



Audi R8 4.2 Quattro

Photos by Michael Cooney

### 2010 Audi R8 4.2 and S5

## AWD V8 Supercar and Super Coupe

Parting with the R8 was tough. It also brought great relief knowing I had somehow blasted through this fiery trial without a single ticket. The numbers begin the story: 0-60 in 4.1 seconds. Top speed approaching 190.

Snug in the cockpit, you're hit with an unrelenting temptation to nail the throttle. From stop lights. Through canyon hairpins. On deserted stretches of freeway. All the time. Everywhere. As others have noted, the R8 makes a fine daily driver, and is content to slog around town at mundane speeds. And that's true. I tried it myself. But that's not why you'd get one, is it?

With a 4.2L 420-horsepower V8 behind your ears and displayed beneath the rear window, it sings an addictive medley ranging from low rumblings to high-pitched snarls, thanks to its 8250 rpm redline. The magnificent sounding Bang & Olufsen audio system came in second place to the engine's sonorous wail.

Its side profile is sleek and rounded. From behind, it has that "ready for business" look. Inside, soft leather seats offer outstanding support and are truly comfortable. Legroom abounds. Sun visors are tiny and offer little relief. Its gauges are models of legibility.

Get this car's 6-speed stick if you want the full experience of driver and machine melding together. A 6-speed R-Tronic (with paddles and auto mode) is available.

There are two suspension settings – stiff and stiffer. Ride quality is reasonable in standard mode, though, and even there its cornering ability is beyond that of nearly all other cars. You won't need the stiffer setting unless you're at a track day or strafing corners at 9/10s-plus. Wide, sticky tires, AWD and a perfectly tuned suspension see to



that. Extremely hard cornering yields negligible body roll and little drama. It just goes where you point it, seemingly oblivious to your entry speed. Clearly supercar territory.

The R8 is not a "car." It's an experience... every time you settle in, close the door, and turn the key. HUGE fun for true drivers.

If a two-seater isn't for you, how 'bout a cool coupe with a rumbling V8 and 6-speed stick? Like an all-American muscle

car, except more sophisticated and refined. It still has all the right sounds and moves, however.

The S5 Quattro Coupe with its 4.2L 354 horsepower V8 impresses with great looks and handling to match. Sounds great, too. Arguably the most beautifully sculpted 2-door coupe around, it looks both elegant and a bit mean at the same time.

Up front, plenty of room and comfortable leather seats with adjustable everything make for a perfect setup. A driver's car for all seasons, with standard AWD. Its adjustable suspension has Auto, Comfort and Dynamic settings. Auto switches between Comfort and Dynamic depending on a sensor's reading of your driving mood. Amazing grip while cornering hard makes this a head-for-the-hills kind of car. Great fun while still comfortable on the freeway or around town.

In back, rather vertical seatbacks, snug legroom and fixed rear windows were my only concerns.

The S5 has milder cousins in the A5 Coupes, with 4- and 6-cylinder engines and lower prices. As my friend Kristian noted, the "S"5 is an A5 on Steroids. The S5s also come as convertibles.

Audi's R8 is EPA-rated at 12-city, 19-highway mpg. I averaged 16.6. Pricing begins at \$114,200 and this loaded example totaled \$146,425 including destination and a \$2,100 gas guzzler tax. A 10-cylinder version is also available in coupe or convertible. The S5 begins at \$52,400. This one came to \$66,450 including destination and a \$1,300 guzzler tax. EPA-rated at 14-city and 22-highway mpg, I got 17.7.

If you savor cars with stunning looks and handling to match, one of these may be your perfect companion when winding roads beckon. Start fantasizing at [audiusa.com](http://audiusa.com).

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