

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Aston Martin DB9 Sports Pack



**Aston Martin's DB9 Sports Pack has been developed 'with the driving enthusiast in mind'. Add the suspension and chassis modifications to a six-speed manual gearbox and the familiar 450bhp V12 and you get an edgier, more demanding car, quite a distance removed from the familiar smooth long-distance express.**

Make no mistake, this version of the '9 is for proper drivers - ones that can handle a powerful rear-wheel drive car that feels more like a high-performance Italian V12 than an understated classic British GT.

Visually, the car sits imperceptibly lower (6mm actually) on special 5-spoke, light-weight, forged aluminium alloy wheels with titanium nuts. The net result is a 1 kg saving in unsprung weight per wheel and this, together with the revised dampers, uprated springs (with increased compression resistance - 68% front, 64% rear) and a re-tuned front anti-roll bar means a car that can turn in to corners with a lot more precision than usual.



Another change is the composite undertray replaced by a load-bearing aluminium panel that serves the same aerodynamic purpose while adding further structural stiffness, thereby allowing the uprated springing and damping.

The Onyx Black car you see here was delivered in the middle of a typical early British winter, and with country roads awash with leaves and mud, perhaps it was not the best time to test the car to the limit. However, as chance would have it, the road test coincided with a visit to see Aston's racing partner [Prodrive demonstrate the Rally GT](#) at the wonderful setting of Cornbury Park, just outside Oxford.

The combination of an early start, a clutch-bending trawl through London traffic to a meeting at the Royal Automobile Club, then back out of London again with a little motorway work into the countryside was enough to gain an opinion of a car that completes the current showroom line-up - all of which we've driven in the last 12 months.



The immediate driving impression is that in-corner directional stability and roll has been improved via the revised suspension - but it's the far more positive steering with real 'bite' that comes over most of all.

The traction light seem to flicker more than usual; partly a result of the inclement weather, but quite possibly due to the tauter set-up and manual six-speed allowing a much harder and more *macho* style of driving.

It's more V8 Vantage+ than a stripped-away DB9.



Where the regular car cruises, the manual Sports Pack-equipped DB9 really **drives**, putting the man behind the wheel in complete control of a true high-performance supercar. The ride is ever so *slightly* harder than usual, so pot-holed London streets are a touch less comfortable, but you'd hardly notice it after a few hours in the driver's seat.

And speaking of which...the 2007-spec car's ones are the best yet; more comfortable and easier to really find the best driving position possible. Was it me or did the car feel even better screwed together than normal? The standard of finish on the Press car was superb both in its execution and specification and I'd gladly drive the metallic black car out of a showroom any day.





Emerging trembling from the passenger seat of the Rally GT, it was a pleasure to fire up the big V12 and drive purposefully back home, a more thoughtful and considered road driver for the experience.

With this in mind, the return journey had a little more meaning. The DB9 family now has a truly sporting member that can do all the luxury/lifestyle/everyday/special day things its more relaxed brother can do - and more.

If you're going for a DB9 coupé, trust me and specify the Sports Pack; it's the one to have.



The car tested was an **Aston Martin DB9 Coupe Manual (Sports Pack)** in Onyx Black with Sandstorm/Obsidian Black interior and Piano Black wood facia trim (£495 option) and matching wood door trim (£495 option).

Other extras included; Interior lower environment: Sandstorm £495; Seat insert material: Perforated leather £195; Sports Pack including lightweight five spoke alloy wheels £2495; Red brake calipers £295; Linn 950W audio system with Dolby Pro Logic II £2,995. Satellite navigation and Heated seats are fitted as standard.

Total price as tested; £117,850

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