



Jaguar XKR


Photos by Michael Cooney

traction control intervenes to warn that you've reached the limit. In short, the XKR is huge fun in the canyons and is an extremely capable machine.

Nits to pick? Just a few. Jaguar should add an *Instant MPG* readout to join the Average MPG display. And while backup sensors are good, a backup camera would be better. Lastly, the XK needs a bigger gas tank—16 gallons is just too small.

The base coupe begins at about \$83,000; the XKR at \$97,000, which was the sticker on this one since it had no options. The XKR is EPA-rated at 15-city, 22-highway mpg. I averaged 16.1 mpg. On a freeway trip with cruise engaged, I got 27.2 mpg.

What struck me most was the overall greatness of this car. A few are quicker. A few corner faster. But the XKR delivers genuine driving satisfaction like few cars can even dream of. The feeling

of comfort and luxury combined with rocket-like acceleration, precise cornering, braking, and steering with perfectly placed controls all combine to give you a rare treat in the automotive kingdom. More at Jaguar.com. 

2011 Jaguar XKR

A 510 Horsepower Iron Fist in a Velvet Glove

Some cars look fabulous on paper but disappoint in real life. Others are greater than the sum of their parts. The Jaguar XKR is an overachiever in the latter category.

This is one elegant, sleek, sensuous animal of a car. A cat that purrs while cruising along, yet loudly growls upon provocation (induced by your right foot).

XKs come in two styles and flavors. Choose coupe or convertible, and V8 engines with 385 (XK) or 510 horsepower (XKR)—the latter supercharged. There is also an XKR-S with 550 horsepower, and the XKR 175 Limited Edition Coupe, celebrating Jaguar's 75th Anniversary. All variants use a 6-speed automatic with paddle shifters.

Inside you'll find loads of beautiful wood and fragrant, fine leather. Burl Walnut is standard. You can also choose Dark Oak, Rich Oak, Aluminum Mesh or Piano Black trim. Stitching on the leather surfaces adds a classy touch.

Front seats are supremely comfortable and multi-adjustable including the amount of side bolster grip. That's important due to the serious cornering forces you can muster in an XKR.

Are the rear seats comfortable too? I don't know, since I deduced that once in, I might never get out. They are tight with almost no legroom unless a front seat is moved far forward. Okay for short people; great for groceries.

The hatchback makes it easy to load a couple weekenders for your cross-country blast. Visibility was surprisingly good for a fastback GT, including to the right rear.

On freeways, wind noise was commendably

low and the ride was comfortable even with the firm suspension. Its Adaptive Dynamics system samples and adjusts firmness 500 times per second to soak up small irregularities while still delivering great handling in the curves. Speaking of which....

This cat flat out hauls. With 0–60 times in the mid-4s, the XKR lunges forward with a delicious roar. At about 3,970 pounds (200 heavier than the base coupe) the weight compromises cornering ability somewhat, but make no mistake—the XKR handles sharp curves brilliantly with high limits and confidence inspiring control. Should you push even harder (*of course* I did!)



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