequate ventilation. It is entirely possible that one might prefer to keep the chill, dank air of God's own England outside, but American drivers have to suffer through long, hot summers, and they have been spoiled by American cars which are capable of directing gale-force winds to the passengers at the pull of a knob. The Jag has two small vents hidden away behind the panel, and even if the driver can find these—which is doubtful—they don't blow much harder than a terminal TB case. That really should be corrected. The combination of hot, sticky, vinyl upholstery and still, stale air can cause discomfort beyond a Briton's wildest dreams.

On the other hand, the heater and defroster are more effective than the fresh-air system, but still not quite up to American standard. The controls are confusing and the amount of hot air available is a disappointment. The one major exception to this state of affairs is a rear window defroster—optional at extra cost—that's a great boon to all those who have to travel in cold or humid country.

Summing up, we'd say that the 2+2 version of the XK-E has retained the best qualities of its smaller sister, improved enormously on a couple of that car's significant weak points, and stands right up there with the 3.8-S sedan as one of the most desirable Jaguars ever built. The flaws we've mentioned are old stuff to dyed-in-the-wool British car enthusiasts, and none of them are severe enough to outweigh the charm of the car's speed, handling, brakes, and distinctive appearance. It should certainly be the most saleable car that the eminent Sir William Lyons has ever shipped to this country. But we'd sure like to see him drive one from New York to Chicago on an August afternoon when the temperature was about 95 and the humidity at 87%. No matter what they say, BAN will wear off as the day wears on.

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