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Editorial comment and the latest from the *Mercedes Enthusiast* team



*I'm glad we did manage to grab a second try of the car, as the entry level C-Class AMG has become a firm favourite for me*

**S**OMEWHAT REMINISCENT OF LAST MONTH'S COVER SHOOT WHERE I SPOKE OF THE TROUBLE in gathering multiple cars in the winter for pictures, this month we really ramped that up. This time for a three-car shoot for our bargain buy cover story on £10,000 used Mercedes. Rest assured, it was another stroke of luck that a dealer happened to have so many of the cars we needed in stock, which certainly helped to make the pictures. You can have a read of the full feature, which includes useful buying advice on our six selected cars, on page 40.

Elsewhere in the issue, I got behind the wheel of the revised C43 AMG. This was a model that was revised with the C-Class facelift at the end of 2018, but for many, including us, the small but significant changes it received to the engine and drivetrain set up went under the radar. But I'm glad we did manage to grab a second try of the car, as the entry level C-Class AMG has become a firm favourite of the recent models for me. You can find out why that is the case on page 26.

Also to keep you going through the month, we've got plenty of classic material from around the world, starting with a beloved Stroke 8 in Canada and to a collection of interesting classic and youngtimer cars in the Mid-West of America, as well as a pair of modern classics residing with

a pair of life-long Mercedes enthusiasts over in Australia. The passion for the brand certainly seems to extend far and wide! To cap it all off, we're also remembering the S63 AMG in an appropriate way. We hope you enjoy the issue.



**Simon Holmes**  
Editor

Who's been doing what in this month's *Mercedes Enthusiast*...



**Richard Mason**

Richard has been over to the United States but he's not just visiting the obvious sights and sounds, he's also been tracking down some feature material,

including a collection of fine cars owned by Mercedes enthusiast Charlie. "He has a great collection, but it's the stories and the use that Charlie gets from the cars that's really interesting." Sure enough, Charlie took Richard for a drive in his 300SL and recited to us every detailed story about each of his cars on page 48.



**Piotr R Frankowski**

It was a trip down memory lane for this issue, as Piotr happily recalled his time testing the S63 AMG, which involved plenty of

sideways driving on an empty airfield. "The S63 AMG was hugely capable, following in the footsteps of the 6.3 and 6.9 monsters which came before it," he recalls. But perhaps best was the car's understated looks to go with it. "It simply looked like a diesel-spec taxi. And that's good in my book." You can read the full story on page 54.



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8



32



60



72



10

54



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26



48



40

**Cover story**

# CONTENTS

## MARCH 2020

### UPFRONT

- 6 **News** The latest Mercedes news, launches and motorsport
- 8 **Event** Over to the Birmingham NEC for the Autosport show
- 10 **First Drive** A ride in the passenger seat of the new GLA
- 16 **Market Watch** Excellent examples of the 202-series
- 19 **Merc Man** Cars are getting bigger, but when will it peak?
- 21 **Inside Line** How Mercedes is leading from the top down
- 23 **Letters** More from loyal Mercedes-Benz readers

### FEATURES

- 26 **ROAD TEST** We find out how the revised version of the **C43 AMG** is very different car to drive second time round
- 32 **CLASSIC CHOICE** The story of how one Mercedes-Benz enthusiast found he had a love for a **Stroke 8** classic
- 40 **PRICE POINT** Our lead story unearths what you can buy with a **£10,000 budget** in the world of used Mercedes
- 48 **PROFILE** It's over to Mid-West America as we meet one **Mercedes-Benz collector** with plenty of stories to tell
- 54 **SPOTLIGHT** Revisiting the **S63 AMG** as we take a look back and remember its importance to the brand at the time
- 60 **OWNERSHIP** The charming tale of a couple's long-standing love of Mercedes and the **S123 and C126** they own now
- 68 **ENGINE MASTERS** Looking back on the story of how the C111 research car had a **Wankel rotary engine** developed
- 72 **TECHNOLOGY** Time to learn the basics of driving again, as our expert reminds us of **understeer and oversteer**

COVER STORY

### THE BACK END

- 76 **Mercedes Buyer Deals**, tips, top three steals and more
- 80 **Buyer's Guide** Advice when buying a E500/500E model
- 87 **Running Reports** 190E, W123, S204 and R129 updates
- 94 **NEXT MONTH**
- 95 **Merc Trader** Find your next three-pointed star here
- 106 **Wandering Star** Driving across America in an ML320

80



▷ There seems to be a good stock of the ex-army cars.

The latest Mercedes launches, news and motorsport

# NEWS

## ARMY SURPLUS

German Mercedes specialist Lorinser is selling ex-army G-Wagens

**A**ccomplished German tuner, and one of few Mercedes-Classic Partners, Lorinser is currently selling an interesting range of G-Wagens.

The M-B specialist appears to have got its hands on a large amount of ex-Swiss army vehicles that range in size and style, from four to eight seats, hard and soft top, and short- and long-wheelbases. It's not said how many it has but they're all from the early 1990s and badged as Puch models, which were built under licence from Mercedes-Benz. All of the off-roaders come with a 2.3-litre four-pot and four-speed automatic transmission and have covered between 45,000 and 200,000km. Depending on the exact spec, the vehicles can be had from just £12,750 (€15,000), which seems like a good entry level into G-Wagen motoring, if the mood was to take you.

But being a tuning company, Lorinser is also offering to kit out the vehicles with off-road wheels and tyres and a proper diff lock for the additional price of £3,400 (€4,000). The firm is also offering a full restomod package for these surplus cars, said to be ideal for "anyone who loves purist off-road vehicles but is not too fond of the used look and camouflage paint." The company will therefore paint the car and fit a whole host of new and updated off-roading equipment, from a cable winch to LED lighting. A completely updated interior is also on offer and the prices for these conversions start at less than £43,000 (€50,000).

If you fancy one for yourself, take a look at the website [www.lorinser-classic.de](http://www.lorinser-classic.de) for more information.

There are a range of G-Wagens on offer, all from the Swiss army.



▽ Lorinser is offering to update the interiors...

▷ ▽ ...and the exteriors too.

“The M-B specialist appears to have got its hands on a large amount of ex-Swiss army vehicles that range in size and style”



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## BARN FIND 300SL SELLS FOR £615,000

A recently discovered 1961 300SL Roadster that had been hidden away in a barn and left untouched for over 50 years sold for \$800,000 (£615,000) at the Beverly Hills Car Club in January 2020. The car,

which needed a full restoration, was all original and had matching numbers as well the build sheet, service book and history. Originally sold to its first owner in 1961, the car came in light blue,

one of 101 examples finished in this colour, and had covered 75,629 miles in its first seven years before being parked up. With such good history, we can assume the car will be fully restored.

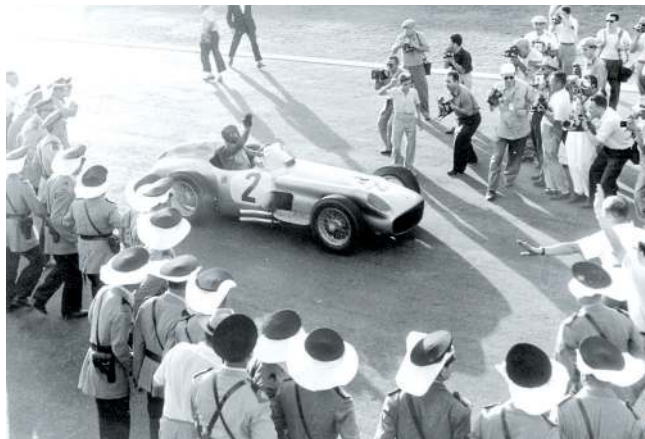


### △ UNIMOG SETS RECORD

On a recent expedition to the highest active volcano in the world, the *Ojos del Salado* in Chile, a modified Unimog U5023 truck set a new highest altitude record for a wheeled vehicle having climbed a record breaking 6,694 metres. Never before had vehicles climbed to such heights anywhere around the world, proving once again the Unimog is the ultimate off-roader.

## 65-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

This year marks the anniversary of when the legendary racing driver Juan Manuel Fangio won the first race of the 1955 Formula 1 season, which was the Argentine Grand Prix in Buenos Aires on January 16 1955. He won with a Mercedes-Benz W196R and later in the year Fangio secured his second Formula 1 World Championship title. It was his third Championship overall but after the 1955 season, the brand's racing department famously withdrew from racing in the series at the height of its success. It would be another 55 years until it returned once again.



### △ AMG GLB35 UK PRICING

It's been announced that the latest performance SUV will arrive in the UK in summer 2020 and prices will start from £48,665. Standard equipment includes Driving Assistance, MBUX infotainment system and a two-litre engine, making 302bhp and 295lb ft of torque. Metallic paint in a choice of six colours can be added for £595.

## 142-MILE R129 SILVER ARROW

A rare Silver Arrow special edition R129 has been advertised for sale as part of the All Time Stars line up at the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in America, which offers high quality Mercedes classics and youngtimers for sale. What makes this particular car incredibly special is that it's never been registered and is displaying just 142 miles on its odometer since new. Only 1,515 examples of the SL500 Silver Arrow model were ever built, and we can imagine this is up there as the very best one in the world. It's currently for sale at the facility priced at \$135,000, which equates to £104,000. We can imagine it will go into a collection.



### ▽ 2020 FACELIFT E-CLASS

In 2016 the 10th generation E-Class arrived and Mercedes has announced the facelift will arrive in summer 2020. The revised model will feature next generation driving assistance systems, such as Active Distance Assist Distronic with route-based speed adjustment, as well as an updated interior, seven plug-in hybrid models and a new engine line up.



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It's the start of the show season for the UK with Autosport

Although we were looking out for all things Mercedes, there was plenty of car parts to keep us entertained



We hadn't seen modified X-Class models before, but they do look good.

# Star cast

With halls of motorsport machinery to peruse as well as modified Mercedes metal on display, the annual Autosport show had it all...

WORDS & IMAGES SAM PRESTON

**T**he Autosport International show, which takes place at Birmingham's NEC, signifies the start of a new year for anyone in the motorsport industry, and sure enough, the four-day

event seemed busy from the start.

Although we were looking out for all things Mercedes, there were plenty of other motorsport cars and car parts to keep us entertained, and this year saw a notable shift towards aftermarket parts for four-wheel drive vehicles, which appears to follow America's

taste for larger than life pick-up trucks. This seemed to include more than a couple of X-Class models peppered around the huge show and they were backed up with a series of G-Wagens too, these seemingly the staple diet for shows with any kind of modified vehicle. The balance was restored

with Formula 1, WRC and BTCC machinery on show, although Mercedes-Benz was notably lacking from the latter this year. Getting up close to observe the incredible F1 cars more than made up for it though, and there was still other Mercedes derived material to keep us content. These included a selection of tuned AMGs dotted around as well as some youngtimer rarities, and oddballs, on display throughout the various stands.

As always, the show provides a great solution to break up an otherwise cold and carless winter period, so we recommend going next year if you do get the chance. ▣



◀ Modified G-Wagens are a show staple diet!



▷ C208 CLK was advertising a rally across Europe.



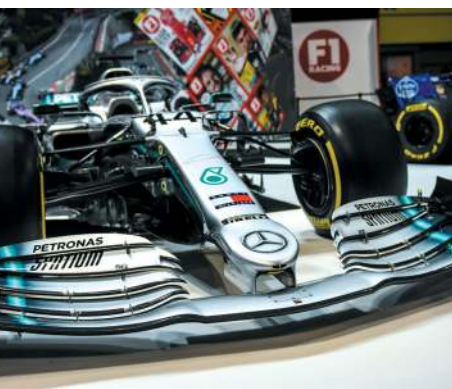


◁ Hamilton's car was on display to admire in detail.

▽◁ Another X-Class used as a demo car.

▽ Matching Vito was part of Projex Design stand.

△ We caught the odd youngster hiding away too.



△◁ The front wings on F1 cars are a true marvel of engineering.

◁ This modified AMG C63 looked smarter than others we saw.

◁◁ HP Tuners demo A45 AMG was making around 515bhp!

▷ Wide-arch C63 with a red wrap had an aggressive look.



Jacked up Brabus must be fun, and tricky, to drive!

Riding shotgun in the new GLA that's out to prove a point...

# Fully abled

**We get to experience the latest GLA prototype with a unusual test to highlight that the latest SUV will very much be capable and practical off-roader...**

WORDS KYLE FORTUNE IMAGES DAIMLER AG

**W**hat does a 70 per cent slope look like? I

can't really tell, as sitting in the passenger seat of the new GLA there's only sky in front of me, and the road some way in the distance. Between it is that slope, and we're just about to drive down it. Overkill, yes, but then Mercedes-Benz engineers seem to enjoy over-engineering products, because I can say with absolute certainty, save for this swirly-stickered prototype, no other GLA will ever be asked to drive down such an extreme gradient.

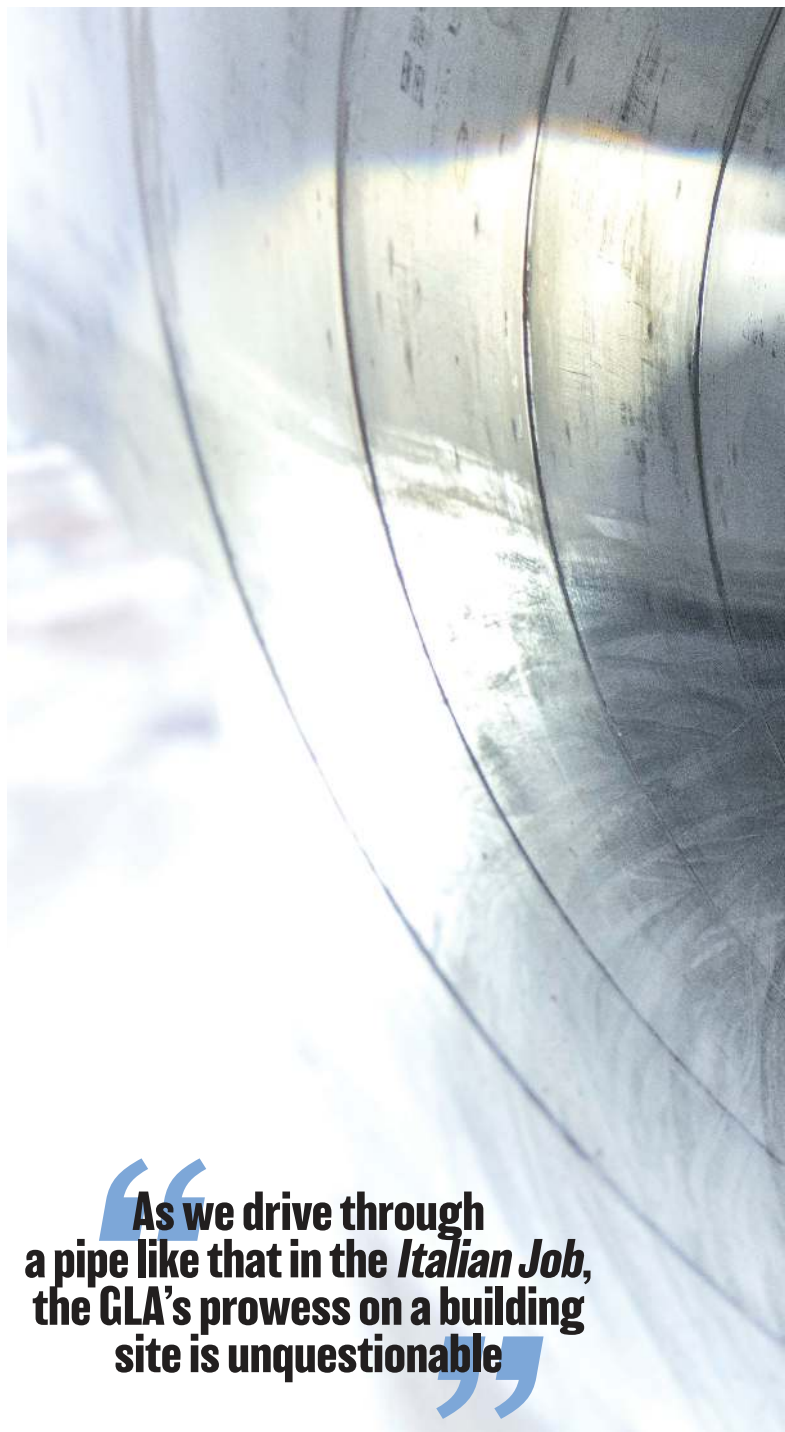
"It's more of a proper SUV than previously," admits Merc's small cars' spokesperson Markus Nast. That much is obvious, even behind that stickered camouflage. It's over 100mm taller and a touch shorter, the new GLA presenting a shape to the world that's more recognisable as an SUV than the raised hatchback that the original

GLA is. That's a very deliberate move, as SUV buyers are looking for a practical vehicle, even in the compact marketplace.

Think more B-Class in its interior proportions than A-Class then, the taller interior feeling lighter and more spacious, particularly in the back, where you no longer feel cramped. It's also easier to get in and out of, and the boot is bigger too. Even so, with the GLB above it, the GLA is still targeted at the more sporting end of the market, which is why we can be sure there'll be a GLA35 (we spotted one while we were on a factory tour) with the likelihood of an AMG GLA45 above that.

## IN THE PIPELINE

Expect that GLA35 to arrive fairly early in the launch phase, along with the more mainstream engine choices, the more powerful of which coming equipped with an eight-speed DCT transmission. ▷



**“As we drive through a pipe like that in the *Italian Job*, the GLA's prowess on a building site is unquestionable”**



▷ Mercedes was keen to prove the new GLA was competent both on and off-road...



△ It felt like a scene from the *Italian Job* film during parts!



▷ Elsewhere, the automatic will be a seven-speed item, with a six-speed manual on entry level models. While Mercedes is bigging up 4Matic four-wheel drive on this pre-launch event, the majority of GLAs will be front-wheel drive.

### WELL-PACKAGED

Those in Europe with 4Matic will all come with an off-road package, which brings a slightly higher ride height and some off-road specific

modes in the drivetrain, the engine and gearbox maps altering if you're ever stuck in a particularly slippery boot sale car park. There's downhill speed limiting too, which is useful if you're on a 70 per cent slope, while the GLA will scabble up a hill as steep as 60 per cent. The four-wheel drive system is now better controlled, thanks to electronically controlled clutches within the differentials (the previous GLA had mechanical

△ Assisted downhill speed limiter allows easier off-riding.

▷ The 70 per cent gradient looks just as steep as it feels!

▷▷ GLA can hold its own against plenty of new off-roaders.

ones) allowing the drive to be apportioned to whatever axle can use it most effectively.

The interior, unsurprisingly, is largely lifted from the A- and B-Class, so there is a smart look and feel throughout, with the showpiece MBUX screen dominating the dash. Depending on the market, and options it can be a pair of seven-inch items, but outside the daily rental

marketplace Merc's insiders admit that few ever leave the factory without optional screen. In the compact class, the A-Class's interior is leagues above its competition, the GLA bringing that same quality and desirability to the compact SUV segment, which will undoubtedly aid Mercedes-Benz's ambitions of growing sales in this category further still.



◁ The able GLA will climb 60 per cent hills with no issue.

▽◁ Agile yet stiff chassis enable amazing feats!

Nobody's admitting it, but on the route to the GLA's off-road course we drove the latest A- and B-Class 250e, with their EQ Power plug-in hybrid powertrains, the GLA certain to get the option of the same plug-in technology after its initial launch. When it does, buyers will have to forgo the four-wheel drive system, thanks to the rear-axle positioning of the battery pack, but that'll be a small sacrifice to pay for the sizeable economy gains it'll bring.

### MIGHTY MINI

As we drive through a pipe like that in the *Italian Job* with the MBUX inclinometer showing 30 per cent, the GLA's prowess on a building site is unquestionable, even if it's largely pointless to most. The other gains, particularly relating to interior space, refinement and comfort are, and that's to the GLA's enormous benefit. Certainly it'll not look

quite as dramatic as its pseudo-SUV predecessor when the wrap is peeled off, but its greater practicality will appeal to a wider audience. It's the eighth vehicle spun off the A-Class platform, and rumours are there could be something else yet to come, too. It's expected to be in a similar vein to the outgoing GLA, so as not to alienate buyers who like the style of it, and don't necessarily need the practicality gains of the new one. A GLA coupe, perhaps, and given the direction of the GLC and GLE above it, it's a distinct possibility.

In the meantime, rest assured if you need your GLA to scramble up a steep slope, drive you down one or take an unusual line through a raised roundabout, it can. For the rest of you, the GLA's wider remit makes it a far more appealing proposition, and the certainty of a plug-in hybrid shortly after its launch next year will broaden its appeal even further. ▣

“SUV buyers are looking for a practical vehicle, even in the compact marketplace”





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Expert analysis of recent events and trends in the Mercedes-Benz market

# 202-series

The popular C-Class from 1993 to 2001 is now becoming a rarity, but with prices increasing for good examples, you should only consider the very finest out there

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES FRESH MOTORS, M&I AUTOS, HAFOD CARS, ROBERT'S CARS, JK MOTORS



M&I Autos had this C220 Classic with an incredibly low 13,000 miles for £4,995.

**F**ancy a Mercedes-Benz saloon that is cheap to run, practical and elegant, showing signs of collectability, and which will cost you no more than £5,000 even for the best example out there? That car is the 202-series Class, built from 1993 until 2001 and which, if in top condition, is an undiscovered treasure.

The 202 went the way of all mainstream Mercedes models, depreciating to banger level money and most ending up scrapped, due to the need for an uneconomic repair or even through lack of interest. But we have noticed recently that some very well preserved, low mileage cars are appearing for sale. Typically they have been in the same family for many years and stored unused, and may have come to the market through probate arrangements.

But be very clear: for this C-Class, the youngest of which is coming up for 20 years old, to be a worthwhile purchase you must consider only the best examples. This was a 1990s Mercedes, not a great era for Stuttgart anti-rust treatment, and the sub-£1,000



examples you'll see are almost certain to be in a bad state bodily. Don't buy anything that needs significant repair work, because the money spent will not be recouped when you sell.

And we're not including the two 202 hotties, the C36 AMG and C43 AMG which replaced it

range of petrol and diesel engines, from 1.8-litre to 2.8-litre, including the novel supercharged petrol 2.3-litre. It was the first model series to use Mercedes' new trim levels, Classic, Esprit, Sport and Elegance, and summer 1997-on facelifted cars feature some of the car maker's then new electronic systems.

But forget all that when looking for a 202 – the best approach is to consider what's offered at any given time, be it a C180 in basic Classic trim or a 280E in high spec Elegance mode. And certainly in the shortlist of best 202s when we looked was the silver 1998 C180 Sport with just 26,000 miles offered for £4,000 at all makes used car dealer Fresh Motors in Watton in Norfolk.

"This was from the estate of a deceased gentleman and came in as a part-exchange," explained proprietor Jacob Freshwater. "It's an absolute gem." So how does a dealer price a car like this, for which there is no trade guide value available to help? "We just take an eyeball on the market and add in the value of the car," said Jacob. "We want to sell the car so we're asking a fair price."

## LOW NUMBERS

We also found another low mileage C180 Elegance at Hafod Cars in Swansea, this example showing 52,000 miles for £5,995, whilst Robert's Cars in Chester had a 1999 C200 Elegance with 66,000 miles for £2,395.

Ian Poulter at M&I Autos near Southampton had also come across a well kept car, a very early one from 1993. It was a C220 Classic, with a sunroof and air-conditioning, its two owners in the same family and the mileage an incredibly low 13,000. "This is one to put away, too good for everyday use," his advertisement said of the dark blue, steel-wheeled car which





Robert's Cars had a 1999 C200 Elegance with 66,000 miles for £2,395.

came with a full history. Ian wanted £4,995, which surely isn't much for a car that's barely run in – but that's what happens when a car is below the classic market radar.

He had chosen to place the C220 on a classic car site rather than mainstream sales website, and that surely tells us which way top 202s are heading. We soon realised that his 13,000-miler wasn't a one-off because the very ad next to his was for a 1999 C240 Sport (the 2.4-litre V6) boasting just 25,000 miles from new and with the additional nicety of leather trim. All services except one had been carried out by an official Mercedes-Benz dealer. It had been offered at £3,950 by Brooklands Garage in Driffield in East Yorkshire, and recently sold.

## For this C-Class to be a worthwhile purchase you must consider only the best examples

While stressing that near pristine cars represent the best value, a decent example can be had for less, and among the very estates we saw was the 1999 C200 Elegance at Stable Classics in Hampshire, advertised at £2,000, and which had also just been sold. "The trouble with 202s is that there are a lot of rough ones, and they tend to scar the good ones," boss Terry Lewis told us. "You have to search through a lot of bad ones to find a good one." JK Motors in North London asked £1,799 for a C200 Sport with a relatively low 76,000 miles.

The 202-series is not going to excite, but you will enjoy a car with much of the traditional solid feel of a 1970s and 80s Benz, but with a few modern features included, especially the post-facelift models which could be optioned with Parktronic and rain sensing wipers among other things. In time, the best ones will be classics – so if you're searching for these now with a view to buying at low cost and tucking them away for the future, you're ahead of the game.



This C180 Elegance was at Hafod Cars showing 52,000 miles for £5,995.



1998 C180 Sport with 26,000 miles was offered for £4,000 at Fresh Motors.



JK Motors asked £1,799 for a C200 Sport with a relatively low 76,000 miles.





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Carlsson recommends:



Our man in the know tackles everything Mercedes-Benz - this month...

# Size matters



This month, **David Sutherland** has come to the realisation that modern cars appear to be growing in size at a phenomenal pace, and a quick look back at the facts and figures gives some surprising results...

**S**ince moving out of London after many years, driving in pretty Surrey has brought a number of delights, most notably the chance to move at normal speeds and admire the view, as opposed to grinding along the capital's choked roads at little more than walking pace. But it has unexpectedly highlighted another aspect of modern motoring – how cars are getting too bulky for roads and other infrastructure.

In a recent Running Report I mentioned how big the GLC feels on Surrey's narrow lanes, especially when meeting an oncoming car in the dark and with another car right up your tail, whose driver is clearly late for the train. Since then I have cleared enough space in the garage to get my CLK63 AMG in, but found there is so little clearance at the sides that it is hardly worth the bother and the risk of damaging the bodywork; to get the coupe in the mirrors have to be retracted and even then extreme care is needed – not just to preserve the bodywork but to position the car so that once inside you can open the driver's door sufficiently to get out.

**A**s is obvious when you look around, cars are getting steadily longer,

and – more crucially – wider. Take the E-Class predecessor of the late 1960s, the W114/W115 or 'Stroke 8'. This was 4,680mm long, and was 220mm, or nearly nine inches longer than the Ponton of a decade earlier. Most of the model generations since the Stroke 8 have been bigger than the car they replaced – hence the current model E-Class is very slightly longer than the original 116-series S-Class of 1972.

It's the same story for Mercedes' 'compact' saloon range. The car maker's first 'small' car for two decades, the 1982 W201 190 measured 4,420mm in length, after which the 202-, 203-, 204- and 205-series C-Classes all expanded. The 205 is longer than the Stroke 8. The 126-series S-Class that replaced the 116 was longer, as was the subsequent 140 range. As the 140 was derided for looking gross, the succeeding 220 shrank a bit but the 221- and 222-series regained that length, the 222 over six inches longer than the 116.



The 1950s Ponton was 1,740mm wide.



◀◀ Stroke 8 was nine inches longer than the Ponton.

◀ Current E-Class is five inches wider than a Stroke 8!

◀◀ Latest C-Class is slightly narrower than a 126 S-Class.



Length doesn't make much difference in most people's driving – but width does, and modern cars are also noticeably broader as well as longer. It's almost impossible to place your car in a supermarket car park so that you and

your passenger can open the door without hitting the car next to you.

A current C-Class is almost two inches wider than a Stroke 8 and only 10mm narrower than a 126-series. Our house was built in the mid-1980s and the 190 that was current at the time would fit the garage with a useful two and a half inches more to play with than the CLK. On the basis that statistically I am bound to misjudge entry to the garage sooner or later – and it'll only take a moment's concentration lapse to do so – I'm considering leaving the CLK outside and paying the extra £50 the insurance company wants if there's no overnight garaging for it.

**T**he GLC will never go in our garage because there would be less than three inches to spare each side at the point of entry, plus the fairly bulbous SUV is difficult to see out of anyway; I want to hand it back to Mercedes-Benz Finance in 18 months in one piece. Besides the actual measurements, cars look so much bigger. I attended the 124-series launch in the 1980s and remember thinking what

a substantial and imposing car it was. But when you see one now it seems compact, and if you put one side on to a current A-Class it would look skinny, the hatchback two inches wider.

It's interesting that as car makers, not least Mercedes-Benz, work flat out to both improve fuel consumption and drive down emissions, the sheer footprint of cars gets ever bigger. I often wonder if 'upsizing' is a trend that will ever be reversed – or will I have bow to the inevitable and call in a garage door expert to see if mine can be made a little wider. ■

**“The GLC will never go in our garage because there would be less than three inches to spare each side”**

The spotlight on Mercedes from within the motoring industry

# All aboard

With Mercedes-Benz tackling a series of modern day issues, it's interesting to see how it all filters down from the top, as our man studies the CEO and board members...

**E**lectrification and the wider environmental concerns, automation, connectivity and plenty of other issues are currently at the forefront of the car industry. Broadly it seems, Mercedes-Benz, the inventor of the automobile, is doing a fine job embracing and adapting to the challenges that each present. We certainly live in a more responsible world, where we question everything, so it's good to see a huge, once somewhat traditional, company embrace the rapidly evolving future.

Of course it must to survive. No company is too big and too important that it cannot fail, and while the

automotive industry is at a pivotal point in its development, the speed at which Mercedes-Benz is adapting to new trends is impressive.

There's an openness to the public, more expressive in its goals and ambitions as to what we'll be driving in the future, if indeed we're actually driving.

CEO Ola Källenius, last seen at the CES (Consumer Electronics Show) in Las Vegas, is always talking not just months ahead, but years and even decades. At the CES he talked about exploring compostable battery technology, the challenges and ambition of making truly zero environmental impact vehicles. That's some way off, but the fact it's being explored and discussed publicly is very interesting.

**A**ny company is represented by its CEO and board members, and it's interesting to note that Källenius is one of the youngest of the eight people who make all the big decisions at Mercedes-Benz. He presents a fresher, more youthful face to the company. It's interesting to note that he, and all but one of his other board members, are photographed with their collars undone and without a necktie in their official company portraits. Spotting that made me chuckle, because as a younger journalist I was told by the UK Mercedes-Benz PR boss

**Mercedes-Benz's commitment to change is evident from the top down**



Previous CEO Dr Z (left) had a more formal look than Källenius (right).



△ Britta Seeger pictured on the left next to CEO Ola Källenius.

at the time, Rob Halloway, that the Germans often thought the British motoring media, while determined in their questioning and desire to properly test cars, were considered a somewhat scruffy bunch.

I'll admit I was among them, shunning business wear for T-shirts, though when I did change that and smartened up, I noticed that access to the higher echelons of Mercedes-Benz's management was quickly forthcoming, Källenius being first, with a one-to-one interview when he was the boss at AMG. I've mentioned it here previously that my change also led to an enjoyable half hour driving and chatting with Källenius' predecessor Dr Zetsche, something that almost certainly would not have occurred without a shirt and jacket.

Attire aside, what's also interesting is the composition of the board, which sees two women joining six men. Not quite gender equality, nor indeed the 40 per cent that the EU encourages, but certainly a step in the right direction. Digging deeper, and somewhat uncouthly discussing remuneration, it's excellent to note that both Renata Jungo Brüngrer, Member of the Board, Integrity and

Legal Affairs, and Britta Seeger, Member of the Board, Mercedes-Benz Marketing and Sales are remunerated the same amount as their male colleagues. That's with the notable exception of Källenius who, being the head honcho, does get a rather more generous pay packet. How much, I'll let you go and find out, but I'll say it's relatively modest when you hear about what some of his contemporaries are paid at other big companies, and virtually nothing when compared to those in the financial industry.

**W**hat of all of this, then? Well I seem to recall reading that companies where women make up over 15 per cent of senior management are as much as 50 per cent more profitable than those with less than 10 per cent. I concede that's one hell of a simplistic comment which like anything, is open to interpretation, as are studies suggesting that gender balance is particularly useful in companies focussed on innovation. What is impressive though, is that Mercedes-Benz's commitment to change is evident from the top down, from one that could once have been described as stuffy and traditional, to one that's embracing an exciting future, and its products, and success only exemplify that.



► Our insider is a globe-trotting road tester driving the latest machines from Mercedes-Benz and its fiercest rivals



text & design

Mercedes-Benz 600 Landaulet -  
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# LETTERS

**STAR LETTER**

## VIETNAM MERC SPOTTER RUNDOWN

I've recently returned from a month's holiday in Ho Chi Minh City (commonly known as Saigon), and of course did a bit of Merc spotting while there. The streets of the city are clogged with motorbikes, all jostling for space with the taxis, cars and buses. Surprisingly, Mercs on the road were nearly all late models, an indicator I guess of the recent upturn in the Vietnamese economy. Apart from a R107 and a very nice W111 Coupe I spotted, the oldest Mercedes I saw was a W164 ML. There were plenty of GLCs, and the GLSs outnumbered GLEs and I spotted a few Maybachs as well. The W110 picture I've sent used to belong to President Thieu, prior to being captured by the Liberation Army in 1975. This one is on display at the Reunification Palace in HCMC.

**Ray Alford, via email**

*It's great to see readers combining their travelling experiences with a good Merc spotter rundown. Thanks for the Mercedes holiday report!*



Tidy Pagoda was one of very few classic Mercs spotted in the busy city.



CL models were far more common and some were wrapped or painted too.



W110 was on display, having been owned by a past president.



Can an EV fit into Steve Mason's life? With floods like this, perhaps not.

## UNREACHABLE ELECTRIC

I can only echo G Woodward's sentiments in the 'EV in Reach' letter from the January 2020 issue. Retired on a small public service pension, we will never afford anything electric, maybe not even when/if they join the sub £5,000 category. Will I want to pay for replacing batteries in a decade old, aged EV? Like power tools, they will become disposable, as replacing the power module will be uneconomic. The profitability of EV for the manufacturers must be their absolute fantasy.

I live in rural Somerset and need a tall 4x4 to get through even modest floods, just to get to a shop for whatever life demands. The water in the photo filled this road overnight, without warning. So where do EV cars stack up?

I drive a 16-year old, three-litre turbodiesel, which is quite a polluter. I can't afford £500 annual Chelsea tractor tax, so less pollution is also beyond my budget. The most recent flood, prior to last Christmas, I drove half a mile in 18 inches of water to buy milk. My 1997 CL420 (C140) stays safely tucked up until the sun comes out.

**Steve Mason, Somerset**

*The hope for many of us is that EV cars will become more popular as supply increases, which will eventually drive down prices for the cars themselves and replacement batteries if need be. We suspect that won't help the ability to tackle a flood though!*

## HARDTOP REMAINER

We have enjoyed trouble-free and wonderfully comfortable motoring

all over Europe from Geneva where we live for the past 20 years in the last two model SLs. We like the model for the hard roof, both for security and noise reasons. I have been enquiring both in the UK and Switzerland about the new model and have been advised it might not have the hardtop. Whilst my wife complains about the small boot, we would both not buy a new model with a soft top and wondered whether you have any firm news on the new model?

**Andrew Hope-Morley, Switzerland**

*The timing was good, as I imagine you may well have seen some of the early spy testing shots of the new SL that have emerged. They all appear to show a hardtop although there have been other hints that the car will be a soft top. Only time will tell for sure and it certainly don't have long to wait.*

## PAST BUYER'S GUIDE

I am looking to purchase a back issue featuring a Buyer's Guide article for the 2007 onwards Mercedes-Benz C216 CL500. I believe it was in an edition printed in 2018 or early 2019.

**Martyn Formstone, via email**

*The Buyer's Guide you're looking for was actually October 2017 and it can still be ordered from the back issues section of our website under the 2017 heading.*



△ There are plenty of back issues still available.

▷ COLLECTORS' EDITION

I want to congratulate you for this wonderful magazine. One of the things I enjoy more is the articles about Mercedes collectors around the world. I am a proud owner of a small collection in sunny Barcelona and I enjoy driving all of them. Here is a picture of my three toys that I try to keep in pristine condition. Plus I have an everyday car, which is an W211 E320 4Matic that drives so smoothly. Keep up the good work and please keep showing these beauties from all over the world.

**Francesc Llorens, Spain**

*Thanks for showing us your cars, that's a great little collection you have. If we're ever nearby, perhaps we could write a full feature on you and your passion for the cars!*

EVOLVING EFFICIENCY

As we live in a time when the keywords of 'environment' and 'conservation' are seen on a daily basis, it is very commendable to see Mercedes (and AMG) going to great lengths to utilise engines to their fullest operating capability.

The recent models based on the quite excellent M260 engine will, inevitably, produce emissions but the greater efficiency available must be applauded, and it is a good achievement on the path

to reduced emissions. The figure of 302bhp from a four-cylinder engine would, a couple of years ago, more likely have been the output from a V8 engine!

Currently, we are in very exciting times, as hybrid, petrol and electric engines (plus Mercedes' hydrogen-powered drivetrains) are being used in conjunction in some models. This all points to a greater choice of engines for consumers and eventually getting to the point of very low (even zero) emissions levels, which will allow future generations to enjoy driving without any apprehension, and keep pollution and its effects on the environment to as low a level as possible.

**Faisal Raffique, via email**

*These are indeed exciting times and considering many thought the concentration on efficiency and EV would kill off the concept of exciting cars, it seems to have done the opposite. Here's to the future!*

RENT-A-MERC SOLUTION

Thank you for your wonderful magazine, which I try to get as often as possible. I live in the west of Ireland and despite our usual wet weather, I try to bring my two Mercedes 450SLC models out for a run at weekends.



△ Reader Francesc Llorens from Spain with his collection of classic and youngtimer Mercs.

I read with great interest your article Rent-a-Merc in South Africa (January 2020 issue).

I am fortunate to own a home in Cape Town and try to go there as often as I can, but unfortunately working as a doctor, this is not easy. This article was music to my ears! Why? Because as said in the article, getting away from the standard rental car and driving a classic Mercedes-Benz around Cape Town and Hinterlands would be simply fantastic.

Unfortunately, I did not see how to contact this wonderful company, could you advise?

**Dr Paddy McDonagh, Ireland**

*Thanks for the kind words and we're glad you enjoyed the feature. The name of the company was mentioned, although it may have been lost in confusion as it's literally called Rent-A-Mercedes. The website is rentamercedes.co.za.*

*Rote Sau (Red Pig) and piecing together its racing history from all the fragmented information found on the internet.*

This has now been consolidated into a new website covering the background to this car, its racing history, the Daimler-Benz touring car racing attempt with 300SEL 6.3s in 1969, as well as an overview of the replica I have been building. I hope that you and your readers find this interesting, so please visit [www.rotosau.co.za](http://www.rotosau.co.za).

**Grant Viljoen, via email**

*That's a great site, well done on piecing all that together. We love the pictures and your replica!*

SHORT AND SWEET

Have you ever road tested the SL400 AMG Sport? If so, in which edition was it in please?

**Adrian Putman, via email**

*We did a small road test on the SL400 in the February 2015 issue, but haven't revisited the car since. Perhaps we could add that to the 2020 features to-do list!*

MERCSPOTTER



**"Whilst in Belgium for the Christmas markets at the tail end of last year, this immaculate 123 caught my eye cruising round the town of Ypres,"** tells

reader Jay Moggridge. "I later spotted the car again parked up so grabbed a picture. It was just about the only old car I saw whilst out there, as it seems the cities have clamped down on anything classic."

Seen an interesting Mercedes or caught one in an unusual situation? Send a picture to [info@mercedesenthusiast.co.uk](mailto:info@mercedesenthusiast.co.uk) (subject 'Merc Spotter') or by post to Mercedes Enthusiast, 17 Wickham Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 5JS.

PIECED TOGETHER

Over the past few years I have been collecting pictures of Die



△ Grant Viljoen has built a great image archive of the Red Pig racer as well as his own replica.

**GET IN TOUCH WRITE TODAY!**

Each month the writer of our Star Letter will receive a superb 1:24 scale model kit of a modern Mercedes-Benz from Revell! Revell model kits are available for purchase from all good toy and model retailers. For further information please visit [www.revell.de/en](http://www.revell.de/en)

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# TALKING POINT



## This month's Talking Point...

**“Which Mercedes-Benz felt the most reassuringly safe and secure?”**

“Let's start by crossing the W168 off the list.”

**Peter Ciesielski**

“Our old 116 450SEL felt as safe as a tank!”

**Jason MM**

“My W163, when effortlessly climbing up a steep slope in the Wombat State Forest. My son had his eyes closed.”

**Donovan Croucamp**

“The W126 was safe in a time cars didn't have to be. It excelled so much, the W140 was a let-down.”

**Juan Sebastián Camacho Guevara**

“ABS and ESP were pioneered by Mercedes-Benz. Both simple safety features designed to get you out of trouble. How many other cars don't have either of these now?”

**Steve Holder**

“W140/126 S-Class models were tanks on wheels.”

**Harry Savvides**

“I was about five years old when my folks' stationary W116 280S was hit by a tanker truck at an estimated 35mph. We were all a bit shaken but didn't have a single scratch on us.”

**Hanjo Stier**

“Mercedes ML W163/W140 S-Class are, in my opinion, the safest cars in the world.”

**Simon Safi**

“The W124 still and always will be the best car Mercedes ever built.”

**Alex Ingram**

Take part in Talking Point every month on Facebook and Twitter. See the bottom of page 24 for our respective websites!



## Cheshire Classic Benz

The Finest Examples of Mercedes-Benz Cars from the 1960s to the 1990s

### 300SL Roadster 1988E

Nautic Blue met, matching hardtop, blue soft top, blue sport check interior, 4 speed auto, air conditioning, cruise control, electric windows, rear seats, original alloy wheels, FSH, 78,000m . . . . . £32,950



### 300SL Roadster 1986C

Signal Red, matching hardtop, dark brown soft top, Saffron sport check interior, 4 speed auto, electric windows, rear seats, original alloy wheels, FSH, 51,000m . . . . . £35,950



### 300SL Roadster 1988F

Astral Silver metallic, matching hardtop, blue soft top, blue sport check interior, 4 speed auto, ABS, electric windows, rear seats, original alloy wheels, FSH, 103,000m . . . . . £28,950



### 320CE Cabriolet 1993L

Pearl Blue metallic with dark blue lower panels, blue soft top, grey leather, walnut wood, leather steering wheel and gearknob, 4 speed auto, airbags, original alloy wheels, FSH, 51,000m . . . . . £19,450



### E220 Sportline Cabrio 1994L

Almandine Red met, black leather, black soft top, 4 speed auto, climate, cruise, airbags, electric seats, electrically adjustable steering column, leather steering wheel, 8 hole alloys, FSH, 48,000m . £18,950



### E320 Sportline Cabrio 1994L

Blue/Black metallic, grey leather, black soft top, 4 speed auto, cruise, airbag, electric seats, electrically adjustable steering column, leather steering wheel, original Sportline 15" alloys, FSH, 96,000m . . . . . £15,950



### 230CE Coupe 1982Y

Astral Silver metallic, dark red MB Tex, auto gearbox, elec front windows, elec sunroof, front and rear headrests/armrests, orig alloy wheels, orig Blaupunkt radio/cassette, FSH, 3 owners, 48,000m . . £19,950



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# SECOND COMING



With only a handful of changes, is the facelifted version of the AMG C43 really that much better than the last one? We put it to the test to find out...

WORDS SIMON HOLMES IMAGES STEVE HALL

FIRST UK  
DRIVE

“Perhaps more importantly, the peak torque spread increased by 300rpm and shifted position”



**B**ACK IN EARLY 2015, MERCEDES-BENZ officially announced it would be launching two performance models in the near future. The first would be the new flagship Mercedes-AMG C63 and the second was to be named the Mercedes-Benz C450 AMG 4Matic. There's a good argument that the lack of full AMG affiliation for the C450 spoke volumes about where the car was aimed as well as its performance capabilities. That too obviously played on the minds of the marketing team and engineers, as by the time the car came to fruition in 2016, the name had been officially changed to the AMG C43 and in doing so automatically became a fully-fledged performance car. At least it had in Europe – strangely in North America the C450 badge saw one season of service before following suit.

Hesitations in naming, and therefore defining the model, certainly don't fit into the strong and clear cut image of AMG, and it's fair to say that was reflected in the early cars. I once drove a Cabriolet version of the first C43 model briefly and recall generally feeling underwhelmed. Although it was an altogether nice thing, it certainly wasn't what you would immediately associate with a truly electrifying drive, or indeed an AMG badge.

But things change, and in 2018 a facelift of the C-Class arrived which included the C43. However, with eyes perhaps focused on some of the other more popular models, many may have missed that the C43 also received some subtle tweaks to its underpinnings in an effort to sway the car from a rebadged C450 to an entry level AMG C-Class. The changes were small (read that as easily missed), as although the engine configuration remained the same, the three-litre M276 was now been given a pair of larger turbos that forced higher boost pressure so that the V6 produced an additional 23bhp and 32lb ft of torque. This took power to a healthy 385bhp and a well matched 384lb ft overall, but perhaps more importantly, the peak torque spread increased by 300rpm and shifted position, now peaking at 5,000rpm compared to 4,200rpm previously. Peak power also arrived at 6,100rpm, a lot closer to the 6,500rpm redline, which although seemed low is a typical nature of a V6. The four-wheel drive and nine-speed automatic transmission remained, although the new model benefited from AMG Speedshift tech for the first time, equating to more responsive gearshifts. To go with the changes there was also a price increase, with the latest Coupe tested here rising by £2,550 to £51,965.

### ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Even on paper, these handful of alterations seem relatively insignificant, as there's still a big issue to contend with and that's AMG's choice of a 4Matic drivetrain that's usually associated with its entry-level hot hatches, rather than the tyre-shredding, rear-wheel drive set up found on its premium and flagship products. It's that raw and raucous image that has set a certain precedent for the brand and ultimately defined these performance models. But this car essentially bridges that gap as it slots neatly into the range and realistically, we're in the middle of an important transition for performance cars of all types. Just 10 years ago, a majority of Germany's fastest models were modern day muscle car brutes, with big capacity V8 engines that powered the rear wheels alone, but times are changing. Several rivals have recently changed to four-wheel drive configuration and Mercedes-Benz has been one of the last to embrace it.

But with four-wheel drive levels of traction, refinement and a forced induction V6 instead of the exhilarating rear-wheel drive and snarling V8 set up, you have to wonder whether the C43 is truly a fully-fledged AMG worthy of the badge, and the accompanying price tag. On the exterior, it's fair to say the C43 isn't exactly what you would class as a full fat model and that's meant quite literally. For a start, it doesn't share the bulging bonnet of its V8 brethren, nor the swollen front and rear arches, although the similar grille design and quad tailpipes bolster the styling and provide a link to the C63. It is lacking the low and



△ Quad tailpipes bolster the rear end styling.

▷ Front seats offer a good level of support.

▷▷ Interior lacks the MBUX screens we're used to now.





## Just the facts

**AMG C43 4Matic Coupe (C205)**

**ENGINE M276 2,996cc V6**

**POWER 385bhp@6,100rpm**

**TORQUE 384lb ft@2,500-5,000rpm**

**TRANSMISSION 9-speed auto, 4WD**

**0-62MPH 4.7secs**

**TOP SPEED 155mph**

**WEIGHT 1,750kg**

*All figures from Mercedes-Benz for model pictured*



“ You have to wonder whether the C43 is truly a fully-fledged AMG worthy of the badge and the price tag ”



## ROAD TEST AMG C43 4Matic

▷ hunkered down look of the V8 car and as a result, the C43 hasn't got anywhere near the same road presence. It could in fact be mistaken for a lesser numbered associate of the family. However, that in itself is the key to the C43's appeal and why it works as an independent stepping-stone between something subtle and unimposing, but hugely capable, which this car most definitely is.

### ON THE ROAD

Once behind the wheel, those small underpinning tweaks are instantly identifiable. The power delivery is responsive on the uptake and remains linear, with the healthy torque spread providing solid acceleration to the redline. Out of corners the engine feels hugely eager and it devours sections of tight tarmac in sharp bursts, whilst the nine gearbox ratios make light work of the power-band, with fast and flowing gear changes during sprints. Although it should be noted that at slower speeds you do notice the gearbox can be clumsy in selecting the correct gear every now and again. Perhaps all of those ratios become confusing even to a computer, but the 4Matic transmission that is coupled to is certainly clever and competent. Working flat out, there's a front/rear axle split of 31 to 69 per cent and thanks to that potent torque spread that's enough to feel like you're being pushed, rather than pulled out of corners. Subsequently, the car has an extra dimension of stability and there's virtually no body roll as the car remains stable and planted at seemingly any speed, so it naturally inspires confidence when pushed.

There are of course a number of driving configurations to help you make the most of your driving experience, ranging from Comfort and Individual to Sport and Sport+, all of which can modify engine response, gear change aggressiveness, suspension stiffness and steering response. Braking is also fierce thanks to the four-pot calipers that grab huge 360mm discs, with single-piston rears biting 320mm discs. Combined it's a very capable chassis that is able to tackle any corner with confidence and even with enthusiastic driving you can feel the front end working with you, rather than against you. The car never once scrabbles for grip and is constantly grounded, making it far more usable and better suited to UK roads, especially the kind of roads we're driving on today.

Despite that complex four-wheel drive system, the car weighs just 60kg less than the V8-engined C63 version and is also marginally better on fuel consumption at 27.9mpg, although much like the emissions at 183g/km, there's not much in it and if you're looking at the range's true performance variant, we can safely assume there are other figures that will be of more concern. For most, those would include the 4.7-second sprint from rest to 62mph and an inevitably limited 155mph top speed. Those figures are for the Coupe, but the C43 also comes in Saloon, Estate and Cabriolet forms, which differ very slightly.

### OFF TIMING

Despite the performance-related revisions of the facelift, Mercedes-AMG claims that the acceleration figures remain the same as the previous model, which had less power and torque, and slower gearshifts, as well as a narrower torque band, which seems a little odd. This test car undoubtedly feels livelier than the previous model and certainly quicker than the acceleration figures would suggest. Perhaps there's a chance that gap between the almighty C63 and the humble C43 have been purposely set in stone. If that is the case, the teams at the top at both Mercedes and AMG shouldn't be scared as it's evident that the new C43 isn't trying to imitate its big brother or steal any of its potential customers. Instead, it seems it's aimed at those who might not want the loud and lairy C63, or its associated running costs. It's no rival but it's certainly no half-hearted effort either, as the C43 works to firmly bolster the evolving AMG brand by offering something hugely fast, capable and accessible. It may well be the dawn of a new age, but it's very much a good one.

“ The C43 works to firmly bolster the evolving AMG brand ”





△ New tweaks are deserving of the AMG badging.



◀◀◀ Huge 360mm brakes are well-suited.

◀◀ The power and torque have both increased.

◀ Tweaked engine now has bigger turbos.

▽ Narrow body makes do without the C63's arches.



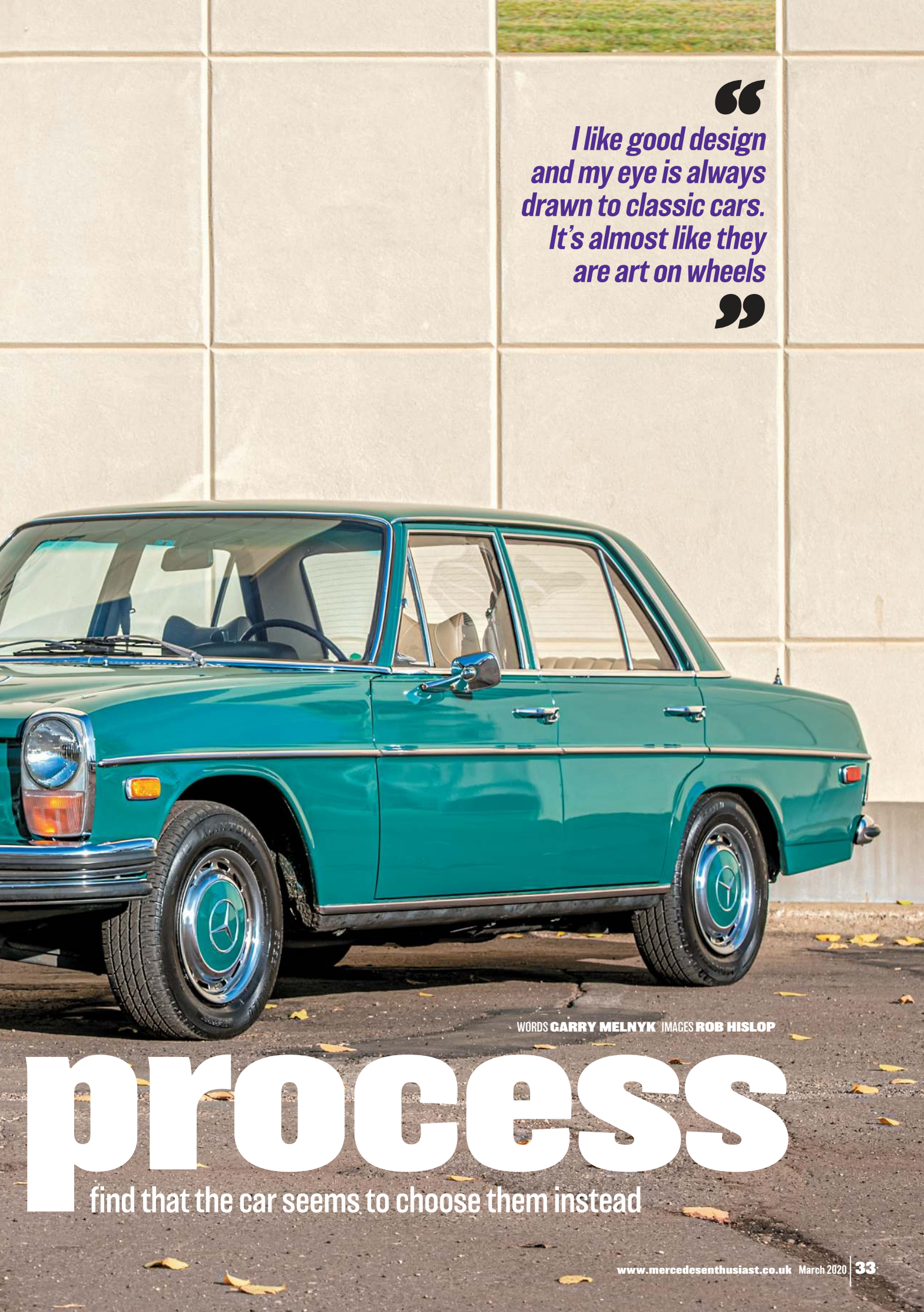
CLASSIC CHOICE  
W114 250



# Selection

When it comes to choosing your first Mercedes-Benz, sometimes owners





“

*I like good design  
and my eye is always  
drawn to classic cars.  
It's almost like they  
are art on wheels*

”

WORDS GARRY MELNYK IMAGES ROB HISLOP

# process

find that the car seems to choose them instead

**A**

**STROKE 8 MERCEDES-BENZ CERTAINLY** has a real charm about it. The classic design has aged well over the years and still cuts an attractive shape in modern times, which is now proving simply irresistible to some. That includes Milap Petigara, the owner of this fine example. He only became a fully-fledged Mercedes enthusiast recently and this is his first Mercedes-Benz,

which he came across in 2015 whilst on a family holiday to the Sunshine Coast, a picturesque region of British Columbia, located in western Canada. It was there, whilst visiting his wife's family in the Pender Harbour area that Milap spotted an older, green saloon car with a 'For Sale' sign displayed in the window, parked by a petrol station. Whilst it caught his attention passing by, there was no time to stop and take a closer look.

However, as fate would have it, a holiday in 2018 would provide another encounter with the car when Milap and his wife Lindsay happened to stop at the same petrol station. The green saloon was no longer parked nearby anymore, but purely by chance, that same car he had spotted some three years earlier then appeared and drove onto the forecourt, piloted by an older gentleman. Milap and the driver, named Bob, struck up a conversation and he soon learned that the car, a 1972 Mercedes-Benz 250, was still for sale. It was then suggested Milap should take the Stroke 8 for a test drive and so he obliged, taking the 250 for a spin around the corner. Afterwards, Bob passed along his telephone number and Milap and Lindsay drove away into the distance, but the thought of the car stayed with him.

### **MEMORABLE MERC**

"I just couldn't get the 250 off my mind," tells Milap. "So I called him the next day to take a closer look and have another drive." After a run in and around Pender Harbour, Milap took a long look at the car and the more he gazed at it, the more he fell for it, as there was something about the car's design, colour and condition which really appealed. "At the time I wasn't a car guy, but I like good design and my eye is always drawn to classic cars. It's almost like they are art on wheels," he explains.

He was smitten and Lindsay ▷

### **JUST THE FACTS**

**250 (W114)**  
**ENGINE M114 2,496cc 6-cyl**  
**POWER 128bhp@5,400rpm**  
**TORQUE 147lb ft@3,600rpm**  
**TRANSMISSION 4-speed automatic, RWD**  
**WEIGHT 1,375kg**  
**0-62MPH 12.9sec**  
**TOP SPEED 109mph**  
**FUEL CONSUMPTION 24.1mpg**  
**YEARS PRODUCED 1967-1972**

*Figures from Mercedes for model as pictured*





“  
*When the holiday came to an end, Milap began the 750-mile drive home in his new classic car*  
”

◁ Milap stumbled across the car more than once.

▽ The 250 led a sheltered life and it shows it now.

▽ Interior is all original and as M-B intended.



**Laurent Nay**  
*Maroquinerie Automobile*



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◁ Colour-coded hub caps ensure the period look.

◁ Rear cabin space of the saloon is like new.



▷ was supportive, suggesting that if he really felt strongly about the classic Mercedes and wanted it, he should have it. So, payment was arranged after Milap had a local mechanic assess the car and assure him the 250 was both roadworthy and capable of a long highway drive. When the holiday came to an end, Milap began the 750-mile drive home in his new classic car, with Lindsay following close behind in the family saloon.

Driving such distances in Canada is not uncommon, where wide, open spaces, good roads and modern cars make such travel a breeze. However, driving a 38-year old Mercedes for that distance is another matter altogether, as we're sure anyone can appreciate. There's a much higher risk of breakdown, which can occur in one of those wide and open remote areas, such as a national park, which would result in a major inconvenience. This certainly crossed Milap's mind, but the idea of gliding along in the Mercedes at speed in a beautiful mountain region overshadowed that possibility and proved to be strengthen his love for the car.

### ROAD TRIP

The first part of his trip involved smaller highways, through Vancouver city, then onto a long, four-lane stretch of the Trans-Canada highway. After that it was on to the Coquihalla Highway, a high speed, four-lane road in southern British Columbia that has sweeping turns and many elevation changes through mountain passes. Milap recalls the 250 had no problem climbing the Coquihalla and there was no hesitation running ▷

“

*It's obvious this example has led a pampered life, but there isn't a lot known about the 250's past*

”



## CLASSIC CHOICE

### W114 250

▷ the car up to 75mph, which is the maximum speed limit. Once back in Alberta and onto the Yellowhead Highway east of Jasper in the Rocky Mountains, Milap was once again able to open up the 250 and let it cruise the final leg home to Edmonton.

### A PAST LIFE

It's obvious this example has led a pampered life, but there wasn't a lot Bob could tell Milap about the 250's past. It is known the car was built in October 1971 and was one of 8,266 produced worldwide for the 1972 model year. This particular car was imported into the United States and it's assumed that it was sold by a car dealer in California, before eventually ending up in the Palm Springs area where Bob purchased it from the original owner. Well cared for and used lightly in a dry climate, the car had about 45,000 miles on the clock at that point and its only options were an automatic transmission and power steering. The base price in US dollars was \$7,205 (£5,530) in September 1971. Air conditioning was not installed, which is surprising given its use in California.

At some point it had been resprayed from its factory dark blue/green code 268 to a period correct Moss Green. In our eyes, the paint was certainly done to a high standard and still retains a high gloss, free from any orange peel or other flaws. Bob informed Milap that he also enjoyed the 250 on many long highway runs, taking it on occasional trips from his home in

▽▽ The car has covered relatively low mileage.

▽ Trusty M114 engine has proved very reliable.



British Columbia all the way to California and in doing so, putting an additional 45,000 or so miles on the odometer.

The interior is a mix of original parchment with black trim and wood accent on the instrument panel and still looks wonderful, with little sign of wear, even on the driver's seat. The biggest expense Bob had incurred during his ownership was

a transmission rebuild in the year 2000, and later the 250 received new tyres, dampers, suspension work, major brake work as well as a new exhaust system. Bob also installed new Weber carburetors and as a result, Milap only had to obtain an out of province mechanical inspection and some minor tune up work. It is maintained by Karmac of Edmonton, a long-established German specialist.

### OPTION FREE

Powered by the 2.8-litre six-cylinder engine and not burdened with the extra weight of air conditioning or pollution controls that came later in 1970s era cars, the 128bhp moves the little saloon

along at a brisk clip. Two Zenith 35/40 INAT downdraught carburetors were standard fit and factory figures from stated the car could get from 0-62mph in a little under 13 seconds.

I recall seeing very few of these cars where I grew up in western Canada. Back then, even with a strong Canadian dollar at the time, these models were pricey items and so appealed to a very small demographic. But that's now changed, and these cars now attract a new type of owner. Indeed, Milap and Lindsay now have a third family member, with son Avi, whose dad tells us will also get his chance to drive the car in the future. Enthusiasts for life already...

“  
**These models were pricey items and so appealed to a very small demographic. But that's now changed**  
”

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# SIX-PACK SELECTION

Cover  
story

## Just the facts

**C220 CDI BlueEfficiency (W204)**

**ENGINE** OM651 2,143cc 4-cyl

**POWER** 168bhp@3,000-4,000rpm

**TORQUE** 295lb ft@1,400-2,800rpm

**TRANSMISSION** 7-speed auto, RWD

**0-62MPH** 8.1sec

**TOP SPEED** 143mph

**FUEL CONSUMPTION** 58.9mpg

**£10,000 BUYS YOU**

A 2011 C220 CDI BlueEfficiency

Sport with 50,000 miles

In the latest instalment of our buying series, we reveal what a £10,000 budget can buy you with a Mercedes-Benz badge on the used market

WORDS **GUY BAKER**  
IMAGES **TERRY OBORNE,**  
**JOHNSONS OF LEIGH, M CAR**  
**PRESTIGE CAR SALES,**  
**AP CARS IN KENT**

**M**ERCEDES' REPUTATION FOR producing long-lasting cars, with comfortable upmarket interiors, desirable technology and impressive engineering is well deserved. And over the last decade or so the range of Stuttgart stars has grown exponentially. So as a used Mercedes buyer you've never had more choice of models.

But not all these cars offer the same degree of reliability or value for money, and that's where we come in. At a range of different price points, we scour the market seeking out the best second hand Mercedes in each class and highlight the key buying issues you are likely to face. This month, our nominal budget is £10,000, a decent sum but one which provides a dilemma. Should you go for something fairly contemporary that could soldier on with the chance of only a few minor issues, or buy a more desirable older Mercedes that you can enjoy but may need regular maintenance?

Ultimately, the choice is yours, but whichever way you lean, you can be sure that you'll be buying the best Mercedes available, as long as you follow our buying tips. We've covered all bases in this feature, with this month's six contenders all capable of providing years of motoring pleasure and reliable service.

“  
*But not all these models offer the same degree of reliability or value for money, and that's where we come in*  
”

1

## Saloon

### C220 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport (W204)

IN SOME PEOPLE'S EYES, A C-CLASS SALOON IS THE default Mercedes, but that doesn't make it a bad car. Quite the opposite in fact, especially if it's a W204 in C220 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport guise. Efficient, torquey, stylish, affordable and comfortable, this model's humble-sounding 2.1-litre four-pot motor delivers an immense 295lb ft of torque from just 1,400-2,800rpm, providing plentiful in-gear acceleration and enabling the automatic saloon to hit 62mph in just 8.1 seconds. It goes on to a top speed of 143mph, which is impressive stuff.

The car's Sport suspension comes with stiffer springs, which reduces body roll compared to the SE and Elegance models, and enhances the handling. And the popular optional automatic models claim marginally quicker acceleration but are slightly less economical than the standard

manual car, but both versions will beat 58mpg on long cruises.

Being a favourite of fleet managers the length and breadth of the land means that there are oodles of good used examples around, with full M-B service histories and at attractive prices. So, finding one in a colour you like and with the spec you need shouldn't prove hard. And although a few will have covered stratospheric mileages, the majority haven't.

We liked the look of this 50,000-mile 61-plater advertised at Your Car Supermarket in the West Midlands ([www.yourcarsupermarket.com](http://www.yourcarsupermarket.com)) for well under budget at £7,500. An automatic seven-speed version, this C220 came with a service history, two keys and was in great condition. It also had half-leather electric seats, Bluetooth, sat nav, front and rear parking sensors, electric folding mirrors and all the usual Sport goodies including some tasty alloys. Examples like this tend to sell quickly but you will find similar examples if you look around. Don't forget to check out used car supermarkets, as well as main and specialist dealers.





Saloon  
C220 CDI  
BlueEfficiency  
Sport



## Buying tips

It's not a common problem but we do recommend you check for any early signs of rust around the bootlid, sills and doors, and you must put every electrical item through its paces. Mirrors, seats, rear lights and dashboard displays have all reportedly had problems, but only according to a handful of owners. Make sure the Comand system does all it should and check that the electric parking brake works properly too. Also look out for any condensation in the headlights, broken suspension springs, worn bushes and torn seat coverings. MAF sensors can fail, as can some engine sensors, and any oil leaks should set alarm bells ringing.

### Just the facts

**Mercedes-Benz E320 Coupe (C124)**  
**ENGINE** M104 3,199cc 6-cyl  
**POWER** 217bhp @ 5,500rpm **TORQUE** 229lb ft @ 3,750rpm  
**TRANSMISSION** 4-speed auto, RWD **0-62MPH** 7.9sec  
**TOP SPEED** 143mph **FUEL CONSUMPTION** 19.2mpg EEC urban  
**£10,000** buys you A 1995 E320 Coupe with 80,000 miles

2

Youngtimer

## Mercedes-Benz E320 Coupe (C124)

FOR A MODERN CLASSIC MERCEDES, 10 GRAND is a relative conservative budget. But if you spend it on the best condition E320 Coupe you can find then chances are you'll see some kind of return on your investment within five years, because demand for the best examples is now rising and that's partly because the 124-series is a largely durable and practical classic. It's good fun to drive, with feisty performance courtesy of a 3,199cc, six-cylinder 217bhp engine, so the 62mph benchmark arrives in just 7.9 seconds and top speed is 143mph.

Torque peaks at 229lb ft at 3,750rpm and the E320 was originally sold as five-speed manual or a four-speed auto, with a five-speed auto arriving later, all transmissions proving durable. The ride is relaxing, as long as suspension components have been maintained, and with a good-sized boot and decent rear seats and legroom, the C124 is a practical and usable classic coupe too.

Buying a car that's in good condition is a must. The best examples will either have led pampered lives or been religiously restored by Mercedes fanatics. A car like this 1995 E320 we spotted at AP Cars in Kent ([www.apcarskent.co.uk](http://www.apcarskent.co.uk)) would make an ideal buy. An N-plater, it was well kitted out, had covered just 79,569 miles and came with leather, an electric sunroof, electric seats, climate control and headlamp wipers. This example was well maintained and had a wiring harness change in 2016, which all 124s eventually need, and was advertised for sale at £8,500. ▷



## Buying tips

All the usual modern classic car caveats apply here: rust, electrical problems and worn suspension components are common issues. Ideally, your E320 should also pack a full service history and a pristine provenance. Maintenance is the key to longterm sound running, so keep an eye out for any oil or water leaks and engine overheating issues, as a poor cooling system will quickly lead to head gasket failure. The engine uses a duplex chain-drive, which shouldn't exhibit wear until it reaches very high mileages but investigate the engine wiring looms, as these need replacing at some point. Any cracked wires are a bad sign and also look for issues on the five-speed automatic transmission, as problems can arise.

Youngtimer  
E320  
Coupe



## Buying tips

It's important that you listen and feel carefully for any hesitation or juddering from the throttle on the test drive, as this could be caused by a simple blown MAF sensor but could equally be more serious injector failure. Make sure you get a proper diagnostic check done before agreeing to buy as this will show up any hidden electrical issues. A full service history is essential and there have been a few recalls so check with a local dealer before you buy that all remedial work has been carried out. If your car comes with Airmatic suspension make sure it's all working. Clogged EGR valves can also be an issue for some cars.



**Estate**  
**E350 CDI**  
BlueEfficiency  
Sport



“

*Should you go for something contemporary or buy a more desirable older Mercedes?*

”

### 3 **Estate** **E350 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport** (S212)

**A** BRILLIANT ALL-ROUNDER, THE S212 E350 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport is fast, frugal and family friendly. With more get-up-and-go than the most powerful four-pots and with nearly as much torque as a V8, this supremely comfortable load-lugger can whisk five adults and their luggage across Europe with ease. Sublime on motorways, it's well screwed together too and despite its fleet car popularity, the S212 Sport boasts refreshingly sharp styling whilst that voluminous boot is nothing short of immense.

The car's refined 2,987cc V6 turbodiesel produces a hefty 457lb ft of torque at 1,600-2,400rpm and mated to Mercedes' excellent seven-speed auto transmission you will never lack for performance, even fully loaded. The benchmark 0-62mph dash takes 6.7 seconds and top speed is 155mph, yet you can better 40mpg with judicious application of the loud pedal. But perhaps

best of all, there are numerous cars currently advertised for sale – almost all at sensible prices.

Don't limit your search to main dealer and specialist forecourts, however, because the E350 CDI can also be found in numbers at used car supermarkets, like this one-owner 2010 example we unearthed, again located at Your Car Supermarket in the West Midlands ([www.yourcarsupermarket.com](http://www.yourcarsupermarket.com)).

Priced at just £9,500 this car had a sensible 80,000 miles under its belt and came with a full service history, an MOT spanning to September 2020 and a plush spec to boot. The kit list included 18-inch AMG alloys, Comand Linguatronic with sat nav, electric memory leather seats, front and rear parking sensors, a six-CD changer, cruise control, climate control, front foglights and this example also came with all previous service invoices and receipts.

**Just the facts**

**E350 CDI Estate (s212)**  
**ENGINE** OM642 2,987cc V6  
**POWER** 261bhp@3,800rpm  
**TORQUE** 457lb ft@1,600-2,400rpm  
**TRANSMISSION** 7-speed auto, RWD  
**0-62MPH** 6.7sec  
**TOP SPEED** 155mph (limited)  
**FUEL CONSUMPTION** 44.8mpg  
**£10,000 BUYS YOU**  
 A 2010 E350 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport with 80,000 miles



**Just the facts**

**Mercedes-Benz SL350 (R230)**  
**ENGINE** M272 3,498cc V6 **POWER** 268bhp@6,000rpm  
**TORQUE** 258lb ft@2,400-5,000rpm  
**TRANSMISSION** 5-speed auto, RWD **0-62MPH** 6.6sec  
**TOP SPEED** 155mph (limited) **FUEL CONSUMPTION** 27.4mpg  
**£10,000 BUYS YOU** A 2006 SL350 with 67,000 miles



**4**

**Roadster**

**Mercedes-Benz SL350 (R230)**

**N**EVER BEFORE HAS THE MERCEDES SL BEEN SO affordable and the R230 SL350 appears to offer the best value of all. A cherished 2006 example could be yours for just £10,000, which is amazing value on the face of it. And although it's not a V8, the SL350 still possesses more kudos than pretty much any other £10,000 roadster, plus it's comfortable and nimbler than the heavier SL500.

Launched in 2006, the facelifted R230 boasts a 268bhp V6 lump which produces 258lb ft of torque from 2,400-5,000rpm and comes as standard with Mercedes five-speed automatic transmission. This suits the SL's character perfectly, although the SL350 is surprisingly agile on twisty B-roads if the mood takes you. The SL350 hits 62mph in just 6.6 seconds, with top speed limited to the usual 155mph, which is fast enough.

The original 2006 asking price was £62,885, with most examples packing a few tasty options taking the asking price north of £70,000 so you're getting a lot of metal for your money. And being an SL, you won't lack for luxury items, with a plethora of toys included. All examples should come with adaptive brake lights, adaptive front airbags, automatic childseat recognition, climate control, Brake Assist, Speedtronic cruise control, draught-stop, exit lights in the doors, extended central locking with closure/opening of Vario-roof and side windows, foglamps, electrically adjustable memory seats, steering wheel and mirror, tinted glass and auto-wash xenon headlamps.

Something like this designo Stone Silver car at Johnsons of Leigh ([www.johnsonsofleigh.co.uk](http://www.johnsonsofleigh.co.uk)) would be ideal, and this particular 2006 car also had the advantage of having covered 67,000 miles with just two owners. Sporting 17-inch AMG alloys and advertised at £9,495, it's hard to imagine you'll find much better value and the interior was trimmed in nappa leather with wood trim and electric memory heated seats. ➤



**Buying tips**

Prospective SL350 owners should watch out for corroded alloy wheels, front end paint chips, any water leaks into the boot (which can damage electrical systems), worn suspension components, failed lumbar support controls, leaky roof seals and excessive oil consumption. And a few cars have suffered premature wear of the camshaft adjuster solenoid or the timing chain sprocket for the balancer shaft, which can be very expensive to rectify as it's an engine out job. A Mercedes service bulletin has been released which outlines repair instructions, but you'd be wise to walk away from any car sporting a permanently illuminated engine light.



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”

**SUV**  
**ML300 CDI**  
**BlueEfficiency**

**Just the facts**

**ML300 CDI BlueEfficiency (W164)**  
**ENGINE** OM642 2,987cc V6  
**POWER** 201bhp@3,800rpm  
**TORQUE** 369lb ft@1,400-2,800rpm  
**TRANSMISSION** 7-speed auto, 4WD  
**0-62MPH** 8.3sec  
**TOP SPEED** 130mph  
**FUEL CONSUMPTION** 31.4mpg  
**£10,000 BUYS YOU**  
 A 2010 ML300 CDI BlueEfficiency with 94,000 miles



**5**

**SUV**

**ML300 CDI BlueEfficiency (W164)**

UNTIL THE GLC BECOMES A TAD more affordable, older versions of the ML are your best entry into affordable Mercedes SUV ownership. The later W164 ML300 CDI is a great overall package, especially at £10,000, as it's comfortable, safe, and good looking, particularly with the larger alloys fitted and our budget will bag a 2010 model with no more than 95,000 miles as well as a few appealing optional extras.

Powered by Mercedes' well-known 2,987cc V6 turbodiesel, the W164's off-road credentials are impeccable and as a tow car the ML is in its element. Power output at 201bhp is more than sufficient, whilst a hefty 369lb ft of torque from a mere 1,400-2,800rpm ensures that even the heaviest of loads can be lugged around with ease. As a passenger carrier, the ML300 CDI is smooth and enormously comfortable while the

standard 7G-Tronic automatic gearbox copes well with all situations. And when its time to hit the diesel pump, you might be surprised to discover that with a prudent driving style your BlueEfficiency model has returned over 30mpg.

These cars tend to put to good use, so mileages can be higher than average, but this 2010 black example at M Car Prestige Car Sales in Preston ([www.m-car.co.uk](http://www.m-car.co.uk)) had covered only 94,500 in nine years, came with a full service history and a £9,999 price tag attached.

A one-owner Grand Edition model, it came laden with kit including 20-inch alloys, black nappa leather with burr walnut, an eight-speaker sound system, automatic climate control, bi-xenon headlights with LED daytime running lights, Bluetooth, heated front seats, Parktronic with a reversing camera and Speedtronic cruise control, ensuring a life of luxury. ▷

**Buying tips**

With so much kit on board we'd recommend you get a diagnostic check done before agreeing to buy, as this will show up hidden electrical issues, whilst a full service history and a low number of previous owners are ideal. There have been a few recalls so ensure these have been addressed and check the car for any signs of off-road damage, as plenty of cars have been off the black stuff. Some owners report rattles or squeaks in cabin and note that both height sensors and the compressor can fail on models fitted with air suspension. Watch out for any hesitation or juddering, clogged EGR valves, blown turbos, a blocked DPF, broken suspension springs and oil or coolant leaks.



*Don't limit your search to main dealer and specialist forecourts*

**6**

**Hatchback**

## **A180 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport (W176)**

### **Just the facts**

**A180 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport (W176)**

**ENGINE** OM608 1.461cc 4-cyl **POWER** 108bhp@4,000rpm

**TORQUE** 192lb ft@1,750-2,500rpm

**TRANSMISSION** 7-speed auto **0-62MPH** 11.3sec

**TOP SPEED** 118mph **FUEL CONSUMPTION** 57.7mpg

**£10,000 buys you a 2014 A180 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport with 100,000 miles or less**



**T**HE CONTEMPORARY LOOKING W176 A-CLASS WAS A GAME changer for Mercedes-Benz, offering an upmarket challenge to VW's Golf. And with so many well-maintained, used examples now offered for sale, the A180 CDI BlueEfficiency Sport model makes a compelling case for itself.

Stylish, efficient and practical, this five-door is a hard act to beat and with plenty around to choose from you're guaranteed a discount on even the most highly specced, low mileage examples. Despite the engine's lowly 1.5-litre capacity there's plenty of torque on tap with 192lb ft available from 1,750-2,500rpm to be exact, so overtaking can be easy and the combined fuel consumption figure of 57.7mpg can be beaten on longer motorway journeys if you're trying to be frugile.

There were various specs available but in BlueEfficiency Sport guise you get not only a great driving experience with plenty of economy, but also a great mix of sporty additions inside and out. Unlike some other Mercedes, these cars were bought in large numbers by private buyers as well as fleets, so many have covered relatively low mileages for their age, but the higher mileage cars were often well maintained at dealers, like this 2014 metallic silver example we spotted for sale also at Your Car Supermarket in the West Midlands ([www.yourcarsupermarket.com](http://www.yourcarsupermarket.com)). A prime example of what you could buy, this 64-plate car had covered 109,000 miles and came with the all-important full Mercedes service history. A seven-speed automatic with paddleshifts, it also boasted a comprehensive spec that included air conditioning, heated front and rear screen, sat nav, Bluetooth, cruise control, 18-inch alloys, electric mirrors, electric windows, part-leather trim and plenty more. Stickered at £8,000 we reckon it represented good value for money.

## **Buying tips**

Aside from all the usual checks you would make for car park dents, scuffed alloys and front end paint chips, we would recommend you test every electrical item as a few owners have had problems with the radio and central locking. Cabin rattles aren't unknown and the model should have undergone a few recalls, so check that these have been done. Some cars have suffered water ingress into boot and rear footwell, check that the stop-start system still works properly and aim for a main-dealer history.



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**1989 Mercedes 300SL W107.** Nautic blue with full grey leather, blue hard top and perfect blue soft top, flat face alloys, OTG, full electric pack, stereo, 109K with full service history and a stunning original car that drives like new. Excellent value .....**£29,950**

**1986 Mercedes 300SL.** Artic white with sports and charcoal trim, charcoal soft top and white hard top, flat face alloys, boot spoiler and full electric pack. 72,000 miles only with FMBSH. Stunning and original example in show winning rust free condition .....**£34,950**



**1988 Mercedes 560SL Sports, LHD.** Signal red with beige leather trim, Hard and soft tops, air con, cruise, OTG, and full electric pack. Sold by us to its last two owners, and three owners from new. Full and detailed Mercedes history. Lovely original example and very very Rare .....**£24,950**



**1983 Mercedes 280 SL W107 sports.** In stunning Milan brown metallic with beige tex trim. Hard and soft tops, rear seats, wind deflector, Mexican hat alloys. One previous owner and only 42,000 miles from new. Full detailed history: All books, tools, documentation. Superb original example in time warp condition, the finest we have seen. Possibly the finest and most original in UK .....**£36,950**



**1986 Mercedes 300SL (W107).** Silver with blue leather and rear seat. Navy blue hood, and nautic blue hard top. Flat face alloys. Sold by us to its last two owners over a 29 year period, stunning example with FSH .....**£34,950**



**1985 Mercedes W107 280SL Sports.** Champagne with Brazil brown duo trim. One previous owner, 67,000 miles only. With FMBSH. Hard and soft tops, and rear seat. Spent the last 16 years in a serious collection. A superb and unmarked original car. We very much doubt that any UK specialist has a better example .....**£29,950**



**1983 Mercedes 380 SL Sports.** White with beige leather trim, and blue sport top. Car supplied new to English film star who owned the car for 30 years. Stunning original rust free example. With impeccable provenance....**£29,950**



**1995 Mercedes SL500 sports W129.** Silver with blue leather and blue mohair power. Hood, hard and soft tops alloys, air con, and full electric pack. ONE previous owner and 15,000 miles only. The car is as NEW and truly magnificent .....**£29,950**



**2004 Mercedes E55 AMG.** Silver with full black leather sports trim, AMG alloys, Aircond, ESR, EM, full electric pack plus massive factory specification too long to list, one previous owner, and 39000 miles only with FSH. Stunning, unmarked and original and very very fast. Amazing value at .....**£16,950**



**1999 Mercedes SL320 sports.** Azurite (Nautic Blue) cream nappa leather. Panoramic glass roof, electric power hood, wind deflector, full electric pack, air conditioner, alloys, tracker system, CD. ONE owner, 45,000 miles only FMBSH, Stunning.....**£18,950**



**1991 Mercedes 300SL 24 Valve.** Finished in light metallic blue with beige leather. Flat face alloys, hard and soft tops. Power hood in blue. 41,000 miles only with full documented, Mercedes and Mercedes specialist history. And two owners. This is the finest W129 we have seen in years, very special .....**£15,950**



**1992 Mercedes 300SL Sports (W129).** Alpine white with full tan leather. Flat face alloys, full electric pack, power hood, hard-top, CD, plus very good spec. 71,000 miles with Mercedes-Benz history. This car is in mint original condition and must not be compared with the normal auction house offerings .....**£12,950**



**1992 Mercedes 300SL W129.** Signal red with beige leather, 8-hole alloys, hard top, black power hood, good factory period spec. 73,000 miles with full Mercedes history, all books, tools, and original documentation. A superb and original example .....**£12,950**



**1994 Mercedes 280 SL W129 Sports.** Monza red with Champagne leather. Hard and soft tops, power hood, windows, seats, mirrors, ABS, cruise, OTG. Two previous owners, last lady owner 20 years. Full Mercedes service history. Diamond black alloys. Stunning and original .....**£10,950**

# CLASS TIME



△ It's clear Charlie loves telling the past stories about each of his cars.

Charlie Spiher has a collection of Mercedes that he cherishes, but it's the story behind each car that he's really passionate about sharing with us...

WORDS **RICHARD MASON** IMAGES **JOE PIANE**





**I**NDIANA IS FAMOUS WITH CAR enthusiasts for the Indy 500 race, as well as once being the home of the Hummer and Studebaker car plants. But it also happens to host a small but unique collection of Mercedes classics and youngtimers acquired over the space of three decades by Charlie Spiher, a retired pharmacist in his 70s.

Charlie offered to show us around the collection and we meet in front of non-descript industrial unit. "I hope you won't be disappointed with my collection" says Charlie with a twinkle in his eyes. "My passion was Harley-Davidsons, but my second wife Lyn said she would only marry me if I gave up motorbikes, although I could have as many cars as I liked. That was 28 years ago and in that time I've had over 20 Mercedes. There's just something about them."

### 1967 W110 UNIVERSAL

"Every car has a story and I like stories," he admits. "I'd had a number of Mercedes W110 Fintails on which the Universal is based but I wanted something different. Once upon a time Mercedes didn't make estates, but did have a firm in Belgium convert them from a production car. I persuaded the last

owner to sell it to me in 2003. It had a lot of rust so I had it all fixed up and resprayed in the original shade of blue."

Charlie explains that the car was originally brought into the US by Michael Harper-Smith, who owns a company in Los Angeles supplying period cars to the film industry. He was in Europe looking to buy inventory and after seeing the Universal on a dealer's lot he just had to have it, he used it in Europe before shipping it home. Later he sold it to a German named Storm, in Port Huron, Michigan, who already had one, before selling it to the last owner who kept it 10 years. Querying the UK numberplate, Charlie says he found it in a gutter whilst visiting London. An original touch is the VIN number that's etched on every window and has been for many years. But talking of windows, we had to ask what Charlie has done to the rear of his gold 380SLC parked in the corner.

### 1981 C107 380SLC

Normally, the SLC's rear side quarter windows are clear glass with plastic slats creating a louvre effect, but here the glass has been painted silver. Over to Charlie to explain.

"Sometimes these windows get moisture in and begin to delaminate. I wasn't that keen on them so I painted over it with silver. It's what I would call a special touch!"



◀ The cars are regularly brought out of storage and used on the road.

▷ Our writer Richard was just as fond of the cars as the owner!

▽ 380SLC was once owned by a rich and famous inventor.

▽▽ Charlie painted the rear windows and now prefers the look of them.



“As the shutter slowly rises, sunlight reveals the rare cars hiding in the shadows, all with their own story to tell”



◀◀ A small and dark warehouse houses his collection of cars.

◀ Immaculate W115 has just 28,000 miles and is the closest to a new car.





**“ Charlie has a great collection, but it’s the stories and the use that he gets from the cars that’s really interesting ”**



△ The 300TD was imported from Germany by the original owner.

△△ On the grille is the 200,000km badge of honour of the car wears.

△▷ Warning triangle was not available on American-spec cars.

▷ The car is one of 3,789 made in 1981 and everything still works, including the air con, and has a relatively low 95,993 miles plus an interesting past. “This car was supplied by a Chicago dealer for \$43,000 in 1981 to Norman Rautiola, for his wife. Norman is the inventor who came up with the keyless car entry system and he perfected touchscreen technology, I can’t imagine what he earns from that!”

Yet Norman kept this SLC for 32 years before finally donating it to the Hope Mission Charity for the homeless. “I bought it from them to raise money,” Charlie confirms. “As you would expect, it was in great shape. I would drive this car anywhere, it’s very comfortable with enough room for four people and it has a better profile than the shorter R107. I paid \$5,500 for what felt like a new car.”

### 1973 W115 220D

“You know, I never buy new cars but this W115 sedan is the closest I’ve got to one,” he continues. He beckons me over to the beige W115. “Fred Ray, a civil engineer, received it as a 50th birthday present from his wife, Dorothy, because he loved German cars. She even got it in the same beige as his VW Beetle. This car was the entry into Mercedes ownership and the extras it doesn’t have is a long list! Everything is manual apart from the transmission, but it’s indestructible.”

Although basic, the mileage is just 28,000 and everything is

very original, so Charlie bought it in 2018 for \$10,000 from a car auction website. “It’s the first car I’ve bought without a pre-purchase inspection. Why? Because Fred had it rust-proofed since new. I’ve only needed to replace the indicator stalk and the neutral safety switch on the transmission. These cars have a certain charm I just love. For example, the diesel will grow algae if the car is left unused for a long time!”

So does Charlie have any more charming cars in his beloved collection of Mercedes? “Yes, another diesel.”

### 1982 W123 300TD

“I bought this car from the original owner, named Karl in Wisconsin. Being a born in Germany, he emigrated to the



▷ The 220S had been lovingly restored by he last owner.

▽ Charlie also enjoys tinkering with the cars when need be...

▽▽ ...and that also includes keeping all of them clean and shiny!

USA and always wanted a Mercedes, so for his 25th wedding anniversary, in 1982, the couple went on a trip to Germany, purchased this car and then drove it round Europe before then having it shipped back home."

Charlie proudly shows us the red warning triangle in the boot, which only came with European cars, whilst the badge on the grille confirms the car surpassed the 200,000km (124,000 miles) landmark, which was some time ago, as the car had 148,000 when he bought it and shows 175,094 now.

"I saw it advertised in Mercedes-Benz *Star Magazine*," he recalls. "The advert said concours condition and 124,000 miles. I called and he admitted the mileage mistake but still wanted \$9,800. So I took a Greyhound Bus and inspected the car. The seller decided I was a worthy of becoming its owner, dropped the price to \$8,000 and I drove it home. It's in exceptional condition with just a few chips on the paintwork."

That's good going for a 37-year old car, but Charlie has much older classic cars in his collection, the oldest being his 220S Coupe, which is an impressive 52 years old.

### 1958 W180 220S COUPE

"This car spent its life in Washington State with three former owners, the first of which was Grace Wynne who had it about 20 years. She lived in Tacoma and worked as a librarian, so I don't know how she ever afforded it."

Charlie explains the car was then sold to an air force pilot but it had numerous issues and after two years deemed it was too much trouble and sold it on. The next owner was Dr Paul Menzel and he fell in love with the car, going on to spend the next 20 years painstakingly restoring it.

"It's not concours but Paul did it extremely well inside and out. He restored it just the way it came out the factory, complete with the dashboard top, which is made from a solid piece of wood, not veneer. I got it on ebay in 2006 when it didn't make its reserve. I called Paul and said I'll get an expert to look at it and whatever he says will probably be my offer. And that's what we did. The mileage of 93,176 is accurate and my wife likes it, she feels like a queen riding in it."

It's a lovely classic but there's one car I can wait no longer to see up close.

### 1961 W198 300SL

"This is a real one owner car which I bought from the owner's estate in 1993. Chassis number 2,730 was acquired by Walter Compton, who was CEO of the company best known for Alka Seltzer. Because of Walter's work he flew everywhere, so in 32 years it had only 39,000 miles and it's now at 62,112, as I use it regularly."

The engine and gearbox have never been out of the car although Dr Compton had it resprayed in its original white in 1981. The red leather is pretty much original and the hood was replaced a few years back.

Another aftermarket item is an ivory knob attached to the steering wheel. "This car doesn't have power steering, which is fine at 75mph but when manoeuvring, this little knob gives you a heck of a lot more leverage. But hey, let's get out on the road and I'll show you what I mean."

I decline Charlie's offer to take the wheel as he says he's turned down offers in excess of \$1m. After popping and crackling

▷ 300SL is the most valuable car here but is regularly driven.

▽ Steering wheel knob helps with low speed manoeuvres.



▷ The 190SL has covered over 50,000 since he bought it.



### Charlie's Collection

- 1958 Mercedes-Benz W180 220S Coupe
- 1960 Mercedes-Benz W121 190SL
- 1961 Mercedes-Benz W198 300SL
- 1967 Mercedes-Benz W110 Universal
- 1971 Mercedes-Benz R107 280SL
- 1973 Mercedes-Benz W115 220D
- 1981 Mercedes-Benz C107 380SLC
- 1982 Mercedes-Benz W123 300TD



the six-cylinder motor finds its voice, a howl reverberating around the unit. Charlie confides the car cost him \$102,000 and had he bought one a year earlier it would have been half that. All too soon we're back indoors to look at this monster's baby brother, a 190SL.

### 1960 W121 190SL

"I've had this car since 1987, it was in Ford Lincoln Blue would you believe, which was way too sparkly a colour for a 190SL. It was rusty and full of filler so I had it restored up in Grand Rapids in the early 1990s, changing the colour to graphite grey and the interior to cream. At the time it seemed an enormous amount of money but I figured you've got to do it right and I'm going to keep it a long time. Since then values have escalated. We've used it on long trips like California and back, Santa Fe and Florida. In the years I've had it I've put over 50,000 miles on the clock and in total, it's done probably 170,000. The engine was leaking oil and losing compression at one point, so I had a place in North Carolina rebuild it and the suspension was all renewed too. All told, this car's cost me \$50,000."

Charlie has a great collection, but it's the stories and the use that he gets from the cars that's really interesting, and surprising. We hope he continues to grow his collection in years to come. ▣

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**Mercedes-Benz 280SL Sports Pagoda** £129,500

1968/9, finished in unmarked gleaming silver with as new soft black hide interior, hard and soft tops, automatic, p/steering, stereo system, Mercedes overmats, only 73,000 miles £1000s spent to keep this garaged convert sports car in magnificent condition. Only 1 lady previous owner. Folder of invoices/old MOTs/ original handbook, all tools. A breathtaking example.

1987 finished in Nautic Blue with dove grey hide interior, head rests, rear seats, hard and soft tops, tinted glass, power windows, central locking, power steering, heated seats, abs brakes, alloys, cruise control, stereo system, long last owner ship, garaged from new, with impeccable service records, thousands, spent to keep this car in the fantastic condition it is in today, drives like new.



**Mercedes-Benz 420SL Sports** £38,750



**Mercedes-Benz 350SL Sports** £35,750

1980 finished in glacier white with tan hide interior, headrests, hard and soft tops, tinted glass, power windows, power steering, automatic, over mats, original stereo, factory alloys, only covered 45,000 miles from new, full Mercedes history, all old MOTs and invoices, complete with original tools, recent full service, garaged from new, one of the finest to be on offer.



**Mercedes-Benz 300SL Sports** £48,750

1988 Finished in Gleaming signal red, with as new beige interior, hard and soft tops, automatic, power steering, ABS brakes, alloys, stereo system, power windows, sundry glass, complete with original fire extinguisher and tools, every old MOT from new, original handbook and wallet, only 66,000 miles, magnificent full service history, garaged from new, this car is superb condition throughout having been pampered from new.



**Mercedes-Benz 380SL Sports** £37,500

1984 finished in Astral Silver with Navy Blue hide interior and Blue dashboard, walnut veneers, headrests, Blaupunkt stereo, hard top, soft top as new, alloys, tinted glass, p/mirror, rear seats, h/rests, automatic, p/steering, p/windows, only 61,000 miles, full service history and accompanied with a set of old MOT certificates, with original paperwork and invoices and original hand book in wallet. Garaged from new, drives like new.



**Mercedes-Benz 560SL Sports** £39,750

1988, LHD, finished in Smoke Silver with Brazil hide interior, auto, headrests, hard and soft tops, centre armrest, over mats, first aid kit, CD stereo system, air-bag, air-con, power mirror, cruise control, ABS, power windows, SRS, outside temperature gauge, tinted glass, expensive Mercedes wheels, only 38,000 miles, service history, drives like new.



**Mercedes-Benz 280SL Sports Pagoda** £135,750

1968, brilliant Artic White, superb contrasting interior, hard and soft tops, auto, PAS, CD stereo system. One of the finest having had thousands spent through its life, and only used on summer days, only 58,000 miles, supplied with original handbook, etc. It would be very difficult to find another even come close to this.



**Mercedes-Benz Sports 300 SL** £55,750

1987, finished in gleaming Signal Red, with soft black hide interior, hard & soft tops, headrests, stereo system, ABS brakes, auto, power steering, tinted glass, alloys, power windows, soft top never used. Garaged and stored for many years hence very low mileage of only 23,500, with service book and old MOTs. This Mercedes could easily be mistaken for new.



**Mercedes-Benz 230SL Sports** £89,750

1966, Porcelain White with as new Black hide interior, auto, PAS, CD stereo system, hard and soft tops, known to us for many years, original service books etc. Entered in many events in UK and Europe. Fitted stainless exhaust system, recent overhaul. Over £10,000 spent in the last few years making this car one of the finest.



**Mercedes-Benz 560SL Sports** £38,500

1988, left hand drive, finished in Impala, metallic colour-coded bumpers, contrasting interior headrests, over-mats, hard and soft tops, auto, power, cruise control, ABS, air-con, air-bags, stereo and CD system, SRS, alloys, complete with all tools, 43,000 miles, two owners, garaged from new, service history.



**Mercedes-Benz E240** £4,750

1998, 6-door limousine, finished in black with superb dark blue interior, three rows of seats, power glass divider, air-con, power windows, automatic, alloys, power steering, full Mercedes history, only two owners, drives like new, absolute gift.



**Mercedes-Benz 560SL Sports** £46,750

1987, left hand drive, gleaming Signal Red with Beige hide interior, headrests, centre arm rest, hard and soft tops, this flag ship SL has power windows, tinted glass, stereo system, light up vanity mirrors, cruise control, air-con, power mirrors, ABS, air-bags, alloys, over-mats, only 27,000 miles from new, with FSH, 1 owner, garaged and pampered.



**Mercedes-Benz 420SL Sports** £39,750

1989, one of the last of this model, finished in gleaming Signal Red with superb black hide interior, piped red, rear seats, hard and soft tops, tinted glass, power windows, auto, cd player, alloys, over mats, full service history, this car is just stunning probably one of the finest.



**Mercedes-Benz 560SL Sports** £49,750

1988, LHD, finished in gleaming Signal Red with tan hide interior, headrests, hard and tan soft tops, power windows, tinted glass, central locking, air-con, cruise control, stereo system, ABS, alloys, SRS, air bags, expensive Mercedes car cover, auto, power steering, only 19,000 miles from new, service history, one owner.

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# REVOLUTION

We revisit a time when AMG suddenly became a huge player and its first range of models put the fear into the engineers at the likes of BMW...

WORDS **PIOTR R FRANKOWSKI** IMAGES **DIETER REBMANN**

**A**T THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY, THE FAMED M DIVISION AT BMW WAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AND ITS CARS HAD A RELIGIOUS FOLLOWING. The Munich engineers appeared to look down on road going AMG-Mercedes cars and there were rumours that they quipped these models had a form of 'longitudinal agility'. As Daimler took over the Affalterbach firm completely in 2005, things changed drastically, and nobody was in a mood for laughter in the BMW capital of Bavaria.

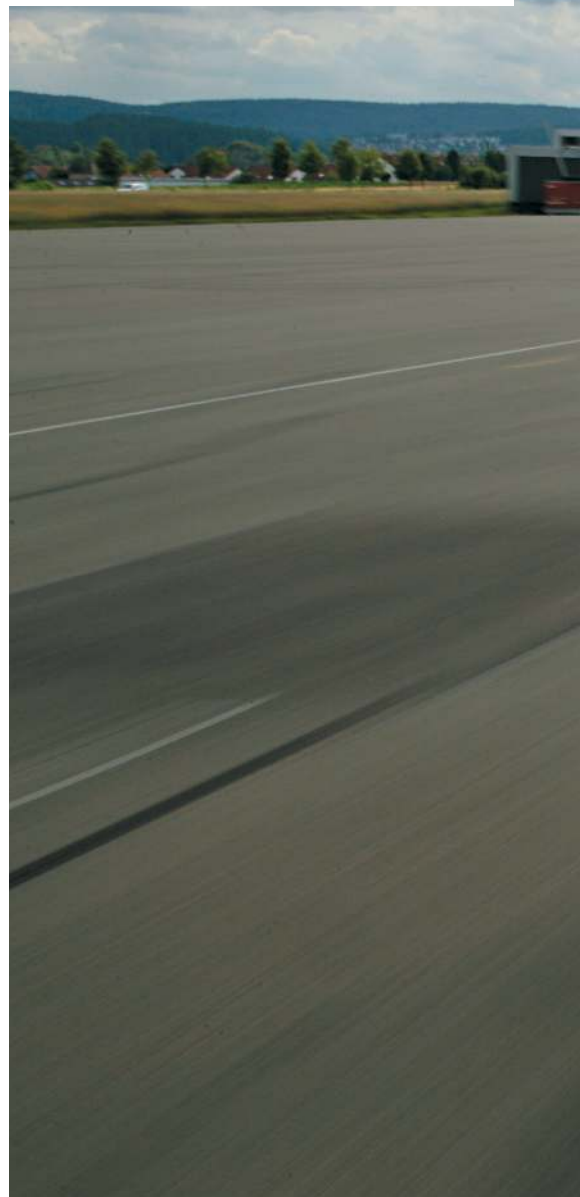
The reputation that the M-badged products from BMW Munich had acquired was wholly justified up to that point, but the boys from Bavaria were not unduly worried about the new line of AMG models that were launching at the time.

At the time I was curious about the new Affalterbach products and travelled to Germany to investigate. I managed to grab two of the new cars, an S63 and an SLK55 (more about the latter in a separate story). The four-door W221 looked like any other from a distance, with the fussy slats and louvers in the grille and the rear lights, but it fitted the aesthetic of the era quite well. On the way to my hotel in downtown Stuttgart, adjacent to the famed Königstraße and the popular Schlossplatz, I was already pleasantly surprised how well the car rode

at legal speeds. It also felt light and agile when changing lanes, and the engine produced a tasty, throaty murmur below the German speed limit.

The car was powered by the then new M156 V8 engine, the first designed by the AMG division completely separately and not based on an existing M-B block. It was planned from the outset as a racing unit with a beautifully stiffened crankcase, and was destined to propel a great number of fantastic cars over the years. A normally aspirated motor, it made use of special alloys and coating to increase longevity and to make a high specific output possible at the lowest possible fuel consumption. On paper, the engine produced 518bhp and 465lb ft of torque and enabled the big car to reach 62mph from a standstill in a very respectable 4.6 seconds, and to attain an electronically limited top speed of 155mph.

**T**HE FOLLOWING MORNING, AFTER A HEARTY BREAKFAST OF 'LAUGENBROT' AND LIVER SAUSAGE, I DROVE SEDATELY TO AN AERODROME NEAR STUTTGART, ONE THAT IS CLOSE TO A GERMAN ARMY COMMANDO UNIT BASE. On route, while moving slowly in orderly stop-and-go traffic, I drew parallel with a nearly identical S-Class. Two slim and impeccably attired Germans sat in it, ▷



“ Daimler took over the firm in 2005, things changed drastically and nobody was in a mood for laughter at BMW ”





< The interior finishings were well suited.

△ The Big 6.2-litre M156 V8 engine was a real brute.

△ Styling was subtle, except for those tailpipes.





▷ gazing incuriously at my car until they spotted the front brake calipers. Then they nudged each other and stared. They were likely connected with Daimler somehow, this being Stuttgart, and suddenly aware of what they were looking at. I accelerated away smugly, very much conscious of the S63 value as a Q-car mothership. It simply looked like a diesel-spec taxi. And that's good in my book.

**O**N THE DAY, I WAS IN FACT DUE TO DRIVE FIVE CARS, WITH ACE PHOTOGRAPHER DIETER REBMANN IN READINESS, AND THEY MADE A COLOURFUL LITTLE GROUP ON THE VAST EXPANSE OF THE CRACKED MALMSHEIM CONCRETE RUNWAY. I wasn't sure what to expect from the S63 on dry tarmac with virtually unlimited run off, and with no stern German policemen in sight, but I knew it would be good. The engine started with not much drama, but with the seven-speed automatic transmission still in Park, I squeezed the throttle and a menacing bass derived rumble spewed out of the rear pipes. Despite its size, it launched away like a lightweight sports car and I found

**JUST THE FACTS**

**S63 AMG** (W221)

**ENGINE**  
M156 6,208cc V8

**POWER**  
518bhp@6,800rpm

**TORQUE**  
465lb ft@5,200rpm

**TRANSMISSION** 7-speed automatic, RWD

**WEIGHT** 1,775kg

**0-62MPH** 4.6sec

**TOP SPEED** 155mph

**FUEL CONSUMPTION**  
28.8mpg

**YEARS PRODUCED**  
2006-2011

*All figures Mercedes-Benz, top speed electronically limited*

it would scoot forward with almost no wheelspin, as long as the ESP was left on. The steering felt nicely weighted, but the level of variable assistance was such that some journalists would later criticise it for being too light. Well, they would be right if they only used this car for a drive down to the pub, but wrong if they had to drive a slalom for half an hour, or to powerslide it repeatedly for the photographer's action shots perhaps.

What needs to be said here is that the S63 AMG was hugely capable, following firmly in the footsteps of the legendary 6.3 and the 450SEL 6.9 monsters which came before it, but with much more finesse and everyday ease of use. For example, the ABC system, which actively limited body roll, made it possible to retain a majority of the typical Mercedes suspension travel despite the various angles of attack. The engineers had managed to create a perfect blend of Jekyll and Hyde qualities: the car worked well as a commuting tool and was capable of shaming much more exotic machinery in the right conditions. In fact, all those who would gladly dismiss it as 'just another V8' would not do this great engine justice.

I always prefer naturally aspirated motors for both racing and public road driving for the simple reason that they let me minutely adjust ▷





△ Firmly seated, Piotr found the car to be agile.

△ All digital display was the first of its kind.

▷ The active suspension worked hard!

▷ the amount of torque reaching the driven wheels at a given moment. I'd rather have less torque overall than too much when I didn't ask for it. And the 6.3 AMG engine (in reality it was a 6.2, but marketing insisted on the connection to the legendary 6.3) is one of my favourite engines ever produced. In this saloon it was magnificent. It was not only mapped in a way which let me drive the beast on the throttle even with my limited ability, but was also capable of revving freely up to 8,000rpm. Try to do that with some American big V8s of the time and you'll see conrods fly.

Also, because of the ABC system, which worked faultlessly (during development the engineers found that a complete removal of body roll, which was technically possible, made the handling of a car wholly unpredictable) also during lurid powerslides.

Starting one is dead easy: with the ESP in off mode, squeeze the throttle pedal progressively while in a gentle turn, and the rear breaks away predictably and controllably. The steering has that typical German quality: an adequate amount of opposite lock just seems to wind itself on, almost automatically. The forces acting on the steering wheel make it as natural as breathing

air. Any competent driver could

powerslide the big Merc at will using just one hand if need be and this kind of thing is what made Mercedes cars special for me. The idea of fluid cohesion between all the controls, the powertrain and the chassis.



## WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT, WOULD I JUDGE THE S63 THE SAME WAY TODAY?

Probably. Not because of its IWM-branded clock or the relatively sophisticated infotainment system, but because of its organic predictability and the breadth of its abilities in real world situations. Good examples of these cars in Germany are offered for sale under 30,000 euros (£26,000) and in the UK for under £15,000, which seems like bang for buck.

The final memory of the day was as I attempted the more smoky power slides for the camera, and suddenly two low flying Huey choppers, complete with *Bundeswehr* commando soldiers sitting on the skids, slowed down passed us and the elite troops took a long look, waved and went on their way. It's hard to forget memories, days and cars like that. ■



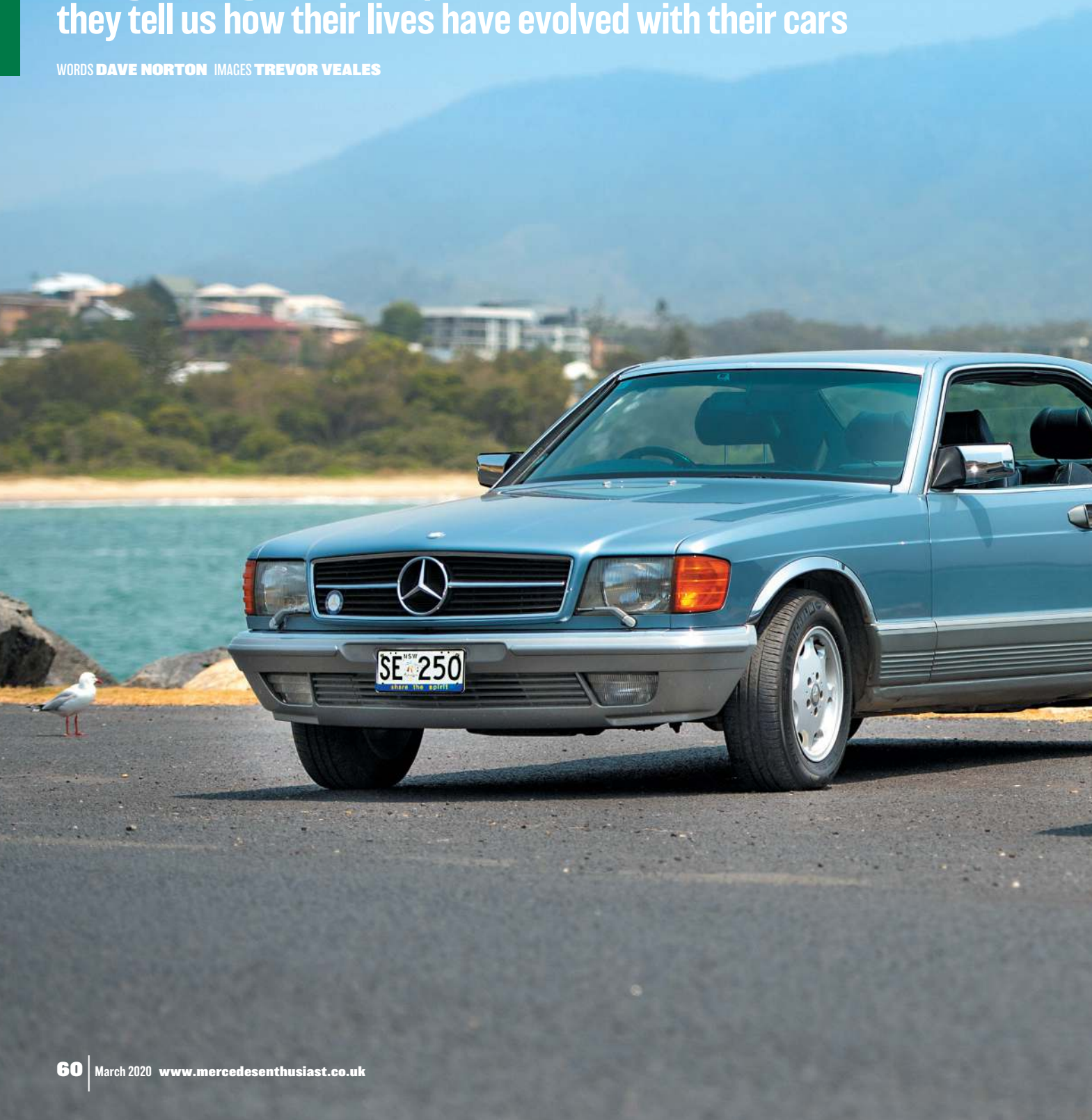
*“The S63 AMG was hugely capable, following in the footsteps of the 6.3 and the 6.9 monsters which came before it”*



# A way of life

We meet an ex-pat couple in Australia who have enjoyed a long-lasting relationship with the Mercedes brand - they tell us how their lives have evolved with their cars

WORDS **DAVE NORTON** IMAGES **TREVOR VEALES**



**“It was one of those magic cars that in almost seven years of service never let us down once”**



## JUST THE FACTS

	230TE (S123)	380SEC (C126)
<b>ENGINE</b>	M102 2,299cc 4-cyl	M116 3,839cc V8
<b>POWER</b>	134bhp@5,100rpm	201bhp@5,250rpm
<b>TORQUE</b>	151lb ft@3,500rpm	232lb ft@3,250rpm
<b>TRANSMISSION</b>	4-speed automatic, RWD	4-speed automatic, RWD
<b>WEIGHT</b>	1,480kg	1,585kg
<b>0-62MPH</b>	11.0sec	9.8sec
<b>TOP SPEED</b>	109mph	130mph
<b>FUEL CONSUMPTION</b>	23.0mpg	20.3mpg
<b>YEARS PRODUCED</b>	1980-1986	1981-1985

*All figures Mercedes-Benz for models as pictured*



**A**SI RECALL, IT WAS AROUND 1986 WHEN I BOUGHT my first Mercedes-Benz, a 1968 280SE Coupe. It was one of those instances where the condition of the car and the price seemed just right and was of course before cabriolet and coupe prices were somewhat elevated. The car drove beautifully but unfortunately, not far into my ownership, I opened the bonnet to dip the oil and the bolt that acts as a pivot point for the hinge decided to snap. The bonnet fell and the left-hand side of the grille punctured a hole in the top of the nearside wing. I ran out of the garage and returned again to make sure that it had really happened. Sadly it had, and the shock of it put me off the car! After the repairs I was not really happy with it in the same way and so it was moved on.

At about the same time, our everyday car was a Volvo 240 estate and as I needed to put another van on the road for our little transport business, the 1985 Volvo was disposed of and the finance used to purchase a Mercedes 307D van. As an aside to this story, the van turned out to be an absolute diamond and the only setback in five years of hard work was that the gear lever sheared off in Woolwich High Street while my wife was driving. Fortunately for me, a friend in Greenwich rectified the problem within the hour and the van continued to serve.

The departure of said Volvo left us without a daily driver and upon bemoaning the fact to a pal of mine who had always had reasonably priced stock around him, I was introduced (in the dark!) to a 1977 W123 230 Mercedes. It drove extremely well and it was not until the next morning that I found that it was

a fairly vibrant shade of yellow, which dubbed the car 'The Yellow Peril' for ever more. It was one of those magic cars that in almost seven years of service never let us down once and proved to be the flag bearer for nearly a dozen Mercedes-Benz models since.

### MOVING ON UP

Enjoying the 230's success, I handed the car over to my wife and I purchased an S123 300TD in Mesa Red. This went on to do thousands of miles with us and was part of the family. It drove well, towed well, you could load it beyond all sensibility and it always rode well, and yet returned 30mpg;

▷ The original Yellow Peril with the red 300TD.

▷▷ Dave found the car would take any load happily!

▷▷▷ A 280CE came next but it needed work.

▷▷▷▷ This fine R107 380SL replaced the C123.



▷ Interior is in good condition except the dash.

OWNERSHIP  
123 and 126



**“We returned in the SEC using the 870 miles home as a test run. We have owned it for seven years and still enjoy it”**



I loved it. As we moved on, my wife replaced the 230 with a nice 190E, and unbelievably the 230 went back to my pal for exactly the same money as I had paid him for it seven years previously! During this period, we also tried a 123-series 280CE Coupe, and although this drove very well, it was suffering from the well-known tin worm issues. The 280CE was replaced with a R107 380SL, a car much loved by my wife and myself. The 190E also gave good service and was around for a couple of years until it was replaced by a C250 Turbodiesel. It was about this time that we bought a classic caravan (a Carlight) but despite the name it was extremely heavy and the poor old S123 300TD was truly out of its depth. So grudgingly, I replaced it with a 1990 Toyota Land Cruiser 4.2 turbo diesel, which was a revelation for towing! It was horses for courses and took nothing away from

the 300TD, which was always held in great affection and I'll always remember it as one of the best cars I've ever owned.

In 2006 there was a major upheaval. Many of our possessions were sold as we had decided to emigrate to Australia, after a very enjoyable visit on holiday to celebrate our retirement. We settled in and bought a new Ford Ranger ute, and almost immediately, a 1978 W123 230E joined it as a second car. It was not the best example, but it did the job just as they always do.

As for everyone else, age takes its toll and as I had spent a lifetime jumping in and out of trucks, it became clear that I needed replacement knees. The operation was duly performed, and whilst in hospital feeling very sorry for myself, I noticed a 380SEC for sale in Melbourne. Given that we had such pleasure from our 380SL, my thinking was that the bigger S-Class ▷



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▷ would probably be a good plan. So fresh out of hospital and after an extremely uncomfortable flight, we returned from Melbourne in the SEC using the 870 miles home as a test run. We have now owned the SEC for seven years and are still enjoying it. I truly believe that it is the best looking, mass produced coupe of all time. When the car was newer, it had been fitted with more modern R129 alloy wheels. I am well aware that they are wrong, but I have grown to like them, especially when the next 123 came along already wearing Mexican Hat wheels, which were optional for both 123- and early 126-series cars.

### MODERN DAY MERCS

Nowadays, my wife drives an ML300, which she is very happy with, and we were really quite content with just the two Mercs and a couple of other oldies. But some years into our new surroundings, a local restaurant owner mentioned that he had a C-Class that kept draining the battery and would I like to have a look at it? The problem was soon put right, but while

△ Pillarless coupe design is a firm favourite to Dave.

**“I truly believe that the C126 is the best looking, mass produced coupe of all time”**

repairing the C-Class I could not help noticing a very dirty looking S123, which in the owner's words, “had a few issues and he was getting around to it”.

That first look at the car was four years ago. We then had a holiday in the UK, and even when we returned the poor old 123 was still dormant so a fresh approach was made, and I went along with a pal for a summit meeting to find out just what the vehicle amounted to. It turned out that the first owner was a lady in Tamworth, New South Wales, who had owned the car for 10 years, and my chef friend had been the owner for 24 years, the last eight being in the shed under repair.

Upon a far more detailed inspection, the S123 turned out to be a 1985 230TE in Cabernet Red with a cream MB-Tex interior. Original features included the third pair of seats, air con, sunroof, electric windows, original alloys and most of the bells and whistles available at the time. ▷



◀◀ 190E was one of the last cars owned in the UK.

◀ This was how the current S123 looked at first.



◀◀ Leather trim has been brought back to new.

◀ This example featured virtually every option.

## “I decided to bite the bullet and buy myself a new project. One that I was well aware that I did not need”

▷ Given that the Yellow Peril and the 300TD had been such good servants to us, I decided to bite the bullet and buy myself a new project. One that I was well aware that I did not need, and yet another car which had no purpose (so I was told!).

### UP AND RUNNING

Having got the car home, the engine was running particularly lumpy and the brakes were almost seized solid. We replaced the calipers and did all the usual things to the braking system, all to no avail but finally, the brakes all came good by replacing the brake booster. We did one or two other jobs, and the car was sent down to our local Merc expert who gave the car a thorough going over. Fortunately, the rear suspension was all in good working order and when moved to the body shop it was found that the only rust on the car was two small areas around behind both rear-wheel arches, however the paintwork was another story. The Australian sun had ruined all the horizontal surfaces and the lacquer had shrunk, so we

▽ The two cars are lovingly cared for and enjoyed.

decided to take it back to the original undercoat, which was considered sufficient by the painter and he was able to carry out a really good job whilst retaining original paint in the door shuts, bonnet and tailgate. The whole car has a new lease of life. Inside, there were two damaged panels on the seats, and these have been replaced by our local trimmer, with excellent results.

All in all, I am delighted to be the third owner. The car has recorded 228,000km (142,000 miles) and only one major job remains, and that is to replace the dashboard, as again the sun has cracked the top beyond all redemption.

A replacement is in hand but I suspect fitting it in place will require a certain amount of skill and patience I'm building up to!

I am delighted that the 123-series is becoming more well thought of and am very pleased to be back in 123 ownership, and it is all thanks to the original Yellow Peril that set us on our way. 🐾



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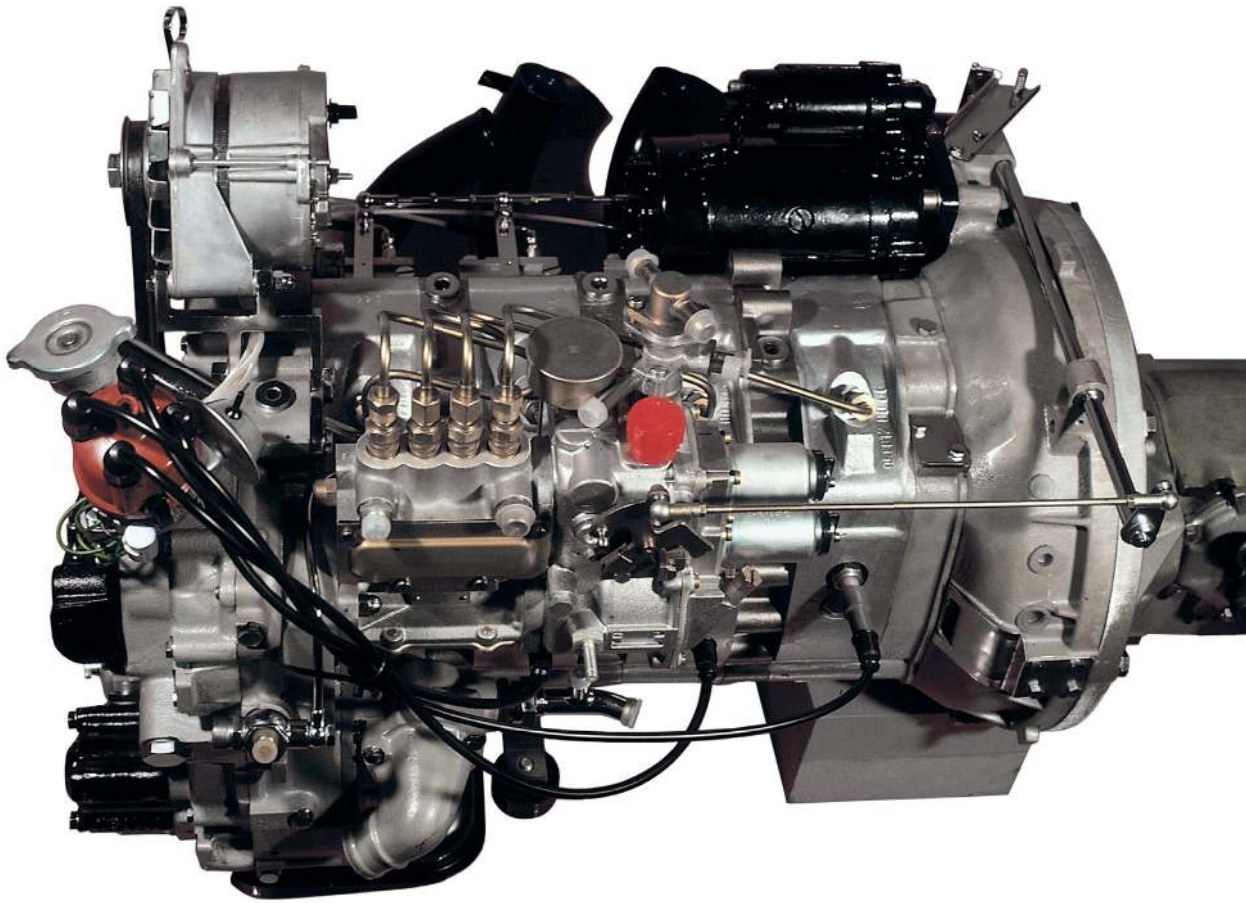
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New materials, technology and suspension knowhow were all showcased by the C111



# M950F

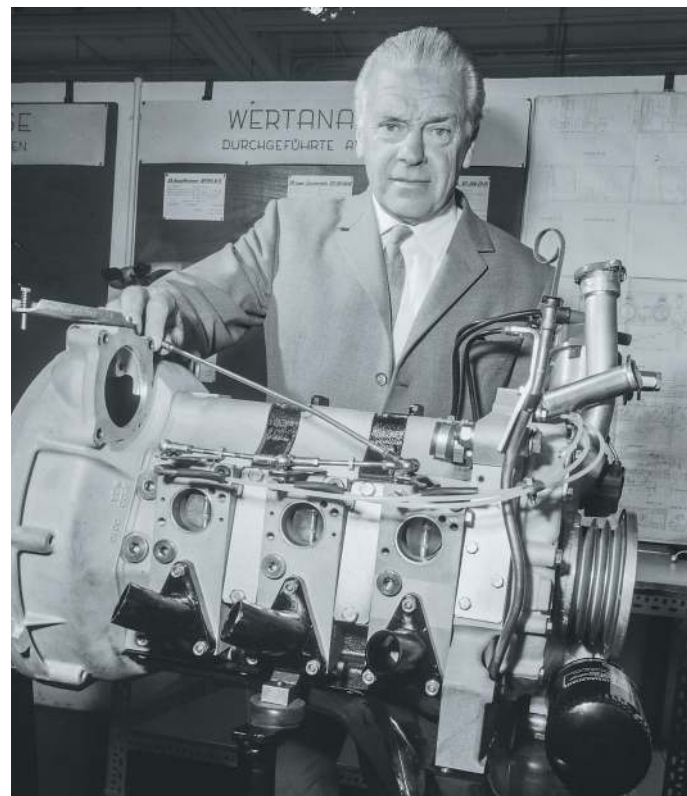
▽ Rudolf Uhlenhaut pictured with the three-rotor Wankel.

The only Wankel rotary engine made by Mercedes-Benz was found in the experimental C111 cars - and an R107...

WORDS SHANE O'DONOGHUE IMAGES DAIMLER AG

**I**N THIS ENGINE MASTERS SERIES WE'VE had petrol and diesel engines, turbocharging, natural aspiration, four cylinders, sixes, V8s, V12s and other stars from the long list of Mercedes powerplants through the years. In this issue, however, we look at something truly unique – the M950F, a Wankel rotary unit that, though intended for production at the outset, never progressed past the prototype stage. Nonetheless it was, in various guises, found behind the passenger compartment of the iconic C111 experimental vehicles, giving it more kudos than most stillborn engineering projects.

Mercedes revealed the first of the ground-breaking C111 cars at the Frankfurt Motor Show in September 1969. The sleek lines and attention-grabbing swing doors wowed the crowds, while rumours suggested that the C111 was destined to take over where the W198 300SL Gullwing left off. Indeed, Mercedes received several blank cheques in the aftermath of the show from buyers keen to be the first to have such a car in their garage, despite protestations from Mercedes that the C111 was only ever meant to be a technology platform and a vehicle to carry out research and



development. And, while the C111's dramatic appearance was enough to justify such a frenzy on its own, the show car's technical specification was even more exotic. New materials, technology and suspension knowhow were all showcased by the C111, but at its heart was something Mercedes foresaw a bright future for, its Wankel rotary engine.

A rotary engine is made up of one or more rotors, rotating in the same direction around the engine's output shaft. They're almost triangular in appearance, with three distinct faces, and they rotate within a housing with a very specific geometric shape called an epitrochoid (a little like a circle with three large bulges in it). The centre of rotation of the rotor isn't the same as that of the output shaft (try to imagine holding up a large bangle by sticking one of your fingers through and resting the bangle on top; now get the bangle rotating around your finger – that's the same type of motion the rotor in a Wankel engine goes through, with your finger representing the output shaft, held on bearings), so they're geared together.

Almost all Wankel engines made were petrol-fuelled and used the common four-stroke 'Otto' cycle, i.e. intake of the fuel and air mixture, compression of that, ignition of the compressed mixture using a spark plug and then exhaust of the burned gases. The



fiendishly clever thing is that all occurs in every rotation of each rotor in a Wankel engine. So, as the rotor turns, its three faces open and close intake and exhaust ports in the housing, while compressing the air-fuel mixture against the housing elsewhere and receiving a power pulse after ignition.

## SPINNING AROUND

There are plenty of advantages to the design. For starters, the power output is generally high when compared with piston engines of similar size and weight. That's mainly because the Wankel engine creates a power pulse (per rotor) for every rotation of the output shaft. A four-stroke piston engine creates a power pulse (per cylinder) for every two rotations of the output shaft (i.e. the crankshaft). On top of that, as everything is rotating in the same direction, Wankel engines tend to be very smooth; they rev freely, they're relatively compact and can be simple in construction. Just like a piston engine designer can add cylinders for more performance, a rotary engine can have multiple rotors, all sharing the same single output shaft.

Felix Wankel, a German engineer, invented this type of engine, patenting the idea in 1929 and making a working prototype at NSU in 1957. NSU then licensed it to other companies, such as Mercedes, which began its research on the Wankel rotary engine in the early 1960s. And while the C111 went on to be famous, it's less well known that Mercedes came very close to putting a Wankel-engined SL into production. It conducted various trials in the body of the W113 SL, with an eye on its replacement, the R107. Engineers installed a three-rotor Wankel engine in the prototype in 1968, producing 200bhp at 5,600rpm, and reportedly covered over 40,000 miles between June and October that year. A testing report confirms the vehicle's top speed of 127mph, a small increase over that of the contemporary 280SL. The R107's body was hence designed

## FACT SHEET

**Engine**  
**M950F**

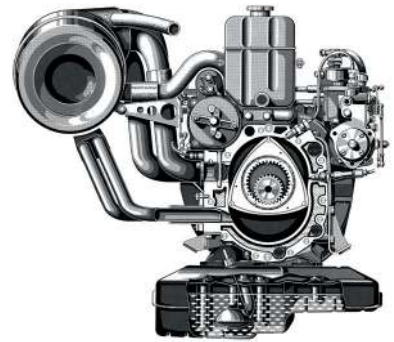
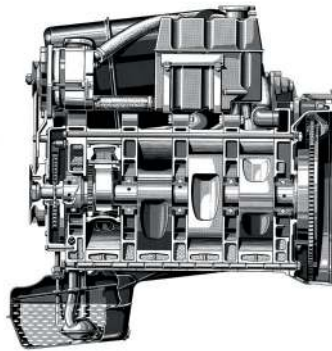
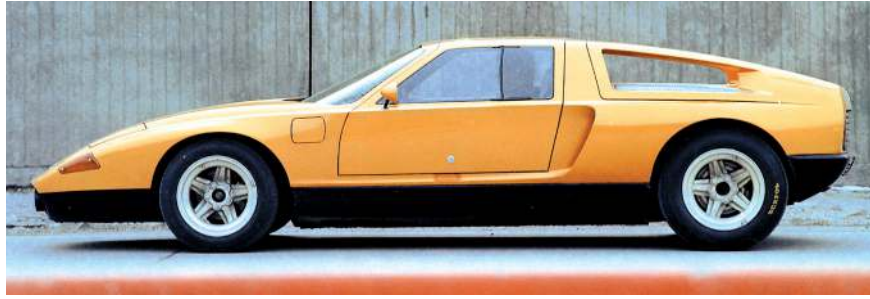
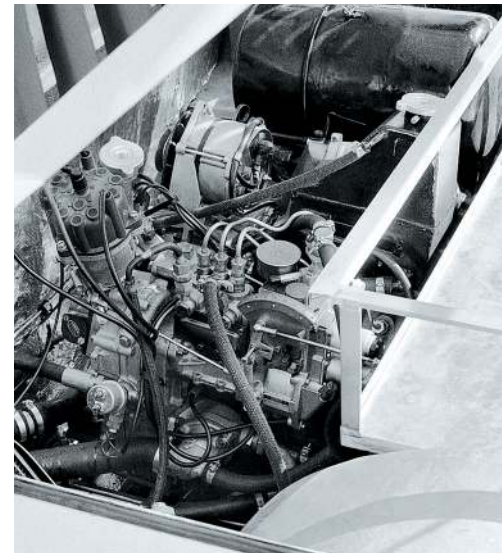
**Configuration**  
**Wankel engine, made in three- and four-rotor guises**

**Capacity**  
**600cc per rotor**

**Years produced**  
**1969-1971**  
**(research and development only, not production)**

▽ Although complex in appearance, the concept is simple.

▽▽ The C111 was the ideal car for these tests.



around housing a rotary engine, with its higher output shaft.

The C111 took things substantially further. Its three-rotor engine, each housing with a 600cc chamber, was said to be equivalent to a 3.6-litre piston engine in terms of displacement. Mercedes quoted peak outputs of 276bhp at 7,000rpm and 217lb ft of torque between 5,000 and 6,500rpm. What's more, this engine used direct fuel injection (by way of a mechanical three-plunger pump), a technology very much in its infancy. The rest of the engine's technical make-up is relatively conventional, with a front-mounted radiator and

△ Triangle shape rotates around the epitrochoid housing.

▽ Early three-rotor engines evolved into four-rotor set ups.



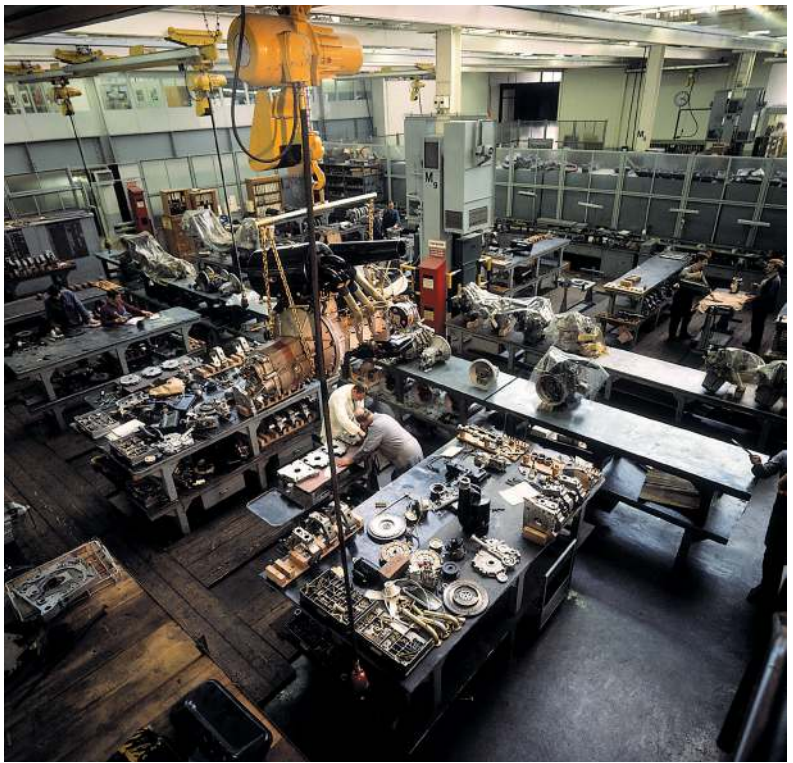


**Wolf-Dieter Bensinger, head of engine development at Mercedes-Benz in the 1960s, was a major advocate of the Wankel engine**



▷ Mercedes invested into the Wankel engine idea.

▷▷ Each of the rotary engines was built by hand.



▷ electrically driven fans for the water-cooling system, a gear-driven oil pump with its own cooler, and spark ignition. Mercedes quoted a 'ready for the road' weight as just 1,100kg, which helps explain its 0-62mph time of five seconds dead and 162mph top speed.

**ALL OUT**

Less than six months later, Mercedes took the covers off a new evolution of the C111 (referred to simply as the C111/II) at the 1970 Geneva motor show. Its new bodywork accommodated the company's latest Wankel engine design. An additional rotor raised the 'effective' displacement to 4.8 litres (it used four rotors, each with 600cc chambers, and a factor of two was applied to this in an attempt to explain how it compared with piston engines), which put out 345bhp at 7,000rpm and 289lb ft of torque at 4,000 to 5,500rpm. Though the weight of the car increased by 140kg (that wasn't all to do with the extra rotor, as the whole engine only weighed 180kg), the more powerful engine managed to help it drop 0.2 seconds from the 0-62mph time and raise the top speed to 190mph. It was met with rapturous admiration by the media of the time. Paul Frère, a famous motoring journalist, wrote, "The four-rotor version would not only be the most comfortable and smooth, but also the fastest car of this kind. I am firmly convinced that there would be thousands of customers for such a car around the world" in the *Auto Motor und Sport* magazine.

Wolf-Dieter Bensinger, head of engine development at Mercedes in the 1960s, was a major advocate of the Wankel engine, and work continued into the 1970s. In 1971, a four-rotor engine making 277bhp was installed in a pre-production R107 Mercedes SL, but the department had sceptics in the form of Hans Scherenberg, head of engineering design, and Kurt Obländer, his 'expert on



△ The Rotary engine was a small package...

△△ ...which allowed for extra luggage space

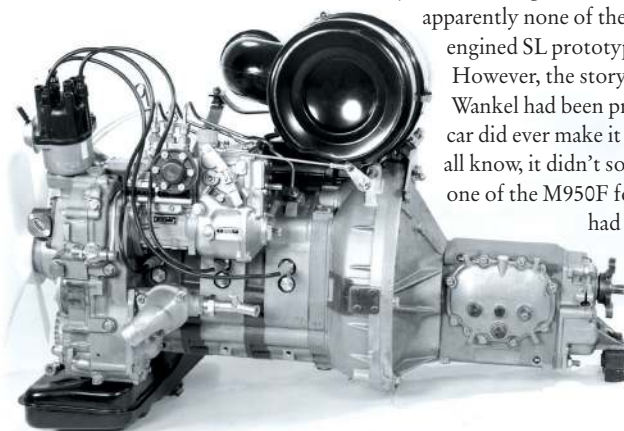
▽ Early three-rotor engine showed great potential..

combustion and pollutant reduction matters.' Obländer is quoted on the record as saying that "The combustion chamber is the central feature of the combustion engine. The priority is to produce an optimum design so as to achieve the most favourable thermodynamic efficiency, i.e. as complete combustion of the fuel as possible. The fact that this did not occur with the Wankel engine, indeed that it could not happen, manifested itself initially in high fuel consumption and later, even more publicly and confirmed officially, in the difficulties in meeting the still quite tame exhaust emission standards for passenger cars due to the high proportion of non-combusted hydrocarbons. It was this birth defect in the Wankel engine, its failure to offer an optimum combustion chamber, which was responsible for its rapid demise and not the constantly repeated suggestions of mechanical problems." Seemingly, Scherenberg had raised the issue as far back as 1967, suggesting that the rotary engine used 50 per cent more fuel than a piston engine in vee formation of the same capacity.

And that, more or less, was that. The next iteration of the C111 used a five-cylinder turbodiesel engine. All work on the Wankel rotary project ceased in 1976 as the oil crisis of a few years earlier focused car manufacturers' minds on fuel consumption. While the early C111s are prized possessions of Mercedes (as are their original Wankel engines), there are apparently none of the original rotary-engined SL prototypes remaining.

However, the story goes that Felix Wankel had been promised a C111 if the car did ever make it into production. As we all know, it didn't so instead, he was given one of the M950F four-rotor engines and

had it installed in an SL himself to create one of the most unique Mercedes models of all time.



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# OVERSTEER



# AND UNDERSTEER

WORDS MATT RONSON IMAGES DAIMLER AG

In the first of a new series, we asked an expert to talk about car control and what you can do to become a better driver

**I**F YOU HAVE EVER PUSHED YOUR CAR TO ITS limits and driven it hard then you have probably already been introduced to oversteer or understeer. In some cases, you might have experienced both. Road car manufacturers tend to prefer understeer as the first sign of trouble, as it is easier for a novice to control than oversteer, so will help prevent crashes as far as they are concerned. However, a driving enthusiast, particularly in a rear-wheel drive car, tends to prefer oversteer as the first port of call for the car losing grip due to the ability to maintain oversteer through a corner without feeling out of control.

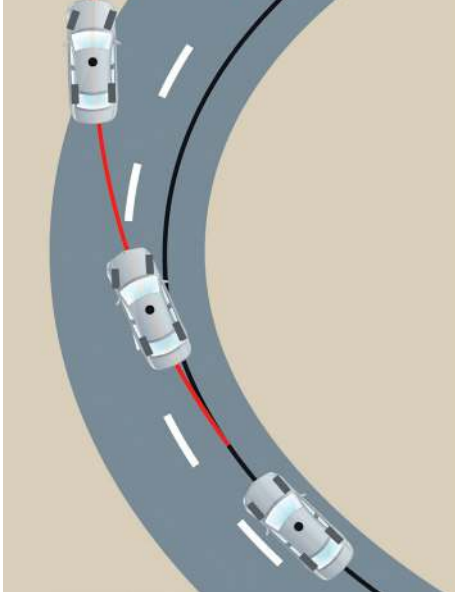
## WHAT IS OVERSTEER AND UNDERSTEER?

Oversteer occurs when the rear of the car is carrying more speed than the front around a corner. This causes the back of the car to swing out, rotating the car unevenly and will cause the car to spin out if it is not counteracted. Oversteer is most common in rear-wheel drive platforms and when instigated on purpose, it's known as a power slide or drift.

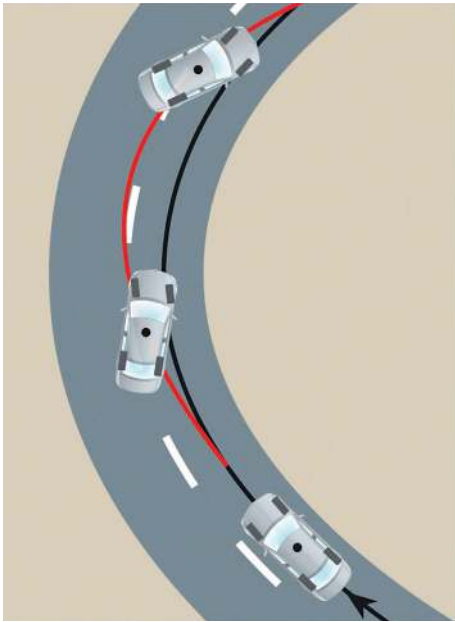
Understeer affects the front wheels of the car, washing the car out during cornering and providing a lack of feel to the steering. It is caused by the front of the car losing grip around a corner and overloading the tyres. This causes them to break traction and veer off in a straight line as opposed to the intended, steered direction, therefore pushing the car wide and dramatically slowing down the car.

“  
Car manufacturers tend to prefer understeer, as it's easier for a novice to control than oversteer  
”





◁ Understeer occurs when the front wheels overload and lose grip.



◁ Oversteer is when the rear end carries more speed than the front.

▽ Braking too late can trigger understeer as the tyres are overloaded.

### REGAINING CONTROL

If oversteer strikes whilst driving, the best response to get the car back on the straight and narrow is to first of all counter steer to correct the slide. Once you have counter steered you begin to gently and gradually release the throttle. This will start to provide the rear tyres with more grip at a gradual and linear rate, which will stop the slide. At the same time as slowly releasing the throttle, the steering wheel can be turned back to straight gradually. It is very important to move the throttle and the steering back to the neutral position at the same time, and slowly. If you counter steer and just release the throttle entirely, the car will grip up and jolt in the opposite direction, which usually results in a loss of control.

In the event where understeer starts to happen the response is much simpler to solve in terms of driver input. First of all, immediately release the throttle to slow down the car and maintain the same amount of steering angle. If you continue



to understeer then gently apply the brakes and turn out of the corner slightly more and wait for the car to grip again at the front. Once grip does return, straighten the steering and gently reapply the throttle to drive out of the corner.

### ADAPTING YOUR DRIVING STYLE

Sometimes the solution to your out of control vehicle behaviour can lie directly with you. Your

driving style and inputs are a fundamental part of generating a smooth, predictable car. When understeer or oversteer strikes, the first point of scrutiny should always be the driver. You must assess your every move; how smooth the throttle and braking inputs were applied, and more importantly, how carefully the steering was fed into the corner. Any sudden jerks of the steering or simply driving off line are common causes of generating instability during driving.

One common cause of understeer is applying the brakes too late when approaching a corner, causing the front wheels to lock up and lose grip. If you brake too late and the wheels don't lock up then you still have the issue of entering the corner too quickly, generating too much load transfer, overloading the outside tyres and generating understeer. Finally, turning into the corner too late, even at the correct speed for the corner can often overload the tyre tread due to the angle of the tyre altering too quickly, breaking traction and therefore causing understeer to occur.

A common cause of oversteer in front-wheel drive and rear-wheel drive cars is lifting off the throttle suddenly when entering a corner. This rapidly unloads the rear tyres as the weight shifts to the front wheels, causing the rear tyres to break traction and start oversteering. In a rear-wheel drive set up, applying the throttle too early when exiting a corner can cause the tyres to spin due to uneven tyre loading on corner exit. The spinning tyres generate much less grip, sliding the rear of the car. Finally, a common cause of oversteer due to driving style is applying the brakes during cornering, which again unloads the rear tyres and causes them to lose grip. ▷



△ Being smooth with your driving style will prevent loss of control.



◁ Understeer will cause the car to plow straight onwards in a corner.



“

**A common cause of oversteer is lifting off the throttle suddenly when entering a corner**

”



### ▷ **SET UP ALTERATIONS**

There are some common solutions to oversteer and understeer that are effective at solving both issues. The first is to check the tyre pressures of your car when they are hot. Look for any values much higher or lower than the usual pressure setting of around 32psi because over or under inflated tyres will cause huge losses of grip. Next, check the masses present at each tyre by corner weighting. The sliding wheels could be at one extreme of the scale or another. Often the sliding end is underloaded and will require the ride heights to be altered in order to shift some weight onto the sliding wheels. Another solution is to increase the track width of the sliding axle, front wheels for understeer and rear wheels for oversteer. The increased track width will allow more lateral load transfer to be handled on the altered axle, reducing any oversteer or understeer significantly.

△ **Instigating oversteer on purpose is commonly referred to as drifting.**

▷ **Driving enthusiasts prefer oversteer as you can still maintain speed.**

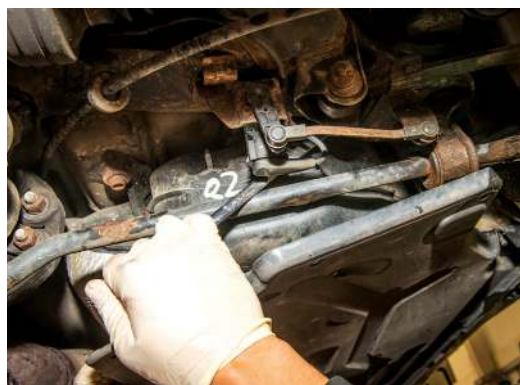


▽ **Adjustment of your suspension set up is key to curing any issues.**

### **CURING OVERSTEER**

Often, set up alterations can make a world of difference and cure the oversteer, creating a much faster and more pleasurable driving experience. To adjust the correct area of suspension you must first determine where the oversteer is occurring; whether that's corner entry/exit or mid-corner.

For corner entry/exit oversteer some of the possible solutions are to lower the rear ride height of the vehicle, install a softer rear coil spring, reduce the rear damper compression stiffness and increase the amount of rear end toe-in.



For mid-corner oversteer some set up changes that can be made to help include softening the rear anti-roll bar, or alternatively you can stiffen the front anti-roll bar. Softening the rear coil spring rate will also help, as will reducing the rear ride height and finally, check your rear-wheel camber settings are correct as too much or too little camber can reduce the available contact patch of the tyre and reduce grip.

### **CURING UNDERSTEER**

Similar to curing oversteer, it is important to take notice of where during the cornering process that the understeer is occurring, such as entry/exit or the mid-corner section.

To solve corner entry/exit understeer you can increase front damper rebound stiffness, reduce the front-end ride height of the car, increase the front caster angle or you can increase toe-out of the front wheels.

For mid-corner understeer, some set up solutions would be to soften the front anti-roll bar or alternatively stiffen the rear anti-roll bar, soften the front coil spring rate, reduce front damper compression stiffness and lower the front ride height. Once again, it would also be worth checking the front wheel camber settings are optimum for maximising the contact patch.



**WEISTEC ENGINEERING**

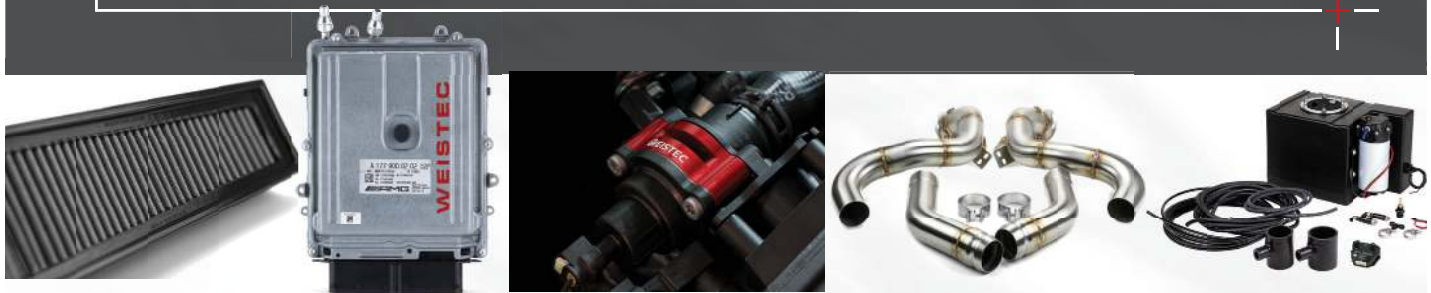
**W213 E63S AMG**  
**W.3 PERFORMANCE PACKAGE**

PERFORMANCE  
 IMPROVEMENTS



POWER GAIN  
 UP TO **+273 BHP**

TORQUE GAIN  
 UP TO **+279 BTQ**



YEAR	MAKE	MODEL
2017 - 2021	MERCEDES-BENZ	E63/S AMG
2019 - 2021	MERCEDES-BENZ	G63 AMG
2018 - 2021	MERCEDES-BENZ	S63
2019 - 2021	MERCEDES-BENZ	AMG GT63/S 4 DOOR COUPE

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# SWOOP TO CONQUOR

Now is an ideal time to bag a bargain CLS, as our used car market expert highlights this month, and it seems the early C219 in particular is fantastic value for money

WORDS GUY BAKER IMAGES BISHOPS CROSS CAR SALES, SSM MOTOR GROUP, ARNOLD CLARK MERCEDES



2007 CLS320 CDI at Bishops Cross Car Sales was £6,395.



**M**ERCEDES' FIRST GEN C219 CLS is now 16 years old and fast becoming a classic. A radical object of desire for many admirers initially, it's now been superseded by two further generations and settled quietly into middle-age. And that's brought C219 price tags down to staggeringly low levels so now most models are within reach of all but the most limited of budgets.

The later generations have also seen sizeable falls in value over the last couple of years, with the second-generation C218 also offering exceptional value for money. But it's the original 2004-2010 C219 version that offers the greatest value, with diesel versions dominating the market. A mild facelift in 2008 brought different bumpers, tail lights, a revised front grille and different wheels, but the very best buy at the moment is the pre-facelifted CLS320 CDI, something like this Iridium Silver 2007 example at Bishops Cross Car Sales in Warwickshire ([www.bishopscrosscarsales.co.uk](http://www.bishopscrosscarsales.co.uk)) that was priced at £6,395.

## VALUED ASSET

With just 53,980 miles on the clock, it showed what incredible value the C219 has become, and with just one private owner from new this example also boasted a full and uninterrupted Mercedes-Benz service history, with 12 services all carried out by Mercedes-Benz of Worcester. An impeccable example maintained regardless of cost, it came with black leather upholstery and laurel wood trim, plus 18-inch alloys and a whole host of goodies including Comand APS, heated and electric seats, a CD autochanger and



△ We found this 2014 CLS350 Bluetec priced at just £14,495.



△ This 2019 350d 4Matic with 6,000 miles was up for £33,998.

Parktronic. This was one of the best examples we've seen, but there are others around, some even more lavishly equipped.

The second generation C218 CLS arrived in 2010 and came with sharper styling, and design cues from the contemporary E-Class, like 'Ponton' rear arches. But the signature swooping roof line remained, whilst Mercedes

added a new nine-speed automatic transmission. And over the last year or so post-facelifted 2014 onwards C218 models have been falling substantially in price, with some of the best deals now seen on the CLS350 Bluetec model.

We liked the look of the 2014 AMG Line example advertised for £14,495 at SSM Motor Group in Yorkshire ([www.ssmmotorgroupltd.co.uk](http://www.ssmmotorgroupltd.co.uk)). With a very reasonable 43,000 miles this Obsidian Black car came with a high spec that included Titanium Grey 19-inch alloys, Parktronic, Comand Online System with Media Interface, heated seats, Speedtronic cruise control, Linguatronic, Parktronic with reversing camera and black ash wood trim.

Expecting to find serious bargains on the current-generation C257 CLS is a bit more optimistic, but you will find late 2018 and 2019 ex-demo Approved Used models selling at franchised dealerships for £15,000 less than the current list price, like the 2019, 6,000-mile 350d 4Matic we spotted at Arnold Clark Mercedes in Grangemouth ([www.mercedes-benzofgrangemouth.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benzofgrangemouth.co.uk)). Advertised at £33,998 it was very well specced (like most ex-demo examples) and came with the Mirror Pack, the Stowage Pack and the Seat Comfort Pack, as well as all the standard factory equipment. Without doubt an impressive price for a nearly-new CLS, but if it's sheer value you're after then we'd recommend sticking to the seminal C219 model.

► *Fancy a less ostentatious Mercedes four-door? Then check out our top three £15,000 Mercedes diesel saloons on page 78*

## FORECOURT FIND

### E55 AMG (W210)

Built to rival BMW's M5, the old school W210 E55 AMG packs a sledgehammer punch yet boasts a gentleman's club of an interior and is now beginning to steadily appreciate in value, as long as it's in prime condition. But good examples are becoming rare, so we were excited to come across this pristine Midnight Blue 1998 example advertised for sale by Hampshire-based Kingdom Specialist Cars, priced at £15,000.

Having covered just 71,000 miles and boasting three former owners, it was originally registered to M&C Saatchi for its Chief Executive. The immaculate interior is trimmed in designo graphite and Anthracite Exclusive nappa leather and this car has a full service history, as well as a comprehensive file of receipts including every MOT certificate since its first in 2001.

► **Kingdom Specialist Cars**  
Tel 07577 575770  
Web [www.kingdomspecialistcars.com](http://www.kingdomspecialistcars.com)



△ It's hard to find truly great examples, but this seems one.

▷ The car has covered just 71,000 miles in its 22 years.

▽ Interior appears well looked after, like the rest of the car.



## TOP TIPS SUSPENDED ANIMATION

Keen to improve your Mercedes' grip, acceleration, braking or steering? A suspension upgrade could do all of that but make sure you follow our tips

- ⊗ Suspension upgrades could provide better cornering grip, improved acceleration and braking, and improved steering feedback, whilst maintaining a comfortable ride.
- ⊗ Most factory Mercedes use a MacPherson strut and a spring suspension set up to provide a comfortable ride and decent handling, but dampers and springs can be upgraded to enhance the experience.
- ⊗ Before parting with any cash do some thorough research on owner forums to help decide which set up might be best for your particular Mercedes. There will be numerous options so learn from other's mistakes.
- ⊗ A new set of springs will cost from £250 and your car will sit lower, plus corner flatter, but with springs alone the ride quality will almost certainly suffer, whilst your OE dampers might wear out sooner.
- ⊗ A better option (from around £500 upwards) is to fit new springs with matching dampers. More expensive adjustable dampers will even allow you to adjust the damping yourself, but they will set you back more.
- ⊗ Coil-overs are the most effective option on high performance Mercedes. Designed as one matched unit, they provide optimal damping whilst maintaining ride quality, however they will cost upwards of £1,000 and are only available for certain models.



## AUCTION SPOTLIGHT

A round up of recent prices paid for modern Mercedes-Benz cars in auctions across the UK

● **C180 K SE Coupe**

Auto, 2004/54-plate, 97,000 miles, **£1,350**

● **ML270 CDI**

2003/53-plate, 132,000 miles, **£1,450**

● **CLK280 Sport Cabriolet**

Three-litre, 2007/57-plate, 100,000 miles, **£3,850**

● **CLS320CDI Coupe**

Three-litre, 2006/06-plate, 115,000 miles, **£4,200**

● **SL500**

Five-litre, 2002/02-plate, 105,000 miles, **£4,350**

● **ML420 CDI Sport**

Four-litre, 2007/57-plate, 102,000 miles, **£6,550**

● **GL320 CDI,**

Three-litre, 2008/08-plate, 122,000 miles, **£8,050**

● **SLK250d AMG Sport**

2.1-litre, 2015/65-plate, 37,000 miles, **£12,150**

● **B200d AMG Line**

2.1-litre, auto, 2016/66-plate, 39,000 miles, **£12,600**

● **A200 CDI AMG Sport**

2.1-litre, auto, 2015/65-plate, 37,000 miles, **£13,400**

● **GLA220 CDI**

2.1-litre, auto, 2014/14-plate, 35,000 miles, **£15,400**

● **CLS400 AMG Line Coupe**

3.5-litre, 2015/15-plate, 67,000 miles, **£16,200**

● **CLA220d AMG Line Coupe**

2.1-litre, auto, 2017/66-plate, 42,000 miles, **£17,400**

● **C63 AMG Coupe**

6.2-litre, 2013/63-plate, 40,000 miles, **£19,650**

● **GLC220d Sport**

2.1-litre, auto, 2016/66-plate, 39,000 miles, **£19,900**

## AUCTION ADVICE

Always arrive early at car auctions, pick up the sale catalogue and examine the vehicles in the line-up before the bidding starts. In addition to the hammer price, you'll have to pay a small buyer's fee. You'll need to provide a deposit of at least £500 (in cash or by Maestro or Visa Delta debit card) but the balance of the purchase price and the buyer's fee can be paid banker's draft, cash, cheque, telegraphic transfers, credit or debit card.

Find your nearest auction house check out [www.british-car-auctions.co.uk](http://www.british-car-auctions.co.uk) or [www.nama-uk.com](http://www.nama-uk.com)



TOP THREE

# £15,000 MERCEDES DIESEL SALOONS

Diesel saloons have been a mainstay of the Mercedes-Benz UK range for many years, with the C-Class, E-Class and S-Class all popular in company car fleets. And although their appeal as new cars may now be diminishing, as used buys they make a whole heap of sense, offering great value, impressive economy and plenty of choice.

They can also be readily tuned to provide enhanced performance too and top-spec models are still stylish by today's standards.

All three of this month's selections are best bought at four to five years old when the worst of their depreciation has occurred by and you can enjoy a Mercedes diesel at a better budget.



## S350 CDI BLUETEC (W222)

With a healthy 255bhp and a hefty 457lb ft, the mighty S350 CDI Bluetec is not only luxuriously appointed, but lively too when the need arises. And our budget bags a low owner 2013 example with a mere 45,000 miles, which is exceptional value. Whack on a private numberplate and you friends with be convinced you've won the lottery. A typical spec includes a sunroof, Comand with sat nav, a rear view camera, electric heated leather seating, front and rear parking sensors, voice control, cruise control, Bluetooth and big AMG alloys.



## C250D SPORT (W205)

S-Class simply too big for your needs? Then a contemporary W205 C250d might be just the ticket. A 2015 minter with no more than 75,000 miles is under £15,000, and with 369lb ft of torque on tap you'll never be left wanting for performance. Fuel economy can exceed 60mpg on longer journeys and, as a fleet favourite, there are plenty of examples to choose from. Quite a few sport popular optional extras too - such as the Driving Assistance Package, the Airmatic Agility Package or walnut interior trim.



## E250 CDI (W212)

Sitting conveniently between the S- and C-Class models is the W212 E250 CDI, and in particularly appealing AMG Line trim it cuts a dash. Fifteen grand puts you behind the wheel of a 2014 example with 50,000 miles and a pristine, one-owner Mercedes-Benz main dealer service history. As with the other two contenders, the E250 CDI four-door boasts prodigious torque (369lb ft to be precise) and owners report an average of 41.3mpg over long term use. Make sure you buy a car with a few optional extras, to maximise the residual value.

## LATEST PRODUCTS AND ACCESSORIES

### UPDATED AIR FILTERS FOR M177

For those wanting to extract more power from their 213-series E63 S AMG model, American-based tuner Weistec is offering updated freer-flowing air filters. These direct replacements simply drop into the car's original air boxes and allow the four-litre, biturbo M177 to breathe better, thanks to an improved shape, position and high flow material. These work to improve power and increase performance, with maximum gains applying when combined with a Weistec ECU remap. The cost for the filters is £230 for a pair, plus postage and you can check out [www.weistec.com](http://www.weistec.com) for more information.



### PERFORATED R129 SL TRIM RECREATED

Bespoke interior specialist d:class in the UK has announced that it is now able to offer a recreation of the perforated material found on models such as the Mercedes-Benz R129 SL Mille Miglia edition. Using its own state-of-the-art CNC perforation machine, owners of these rare cars will now be able to use the services of the expert retrimmers to restore their interiors back to original. The price is dependent on the size of the job but you can contact the team for a quote at [www.dclass.co.uk](http://www.dclass.co.uk).



### EBC BRAKES RACING RP-1 PADS

EBC Brakes has just released its Racing RP-1 pad, its highest-performing friction material ever. Proudly designed and built in the UK, the RP-1 is EBC's most extreme track day and race suited brake pad, offering unrivalled performance at a competitive price.

Available for many Mercedes performance models and in most aftermarket race caliper fitments, these pads have an extremely low wear rate with a stable friction coefficient, even under the harshest driving conditions. They also come thermally bedded, eliminating early life fade and minimising bed in time, whilst stainless-steel backing plates reduce heat conduction. Prices start at £99 from [www.ebcbrakesdirect.com](http://www.ebcbrakesdirect.com) or your local EBC stockist.

# SIGNATURE TUNE **A45 AMG**

So you've bought a W176 Mercedes A45 AMG, but how do you make it even better?



A45 AMG is a highly potent car but it's capable of much more.

**M**ercedes' 355bhp A45 AMG changed the image of the previously humble A-Class forever. With a two-litre turbocharged motor, four-wheel drive and a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission and different driving modes the A45's factory spec was impressive.

But the high interior spec, AMG heritage and elevated price tag reassured Mercedes enthusiasts. As a result, it appealed to both camps and sold like hot cakes, so seven years later it's available in substantial numbers on the used market. Already ripe for tuning, a 2015 facelift brought a tweak to 376bhp, plus revised gear ratios, styling enhancements and more options. Reliability appears excellent and prices for decent examples start at just over £19,000.

## OUR TOP TUNING TIPS

There were some issues with early turbos and the dual clutch 'box, but both should have been resolved under warranty. Electrics can be very expensive to fix so use a diagnostic tool to scan the car's ECU for any faults.

We'd also recommend you buy a standard car and then plan modifications, rather than buy one that's already been modified, that way you'll be sure of the provenance. And always keep your insurer informed.

## ENGINE

Expert tuner CKS Performance in Watford recommended an ECU remap, which for £834 adds a substantial 70bhp and 59lb ft. Meanwhile a £999 remap at Cheshire-based Collins Performance would add around 72bhp, with 85lb ft. A Stage 2 package with a hybrid turbo is £3,500 or more, but could take you beyond 460bhp. On the other end of the scale, a K&N high-flow air filter is £81, whilst a downpipe is recommended (around £650) and many owners fit aftermarket backboxes.

## TRANSMISSION

As it's very impressive in factory spec, the transmission needs little improvement, however a gearbox ECU remap (Renntech is popular) can produce slightly faster shifts and adjust the torque limiter to unleash slightly more oomph when it's safe to do so.

## SUSPENSION

OE bushes can wear out in just a just few years and affect the ride and handling, so we'd recommend fitting polyurethane replacements. You can also upgrade the anti-roll bar links and aluminium strut braces are popular (CKS does a nice one for £234). There are already plenty of aftermarket options for dampers and springs, with some owners recommending H&R or Eibach springs plus Bilstein



△ Items such as brakes can be upgraded to suit heavier track use.

dampers. And properly-matches coil-over kits, like the Bilstein B12 Pro Kit (around £600) are a wise choice for track use.

## BRAKES

There are plenty of options out there for the A45, from upgraded pads right up to pricier big-brake kits from the likes of Forge, Brembo and EBC. Renntech's performance brake kit is £890 and includes braided brake hoses and DOT5.1 fluid.

## WHEELS AND BODYWORK

Your options are limited only by your imagination, from boot spoilers and alloys, right up to full-blown kits from the likes of Lorinser, RevoZport and Mad Motors. And you don't have to make big changes, with facelifted LED headlights available for pre-2015 cars that help.

## INTERIOR

Some owners have chosen aftermarket steering wheels and pedals, as well as sports seats, carbon fibre trim and bespoke gear knobs. Android DVD GPS Navigation Command upgrades are also available so you can install apps from the Google Play Store, play DVDs and connect to any wifi network. With the appropriate adapter you could also gain access to the ECU's diagnostic fault codes.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

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## BILSTEIN DAMPERS FOR S211

You can save over 20 per cent on the list price of Bilstein dampers for the S211 Mercedes E-Class by buying them at PFS Parts ([www.partsformercedes-benz.com](http://www.partsformercedes-benz.com)). Made to fit the 2002 to 2009 estate models, Mercedes-Benz relies on the innovation and quality of Bilstein dampers when developing its original equipment. So you can expect the same exacting standards when buying a Bilstein product direct. These dampers include a locating tool to hold the unit in position but are not suitable for models with Airmatic suspension. The normal list price is £295 but PFS Parts is only charging £234.



# HOT STAR

Built to take on BMW's M5 model, the V8-engined 500E was unlike anything Mercedes had built before, which is why it had a helping hand in producing it. Here's what you need to know when buying one now.

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES TERRY OBORNE

**A**T FIRST glance the 124-series 500E, or E500 as it was later badged, could pass for one of the taxis waiting outside a station anywhere in mainland Europe in the 1990s, except that that it isn't in cab spec yellow. An unremarkable mid-sized saloon – that's anything but.

The 500E, launched in 1991, was Stuttgart's answer to the BMW M5, which for six years had been the undisputed and definitive high performance saloon. It used five-litre V8 power and was part-built by Porsche, the Zuffenhausen sports car maker also honing its chassis. From late 1990 until April 1995, the Porsche factory would turn out 10,479 of the cars, each one hand-built over 18 days, the peak year being 1992

when 4,416 were assembled.

The price on its arrival in Britain in March 1991 was £56,000 (some £10,000 more than the BMW M5), rising to £60,000 by the time imports ceased. The car is one of the rarest Mercedes models in Britain, with only 29 delivered new, although others have been personally imported.

Pristine, low mileage examples sell for £60,000 or more at international auctions, but you can still find average condition examples for a little under £20,000 if you look hard. So what should you be looking for in this subtle, but oh so potent W124?

## DESIGN, EVOLUTION

Work on the 500E is said to have begun quite soon after the 124-series appeared in 1984, the idea being to lightly modify the then

flagship 300E. But during its course the project became ever more ambitious, the end result something that while still looking much like a regular 124 saloon used so many different parts it was almost a new car. For example, of the bodywork only the bootlid, roof, front doors and glass remained standard 124-series, while fastidious attention to detail saw a larger fuel tank installed.

The M119 V8 produced its extra torque thanks to revised intake manifolds and Bosch LH- rather than LE-Jetronic fuel-injection, and there were also detail modifications to the engine block, crankcase and connecting rods. It was a tight fit in the W124. The battery had to be moved out of the engine bay and into the boot (which also helped with weight distribution), while to

accommodate the larger, 500SL rear differential the car's floorpans had to be modified.

The engine came with the SL500's four-speed automatic gearbox, switchable between Sport and Economy; a manual gearbox wasn't offered. Mercedes' traction control hardware of the time, ASR (Acceleration Skid Control) came as standard, as did self-levelling rear suspension.

The larger, 500SL brakes were fitted, the suspension was lowered 23mm and the front and rear track was widened slightly. To accommodate this, plus the 8Jx16-, rather than 7Jx15-inch alloys (a new eight-hole design, and shod with 225/55 tyres), the wheelarches were extended – among the few visual clues that this was a special W124. The other identifiers were the more



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**The 500E was Stuttgart's answer to the BMW M5, which for six years had been the undisputed performance saloon**

aggressive looking front spoiler, with halogen foglamps, the slightly more pronounced side skirts necessary to marry up to the flared wheelarches, and of course the bootlid badge.

The most noticeable interior differences between the 500E and regular W124s are the seats. The front and rear seats have bigger side bolsters than the standard items, but aren't the normal Sportline sports seats; a sticker on their underside reveals them to have been made by Recaro. At the rear you see individual seats with a walnut capped stowage compartment between them, rather than the usual one-piece bench, an arrangement made necessary by the 500E's larger transmission tunnel. Fabric/half leather trimmed seats were standard, with full leather an option, as were walnut consoles between the front and rear seats. Some of the carpeting is also thicker in the 500E.

For the necessary body re-engineering, Mercedes contracted Porsche to carry out the work and install the engine at its factory in nearby Zuffenhausen. The cars were then brought back to Mercedes for painting, after which they

## JUST THE FACTS

**Mercedes-Benz 500E/E500 (W124)**

ENGINE **M119 4,973cc V8**

POWER **316bhp@5,600rpm**

TORQUE **347lb ft@3,900rpm**

TRANSMISSION **4-speed auto, RWD**

WEIGHT **1,710kg**

0-62MPH **6.1sec**

TOP SPEED **155mph**

FUEL CONSUMPTION **16.7mpg**

YEARS PRODUCED **1991-1995**

*Pre-October 1992 cars 322bhp and 354lb ft; fuel consumption according to EEC urban*

returned to Porsche once again for final assembly, before arriving back at Mercedes for final checking and despatch.

Only minor modifications took place during production. In October 1992, after the V8's full throttle enrichment was taken out, power dropped six bhp to 316bhp and torque 7lb ft to 347lb ft. As from February 1993 the front brake discs were increased in diameter from 300mm to 320mm, and the rears from 278mm to 300mm.

Along with all other 124s, the 500E received a facelift in mid-1993, including a new bonnet and grille, with the three-pointed star now located on the bonnet instead of on top of the grille.

The front and rear lamp clusters no longer had orange indicator lenses. This point also marked the badge changeover, the 'E' becoming a prefix rather than a suffix, from '500E' to 'E500'. A late batch of 500 cars, the E500 Limited, were built, but none officially came to the UK. These came in special colours and ran 17-inch Evo II alloy wheels with 245/40 tyres.

## DRIVING THE 500E/E500

The 'Super Cab' feels as subtle to drive as it is to look at. The engine hums quietly, like any other Mercedes V8, giving no indication of just how fast it will propel the 1,700kg car; indeed, at low revs the 32-valve unit doesn't seem particularly responsive. But as the revs rise past 3,500rpm so does the urgency of the engine note, and the Benz takes on a whole new character, providing effortless performance for overtaking, even without kicking down the transmission.

Mercedes wanted to give the 500E handling to match its performance, but at the same time avoid subjecting occupants to a rock hard ride. The chassis is firmer and less compliant than say a 300E's, but roll is better

controlled, and for all its bulk the 500E feels an agile car. The E500 feels luxurious and cossetting, and getting comfortable behind the wheel is easy, thanks to the electrically adjusted seats' extra support plus the better pedal positioning of left-hand drive.

## WHAT YOU'LL PAY

In the mid-2000s a 500E/E500 could be bought for £6,000 to £7,000. These days are gone, below average to average cars now making £15,000 to £20,000. Twenty thousand is the threshold for a tidier example, but if you want a good if not perfect car that will give reliable service without first needing work, then from £25,000 will have to be the budget. The E500 Limited is the most sought-after model, and commands extra.

In view of their scarcity, it's hardly worth the effort searching for an official UK car. They differ only from European cars in having an mph speedometer and side repeater indicators. You'll see Japanese market cars that have been imported; they tend to be in good condition and with low mileage, but usually don't come with a service history or paperwork. ▶

# 500E/E500 INSIDE AND OUT



## Mercedes Specialist

Jay Manek at Mercland in Warwickshire is our technical consultant for this month's Buyer's Guide.

## POWERTRAIN

The most likely problem with the M119 V8, which is a super tough unit, is a failed wiring loom, this from an era when they were made from bio-degradable material. "At this age they will have all but degraded, and so are likely to need replacement," says Jay Manek of independent Mercedes specialist Mercland in Nuneaton, Warwickshire. "The symptoms are non-starting, poor running, and misfires. The issue is easy to spot by looking closely at the wires where they plug into sensors or components - the inner insulation will be cracking. There is an upper and lower wiring harness, and both should be replaced."

The electronic throttle actuator and mass air flow sensor are two common failures, the former also suffering crumbling wiring and resulting in a lack of performance. The distributor caps and rotor arms, there being two of

each, also fail fairly regularly. "This will be evident if the car is misfiring or idling poorly," Jay tells us. "They should all be changed every third service."

Timing chains are duplex items and rarely fail - but it's wise to replace them in time. "At over 150,000 miles, it would be good preventative maintenance to replace the chain, tensioner and guides," Jay advises. "It's not a cheap job, but this will ensure the continued smooth running of the engine. If you hear any rattle on start up, the chain should be replaced immediately."

The transmission is very strong, but over the years the gears and clutches can wear. Any potential buyer should check that the gear changes are silky smooth, and there are no harsh clunks when selecting gear. A fluid and filter change is recommended every 40,000 miles.



M119 V8 is a reliable unit, but as with all 124-series engines, does suffer from wiring loom issues.

## SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

Front lower suspension arm ball joints should be checked for excess play. If worn, replacement of the complete suspension arm is required, and this should be done in pairs, making the job more costly.

The more complex rear suspension requires close examination, the pipework for the hydraulic self-levelling often corroded and possibly leaking. "Fitting some of the lines around the rear axle takes time and patience," Jay warns. Rear suspension spheres commonly need replacing, the symptom a bouncy and uncomfortable ride."

The rear lower ball joints are also prone to failing, causing a knocking noise. "Special tools are required for this job, and a garage would likely charge £300 per side," Jay says. "The five-link rear suspension is also worth replacing if it has not had any attention."

The usual check for worn brake discs should be made, worn out discs



having a pronounced lip at their outer edge. A common upgrade is to install the 334mm brakes and larger, Brembo calipers from an R129 Silver Arrow, which improves stopping. The steering should not have play at the straight ahead position, and shouldn't groan when lock is applied.

The complex suspension can often be troublesome and costly to repair.

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Rust can be a problem and items exclusive to the model, like the front wings are over £1,200 each, but they can often be repaired.

**Mercedes contracted Porsche to carry out the work and install the engine at its factory”**

**BODYWORK AND WHEELS**

As with any 124, corrosion is likely to be an issue, so examine the car thoroughly, including the underside. “The front wings are made from heavy gauge steel, and even if they exhibit some paint bubbles, the rust can normally be ground back and repaired,” Jay explains. “New wings are now over £1,200 from Mercedes, so it’s well worth restoring the original wings if

possible. Rust around the wheelarches is also common, but again a good bodyshop should be able to repair any affected areas.”

If a 500E/E500’s wheels haven’t been restored, they’ll probably need it. The standard ‘eight-hole’ rims tend to first corrode at the centre caps, this then spreading outwards if not checked, and it is most unsightly.



**INTERIOR AND ELECTRICS**

The air conditioning system should be examined carefully. Due to age, leaks in the system are common, and electrical components such as the fan switches can fail, although the most likely point to leak is the condenser.

It’s also important to check the function of every electrical component: seats should be checked for all of their adjustment and heating, electric windows should be fast and smooth, and the sunroof should glide open and shut without any nasty noises. “Often items can fail simply due to age,” Jay points out.

Most 500E/E500s have been well looked after, and the leather trim should be in good order. Ideally it will have a bit of patina in some creasing at the stress points.”



Air con and all other electrical systems should be checked for smooth operation, and the leather should be in good condition, although a little patina showing originality isn’t a bad thing.

## 500E/E500 INSIDE AND OUT

## VERDICT

If you want a low key hot rod with a star badge the 500E/E500 certainly has it all: massive performance, silken refinement, comfort and space, and fuel consumption apart, moderate running costs. Perhaps best of all, it's a model that's still available at a reasonable and affordable price, considering its rarity and pedigree.

However, care must be taken when looking, as the youngest cars are now a quarter of a century old, with all the potential issues that sheer age throws up. Rust and electrics are there to catch out the unwary. But what an amazing Mercedes!



## E60 AMG: the ultimate

During 1993 and 1994 a dozen of the top-spec E500 Limited models found their way into AMG's hands, where the V8 was given an extra litre in capacity, the cylinder bore and stroke increased, while the cylinder-heads were ported and inlet manifold polished to optimise gas-flow. A reprogrammed ECU and sports exhaust were the final touches on a package that gave 376bhp and 428lb ft torque. The brakes were also upgraded. Mercedes quoted a 5.4sec 0-62mph time (0.6sec quicker than an E500), and the same electronically governed 155mph maximum.

It's thought more than 100 other cars were converted by AMG, and specifications no doubt varied slightly between each build. It's also known that some five-litre cars have been converted independently, so can't be called a 'proper' E60. The 1995 E60 AMG pictured here, which is the genuine article, sold at an RM Sotheby's auction in London last November for the princely sum of £138,000.

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## Typical basic servicing costs

(A/B services including VAT)

MODEL	OIL SERVICE	MAJOR SERVICE
500E/E500	£180	£300

Quotes from Mercland

## Other costs

- ★ Gearbox service **£250**
- ★ Front brake discs and pads **£350**
- ★ Engine mounts **£700**
- ★ Distributor caps/rotor arms **£650**
- ★ Air conditioning condenser **£800**
- ★ Front suspension ball joints (both sides) **£800**
- ★ Four premium brand tyres (225/55 ZR16) **£450**

## Buyer's checks

- ✓ Biodegradable engine wiring loom may be crumbling
- ✓ Faulty electronic throttle actuator and/or mass air-flow sensor will cause an engine misfire
- ✓ Worn distributor caps and rotor arms result in poor starting and general running issues
- ✓ Ensure the automatic gearbox changes gear smoothly
- ✓ Suspension lower ball joints at both the front and rear wear out and become noisy
- ✓ Front and rear wings are prone to becoming rusty
- ✓ If the air conditioning doesn't blow cold, the system's condenser probably needs replacing

## What you'll pay

- £15,000-£20,000** Average condition, 100,000 miles plus and some body rust showing
- £20,000-£25,000** £20K is starting point for tidy cars, and a Limited model will fetch more
- £25,000-£30,000** Good condition Limiteds with low mileage and full history to back it up
- £30,000-£50,000** Has to have very low mileage and be in excellent overall condition
- £50,000-£70,000** Pristine, ultra low mileage cars at international auctions for collections

► Thanks to **DD Classics** in London for the loan of the 500E for photography **Tel** +44 (0)20 8878 3355, **Web** [www.ddclassics.com](http://www.ddclassics.com), and to **Mercland** in Nuneaton for technical advice and parts/servicing prices **Tel** +44 (0)2476 386327 **Web** [www.mercland.com](http://www.mercland.com)

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# SIGNS OF LIFE

The W123 bursts into life as the engine starts for the first time in 20 years, whilst life with C-Class Estate has been decidedly easier with new wheels

WORDS & IMAGES MATT RICHARDSON

## FACTSHEET

CAR 1983 W123 230E, 2010 S204 C250 CDI

OWNER Matt Richardson

LOCATION Kent, UK

PURCHASED May 2018

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT The W123 lives again but briefly, and the C250 CDI is treated to a new set of wheels but these will wait until summer



**Since my last report I've been running the C-Class on winter tyres**



**I**'VE BEEN BUSY working through the various issues with my W123 to try and make it start, as I've now got a spark and with the air filter removed I can see no reason it's not getting air, which just leaves fuel. Last time round, I'd just fitted a new fuel pump and filter, but checking the fuel feed revealed it still wasn't delivering a satisfying fountain of petrol when I turned the key. This was something of a mystery, as I could hear the pump running and had just poured in two gallons of fuel into the tank. As I cranked and cranked hoping the fuel might suddenly start to flow, I realised I could hear something splashing on the ground underneath the car. With equal parts curiosity and trepidation, I peered under and was mildly horrified to find the fuel pump working very effectively but the fuel lines were not, as petrol gushed down from above the rear axle where the pipes pass between the subframe and chassis.

The next week was spent with the car on axle stands while I tracked the metal pipes from the tank and pump along the car's floor. There were three lines: the feed, return and vent, and I could see they were leaking where a rubber bung held them in place. So I cut off the metal pipes

ahead of the axle and pulled them out. I couldn't believe the state of them as they crumbled and fell apart in my hand!

As a quick temporary fix, I used flexible fuel hose to replace them, tried priming the pump, and this time fuel gushed out in the engine bay! Success, so I tried starting it again and nothing. But a blast of Easy Start and the four-pot purred into life at last! But as soon as it burnt off it died, meaning the fuel still isn't reaching the injectors so there's sadly more investigation to be done.

### WATER WELL

Meanwhile, I'd noticed water in the footwells so decided the car needed some protection and picked up a new All Season cover from Halfords to keep the water out and UV from cracking the dash. As far as I can tell, the car has only a tiny bit of rust in one wheelarch and this should keep it from getting worse for now. I had to go for the XL size as the W123 hides its dimensions well.

In other news, I've given my S204 a net of new wheels and since my last report I've been running the C-Class on winter tyres. Although it's not snowed yet, it has been cold enough to warrant using them, as regular tyres lose grip at these low temperatures. I had been looking at slightly larger aftermarket

alloys for it and had narrowed the choice to two designs, when I stumbled upon a set of four new and freshly refurbished 18-inch AMG wheels for £450. I made a cheeky offer of £400 which was accepted and my wheel dilemma was solved. A new set of Continental SportContacts went on to complete them, ready for when the weather improves, until then the original 17-inch wheels are wearing a set of General Cold Weather tyres. It's interesting that although it normally has staggered width rims, the handbook says to fit same width front and back for winter, which may explain why in the dry traction is not the best, but in the cold and damp they cling on well. Now I'm looking forward to it warming up as the C250 looks so much better on the bigger wheels!

△◁ Winter tyres have been fitted, which work well in low temperatures.

△ The new 18-inch wheels (left) will have to wait until it warms up.

△△ New fuel pump and filter for the W123 helped but it's not enough.

▽ Although the car has started at long last there's still more to do.



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# TICKING OVER

The 190E reaches the 150,000-mile mark but there are small issues to deal with as a result, whilst there are plans afoot for the E-Class later this year

WORDS & IMAGES WILLIAM TERRINGTON

## FACTSHEET

**CARS** 1989 W201 190E, 2011 C207 E250

**OWNER** William Terrington

**LOCATION** Staines, Surrey

**PURCHASED** March 2014/March 2017

**UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT** More maintenance for the 190E and attention is turned to the E-Class's future as plans are made for a show



**As is typical after a service, a list of small issues to fix came back on the invoice**

**I** AM PLEASED TO report that the 190E is running smoothly, especially after an oil and filter change, a coolant refresh and a new fuel filter. On a brief trip to the New Forest in November last year, I had much fun driving it around, using the rev range and kickdown and went through most of a tank of unleaded 97 (I never put in anything less). The car does seem to, however, have a particular appetite for Shell V-Power and runs brilliantly with BP Ultimate. Also, on the way back, the car's odometer ticked over to 150,000 miles, thus a service was booked the following month,

However, as is typical after a service, a list of small issues to fix came back on the invoice and I do still have these to sort out. It seems that there are two very slight leaks, one from the gearbox cooler pipes and one from the low pressure power steering hose, along with some little bits and pieces that are a little more easy to remedy. But right now, the car is not doing many miles and is resting nice and cosy in the garage for the winter.

The other issue that I have noticed, is that the black painted steel wheels do seem to leak a little air. It's nothing serious, but I do think that the tyre pressures need to be topped up maybe

just a little too often. Also cosmetically they are not brilliant, as there is some surface corrosion and quite a number of spot repairs, presumably done with de-rust and black paint over the years. After a call to a Mercedes-Benz Parts department, I discovered a new set is still obtainable and the cost is surprisingly low: the wheel trims cost more. So the plan will be to purchase a new set, along with a set of Pirelli tyres to complement work that will be done on the suspension at a later date, as the rears of the current set haven't got too long to go, and the front ones are a different brand.

### THE DAILY

I promised in the last report to write more on the E-Class Coupe. This was an unexpected replacement for a 2006 W203 C230 Sport Edition, which developed a

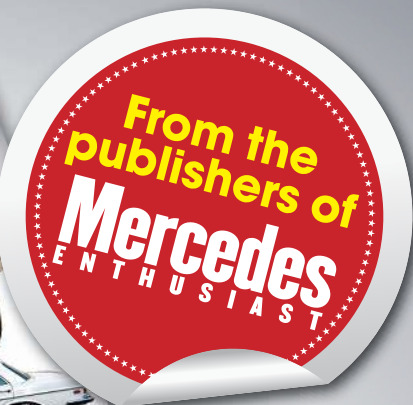
balancer shaft issue with its M272 V6 engine. The E-Class provides 201bhp, roughly the same as the C230, but has a 1.8-litre, four-cylinder turbocharged M271 engine, rather than a 2.5-litre naturally aspirated V6. I am aiming to prepare this car for the M-B Owners Club Concours event in 2021. It has a low mileage of 43,000 and the engine bay is already pretty much perfect. All that is required is an alloy wheel refurb, plus new tyres, and an appointment at the interior trimmers and body shop, just to sort out some minor issues, such as some slight blemishes on the driver's seat and steering wheel, and to repaint the front bumper/spoiler, as there are some scrapes underneath. The original plan was to enter the car in this year's concours, however the 190E took president and must come first.

△ Currently the 190E is tucked away for winter but needs a little work.

▽ The E250 is in great condition and just needs a few little touch ups.



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# KEEP ON RUNNING

With the car parked up for a few months, a visit to see a Mercedes-Benz specialist was overdue, and it was fingers crossed that all was well...

WORDS & IMAGES CRAIG PUSEY

## FACTSHEET

CAR R129 500SL

OWNER Craig Pusey

LOCATION Surrey, UK

PURCHASED April 2019


**UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT** The 500SL has been taken to a trusted specialist for a once-over and it turns out that there's work to do in the future



the first time I take a newly bought modern classic to a specialist. I always fear the knowing smile when some horrific common fault is discovered, followed by the comment, "You paid how much for this?!"

So, standing in the workshop I naturally expected the worst, but the guys didn't look like they were about to burst out laughing or begin pointing in a panicky manner, so I calmed down. Closer inspection of the wiper, including testing both the switchgear and relay, revealed that the motor was the problem, so I'm now on the lookout for a used wiper arm and motor. But what about the leaky top? Removing the roof showed no obvious reason for water ingress, so PCS' Ollie Stoner cleaned the rubber before applying special *Gleitmittel* fluid, the Mercedes-Benz rubber re-conditioner, which I'm please to say seems to have saved me the £700 cost of a new seal!

## HANGING IN THERE

The two other things discovered on the 500SL were not much of a surprise, as I'd already suspected the handling was poorer than that of other well-kept R129 SLs I've experienced. First up, if I want to keep car and engine together, a new set of engine mounts are due, as the V8 engine appears keen on escaping the chassis. After that not inconsiderable job will be the front suspension and lower arms, which are also giving way too much play. I hope my wife isn't reading this, as it may it get expensive for a little bit... 

**T**HOSE WITH A KEEN eye may have noticed the lack of a Running Report from me during the last few months. The reason for this is purely down to the SL's lack of use. My job takes me travelling worldwide and I've been out of the country in more exotic climates.

However, on returning to the UK, I was looking forward to getting some miles under my belt and using the R129 as intended – whenever possible and even in the rain. But that's when things started to unravel. The first run out with the car took me into some increasingly wet winter weather, where I quickly discovered that the wiper only worked on full speed, if at all, and that a seal on the hardtop was allowing water into the cabin one drip at a time.

These niggles and a long overdue health check saw me phoning Prestige Car Service of Horndean, the very

same guys who have looked after *Mercedes Enthusiast's* cars over the years. So with a booking in place for the Mercedes-Benz specialist to give the car a thorough once-over, I was left a little apprehensive, as I don't know about you, but I tend to have a bit of a panic

▽ The guys at Prestige Car Service gave the car a thorough health check.

▽ Genuine Mercedes Gleitmittel fluid saved the rubber seal and £700!



**“I tend to panic the first time I take a newly bought modern classic to a specialist”**

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**SLK250 CDI**, AMG sport, September 2012, 2.1 diesel, Tiptronic, auto, 19,800 miles, Tenorite Grey Metallic, multi-function steering wheel, black leather, heated sports seats with airscarf, starguard, full service history from new, very low mileage, economic car, excellent condition, £13,500. Tel: 07464 066222. Dundee [CDW5]



**SL350**, stunning car, excellent condition, 2007, 58,266 miles, Iridium Silver, black leather, Pioneer Z910 touch screen media unit, separate 250 watt amp, full glass panoramic hardtop, aluminium trim, FSH, new MOT with no advisories, £9,950. Tel: 07827 856857. Walton on the Naze [CDW6]



**E300**, SE hybrid, 2014, auto, estate, diesel, 7G Tronic, excellent condition, full service history, 95% Mercedes dealership, beautiful, bulletproof, 2.1, 204 Bhp, heated seats, park sensors, 1 previous Dr owner, paddle shift, Sat Nav, Bi-Xenon adaptive Lights, DAB radio, electric tailgate, may part exchange, £11,695 ONO. Tel: 07769 699966. Lincolnshire [CDW14]



**W204 C350 CDI**, sport, 2009, silver, full AMG kit, full Mercedes service history (to date), 87,000 miles, black leather, 3.0 V6, diesel, drives excellently, £5,995. Tel: 07857 826363. Surrey [CDW7]



**W123 230E**, 1984, auto, metallic silver, black velour interior, 126,000 miles, 1 owner from new, after 34 years my father has decided to sell his beloved car, immaculate and original condition, inside and out, done most of its miles in the dry, been garaged from new, electric windows, electric mirrors, central locking, original Blaupunkt stereo, original carpets throughout, £14,000 ONO. Tel: 07770 304040. London [CDW12]



**W108 280SE**, 1970, auto, ivory, tan leather, originally from Johannesburg, imported to UK in 2003, superb original condition, regularly serviced, oils, fluids, brakes etc., no rust, runs like a dream, good paperwork, 88,000 miles, garaged, lack of use forces regretful sale, £17,250. Tel: 07767 453132. Hampshire [CDW10]



**CLK 320 AMG**, sports, coupe (W208), 1998, Azure Blue, petrol, automatic, MOT until October 2020, 158,000 miles, private number plate included, all AMG extras, grey leather interior, factory AMG body kit, lowered, Bose stereo system, electric everything, more photos and details, £POA. Tel: 07790 643139. Portsmouth [CDW8]



**190E**, Sports Line, 2 litre, a lot of my labour has gone into getting it perfect, mesmerizing example, finally time to find a new owner, more pictures of upgrades available, £4,500. Tel: 07548 874321. London [CDW11]



**W202 C250D**, Elegance, auto, 1996 (N Reg), owned by me for 20 years, dark blue, unmarked grey leather interior, electric windows, mirrors, sunroof, OTG, rear spoiler, alloy wheels (including spare), 236,000 miles, complete history including all MOTs, immaculate but needs some work. £950. Tel: 01455 698983. Leicestershire [CDW13]



**SL320 R129**, 1998, 2 door, convertible, petrol, 3199cc, automatic, Azurite two tone, blue metallic, 78,000 miles, part history, beige leather seats, electric Seats, contrasting carpets, navy blue soft top, body colour hard top, new tyres, comes with the private plate, £8,995. Tel: 07711 325942. Dorset **[CDW15]**



**R107**, 1989, Signal Red, one of the very last SLs to leave the production line, used weekly and garaged, original book, stamped with full set of receipts, company car lease, company car director sold to wife, only 80,700 miles, majority of miles in dry weather, electric windows, original carpets throughout, 2 sets of keys, MOT March 2020, black leather, lovely condition, no time wasters, some cosmetics could be sorted relatively easily, engine is Sound, all electrics great, comes with hardtop, these cars are appreciating fast. £36,750 ONO. Tel: 07847 774663. London **[CDW16]**



**W208 CLK55 AMG**, V8, ultra rare, 2001, only 37 RHD on the road today (Ref: www.howmanyleft.com), no ordinary CLK, 4 previous keepers, Obsidian Black, exclusive anthracite leather, 69,200 miles, serviced 2,000 miles ago, MOT with NO advisory until December 2020, excellent condition, interesting early provenance, 2 keys, original bill of sale, all original books, detailed history file, orthopaedic heated memory seats, cruise control, etc., £9,499. Email: sylvain.haman@gmail.com **[CDW28]**



**300TE**, 1992, just four previous owners, in good condition, 199,600 genuine miles, full service history, £2,950. Tel: 01373 301428. Email: wingspan55@aol.com. Wiltshire **[CDW20]**



**SL600**, 2004, 68,000 miles, 5.5, V12 twin turbo, FMBSH to 60,000, V12 number plate, MOT till 09/2020, no advisories, Obsidian Black, panoramic roof, dark grey leather, heated & air conditioned, massaging seats, chestnut wood trim & steering wheel, Xenon headlamps, every extra, £17,500 ONO. Tel: 07722 284161. Ilkley **[CDW17]**



**SLK 250 AMG**, 65 Reg, diesel, auto, 34,200 miles, command, built in sunroof, loads of gadgets, leather heated seats, metallic black, full Mercedes service history, just serviced in the last few days, my wife's car, excellent on fuel, low tax and insurance, £12,800 OVNO. Tel: 07725 946297. Lincolnshire **[CDW18]**



**C180K**, 2008, automatic, saloon, VERY low 19,000 miles, fully documented, silver, Grey Artico interior, last MOT on 18,450 miles, MOT until October 2020, new tyres at about 16,000 miles, excellent alloys, unused space saver spare, MB service record, £7,490 ONO. Croydon **[CDW21]**



**380SL**, 1984, auto, Thistle green resprayed in 2012, beige interior, 84,000 miles, runs very smoothly, MOT until December, garaged by last owner for 14 years, hardtop, stand and wind deflector, fully stamped original owner's & maintenance booklets, £17,000 ONO. Tel: 01993 830233. West Oxfordshire **[CDW22]**



**SL500**, 2003, 84,000 miles, metallic dark blue, grey leather, new mats, panoramic roof, AMG wheels, memory heated seats, Long MOT, garaged, Mercedes serviced stamped and bills, £10,000. Tel: 07773 323021. Essex **[CDW23]**



**CLK 270D**, 2005 Reg, 5 cylinder engine, auto, recent MOT, new tyres, cream leather trim, all in good condition, no rust, lovely drive, super smooth engine and transmission, £2,500. Tel: 01985 847885. Wilts **[CDW25]**



**260E**, 1991, auto, Pearl Blue, 12 months MOT, showroom condition, no rust, full service history, only 3 owners, 70,500 miles, factory fitted sunroof, blue leather seats, tinted windows, other extra's, £7,550 or nearest offer. Tel: 01529 421712. Lincolnshire **[CDW26]**



**230CE**, 1992, coupe, lovely pale blue metallic, matching leather interior, automatic, 115,000 miles, current owner for 14 years, FSH, garaged 2006 to now, new tyres & gearbox overhaul in 2018, MOT until Aug 2020, electric sunroof & windows, Kenwood CD/radio, £5,000 ONO. Tel: 07813 830655. North Herts **[CDW27]**



**R129 SL500**, V8, 1995, only 2 previous owners, Azurite Blue (366), black soft top, mushroom leather (275), 88,100 miles, last serviced less than 1,000 miles ago, excellent condition, ready to be enjoyed, matching hardtop, original manuals and history file, 2 keys, Becker radio with Bluetooth, electric memory seats, electric roof, cruise control, etc., £12,750. Email: sylvain.haman@gmail.com **[CDW29]**



**280SLC**, 1981, Polar White, only done 57,000 miles, full Mercedes service book stamped history, all the old MOT certificates & invoices to support work done, MOT until October 2020, very rare car, air conditioning, manual gearbox, great condition, excellent soft navy leather seats, last owner had it for 8 years, hence the condition, original interior & carpets, runs very well, stereo, Cobra Alarm, alloys, good tyres, well maintained, £15,990, Tel: 07958 431991. Croydon **[CDW30]**





**E500**, 2003, silver, regularly serviced, MOT until July 20, 132,000 miles, Sat Nav, etc., have copy of data card, too many options to list, transmission oil and brake fluid changed, new airmatic shocks on front, nice clean car, £2,750. Tel: 01784 244708 or Mob: 07957 855219. Ashford [CM31W2]



**C32 AMG W203**, V6 supercharged, 53-plate, beautiful car in original unmolested condition, 133,000 miles, drives like new, full service history (main dealer history up to 100,000 miles), this car is featured in *Mercedes Enthusiast* magazine in January 2019 in the buyer's guide feature, Xenon lights, Sat Nav, Etc., phone for further details and ask for Peter, £7,500 ONO. Tel: 07885 078338. Rustington [I JW9]



**W201 190D**, 1985, 2-litre, diesel, manual, 83,000 miles, new MOT, father & son owned for 32 years, always garaged, seat covers from new, central locking, manual sunroof/windows, power assisted steering, lots of documentation, history, receipts, immaculate beige interior, recent service, plate VGU 190 included, VGC £4,995. Tel: 07714 068326. Brighton [LKW3]



**E320 Sportline**, cabriolet, red, 1995, 114,000 miles, heated mushroom leather seats, 5 speed auto box, wood and leather steering wheel, matching Weismann hard top and draft excluder, only two owners, MB specialist maintained since new, £13,900. Tel: 01784 257749. Middlesex [CM31W3]



**CLK320 AMG W208**, sports, coupe, 1998, Azure Blue, petrol, automatic, MOT until October 2020, 158,000 miles, private number plate included, all AMG extras, grey leather interior, factory AMG body kit, lowered. Bose stereo system, electric everything: windows, seat adjustment, rear window blind, mirrors, sunroof etc., cruise control, speed limiter, front and back parking sensors, heated front seats, headlamp washers, very good acceleration, very fast, always serviced and repaired by Mercedes specialist garage, used daily, full history, owner's manual, offers over £2000. Tel: 07790 643139. Southsea [CM31W1]



**R129 300SL**, 1992, 93,000 miles, full service history, all MOT's, stamped service book, hard and soft tops, MOT until October 2020, no advisories, Toad alarm system fitted, nice condition, appreciating in value, £7,500. Tel: 07950 436272. West Yorkshire [CM31P1]



**560SEL**, 68,000 miles, absolutely beautiful light brown, RHD, wonderful condition, fully loaded with beige leather interior, original Becker stereo system, electric everything: windows, seat adjustment, rear window blind, mirrors, sunroof etc., cruise control, speed limiter, front and back parking sensors, heated front seats, headlamp washers, very good acceleration, always serviced, repaired by Mercedes specialist garage, full history, owner's manual, offers of £15,000 & above. Tel: 07881 275377. London [CM31W5]



**500SEL**, 1985, bullet proof, 94,000 miles, LHD, red, wonderful condition, fully loaded with beige leather & suede interior, original Pioneer stereo system, electric everything: windows, window curtains, seat adjustment, rear window blind, mirrors, sunroof etc., cruise control, speed limiter, front and back parking sensors, heated front seats, headlamp washers. Duchatelet body kit, always serviced and repaired by Mercedes specialist garage, full history, 2 former owners, €90,000 (Euros). Tel: 07881 275377. London [CM31W6]



**C180**, petrol, manual, 5-speed, MOT March 2020, 1993, original perfect alloy wheels, sunroof, owned for 7 years, Signal Red, drives as Mercedes-Benz would expect, real head turner, immaculate inside and out, £4,200. Tel: 07933 108280. Bourne [IJP3]



**500SEL**, 1985, bullet proof, 49,000 miles, beige, LHD, wonderful condition, fully loaded with red leather & suede interior, original Pioneer stereo system, electric everything: windows, window curtains, seat adjustment, rear window blind, mirrors, sunroof etc., cruise control, speed limiter, front and back parking sensors, heated front seats, headlamp washers, Duchatelet body kit, always serviced and repaired by Mercedes specialist garage, full history, 2 former owners, €90,000 (Euros). Tel: 07881 275377. London [CM31W7]



**420SL R107**, 1987, 96,000 miles, beautiful condition, galvanised body looks fabulous, Signal Red, matching factory hardtop, black fabric hood, black/grey Sportscheck interior, full professional body restoration and repaint from SL (RDS Roadsport), other restoration work included refurbished alloy wheels, Continental tyres, bumpers, rubbers and new radiator, complete with rear seat option, electric windows, ABS, tinted windscreen, immobiliser, original stamped service book, £28,995. Tel: 07794 534950. Maidenhead [CM31W8]



**W123**, estate, 2,000cc, manual, transmission, one owner, full service history from main dealer & specialist, 120,000 miles, factory sun roof, £2,500. Tel: 07802 793000. Cheltenham [I JW3]



**A140**, January 2000, V-Reg, manual, Ocean Blue metallic, one owner from new (yes, one owner all 19 years), all old MOTs/Tax discs, extensive service history, all invoices, incredibly good condition for age, only 77,400 miles, £950. Tel: 01322 387051. Mob: 07704 981703. Dartford **[LKW7]**



**CLK 230 W208**, Kompressor, 2001, excellent condition throughout, recently had an extensive bodywork restoration, 97,700 miles, 1 previous owner, large folder of receipts, serviced every 6,000 miles, owned by a Mercedes-Benz Club member, MOT until February 2020, £2,200 ONO. Tel: 07901 546788. Livingston. Scotland **[LKW11]**



**SLK 230**, compressor, auto, 59,000 miles, full mot, full service history, black leather interior, AMG wheels skirts and exhaust, plus private plate K666 SLK, £2,900. Tel: 01736 810033. Cornwall **[LKW12]**



**SL320 R129**, 2000, silver, black hide, glass panoramic hardtop, heated seats, cruise, rear seats, power soft top, 103,000 miles, very clean, full history, 2 keys, £5,995. Tel: 07961 808060. London **[LKW17]**



**CL63 AMG**, 2007, Graphite Grey, 2-door, coupe, black leather interior, extra low mileage 35,400, only 5,000 within the past 4 years, superb condition, only one previous owner, excellent spec including Harman Kardon sound system, Offers over £20,000. Tel: 01519 293676. Liverpool **[JKW25]**



**E240**, 2003, new MOT, good condition, £POA. Tel: 07961 495155. London **[JKW2]**



**E240**, Elegance, first Reg 10<sup>th</sup> December 2002, full service history, 1 previous owner, my ownership from 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003, 50,188 miles, about 1,000 miles per year in the last few years, garaged between MOT and service, excellent condition, petrol, auto, speed limiter, air con, 6 CD changer, electric adjustment on front seats, MOT until May 2020, £6,000. Tel: 01384 443005. Stourbridge **[KLP6]**



**123**, 200, saloon, five-speed manual gearbox, concours car, Cypress Green, matching interior, Becker radio/CD, lots of history, MOT till March 2020, Mercedes-Benz Club member, £POA. Tel: 07970 872765. Lancashire **[JKW1]**



**E280E W124**, 1995, estate, LHD, Sportline edition, leather, manual, FMBSH, 150,000 miles, 3 owners, same owner since 2004, all original including alloys and Becker radio, on SORN since 2015, MOT until July 2020, £4,500. Tel: 07702 230563. Bristol **[JKW6]**



**CLK 230**, red top, Kompressor, very low miles, 50,000 original miles from new, original documented miles from new, has recently been fully serviced to include automatic transmission & air con service, been a member of the Mercedes-Benz Owners Club for a number of years, always been a garaged kept car, £4,490. Tel: 01353 482011. Buckinghamshire **[JKW7]**



**R129 SL500**, 1995, immaculate condition, FSH included, all books/codes, dark blue, grey leather interior, 5 previous careful owners, barely run in, 100,500 miles, hard Top, Stand & Wind Deflector. Recently overhauled Soft Top with new windows. Runs beautifully. Ice cold a/c. £10450. Tel: 07790 016214. Cambridge **[JKW4]**



**450SL**, 1973, convertible, auto, 54,000 miles, hard top, must see to fully appreciate, £12,500 ONO. Tel: 07860 292923. Bexhill-on-Sea **[JKW3]**



**CLK AMG**, 55-plate, convertible, silver, black interior, very good condition, been garaged for most of its life, second owner, 2004 model, folding mirrors, parking sensors front and rear, Xenon lights, Bose sound system, 6 CD auto changer, heated and electric seats, auto wipers, auto head lights, £POA. Tel: 07971 573707. Hertfordshire **[JKW5]**



**E320 Sportline**, a much loved elegant example, rare genuine Mercedes-Benz, 5 speed auto, 4 seater, convertible, '94 Facelift model, the best combination of blue-black metallic, cream leather interior, extensive service history, current owner for the past 13 years, garaged, £POA. Tel: 07770 640620. Bristol **[JKW17]**



**SL350**, 3.7-litre V6, stunning metallic black, convertible, full service history, MOT until June 2020, fully loaded, great condition, much loved, super smooth drive, the V6 will not let you down, £8,200. Tel: 07807 026515. London **[JKW11]**

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853633**



**CL63 AMG**, 2007, Graphite Grey, 2-door, coupe, black leather interior, extra low mileage 35,400, only 5,000 within the past 4 years, superb condition, only one previous owner, excellent spec including Harman Kardon sound system, Offers over £20,000. Tel: 01519 293676. Liverpool **[JKW25]**



**W126 500SE**, 1984, B-reg, just 45,000 miles, full service history, every conceivable extra except sunroof, fully functioning air conditioning and cruise control, beautiful unspoilt leather interior, offers invited in excess of £10,000. Tel: 07867 500132. London **[JKW10]**



**E220**, 1996, N-reg, E-Class, 2.2, 5-door, British Racing Green, cream interior, good condition inside and out, MOT until December 2019, 104,000 miles, 5+ owners, £3,495. Tel: 01516 773470. Wirral **[JKW22]**



**E350 CDI**, Blue Efficiency Sport, estate, diesel, 7G-Tronic, Mercedes-Benz main dealer service history, MOT, 88,500 miles, 2010, one previous owner from new, (private plate not included), £9,495 ONO. Tel: 07946 548054 or 01425 650840. Fordingbridge **[JKW16]**



**S600 L**, first registered in 2000, 106,000 miles, keyless start/stop, Bose sound system, soft closure doors, parking sensors front and rear, two tone painted gold over black, tyres in good condition, Alcantara suede interior roof lining, full Nappa grey leather interior, heated/chilled pulsating seats, owned this car for 14 years and under my custodianship it has been pampered, with no expenses spared to keep it maintained, recent MOT test (no advisories) until September 2020, FSH back to March 2003 from independent specialist, original owner manual with a dust cover, £2,900 ONO. Tel: 07860 633081. Ramsbottom **[JKW13]**



**E200**, Azurite Blue, beige cloth, 1995, 78,000 miles, full service history both Mercedes and specialist, owned this car from new, been garaged all its life, no rust, hardly used in recent years, was going to keep it but need the space, £2,495. Tel: 07570 278925. London **[JKW23]**



**E280**, 4-door, saloon, silver, automatic, M-registration, 176,000 miles, full service history, MOT until August 2020, excellent condition mechanically, inside and out, £3,750 ONO. Tel: 07887 634088. Northampton **[JKW19]**



**E320D**, 2003, damage to front end, engine runs, approximately 100,000 miles, leather interior, open to offers. Tel: 07977 629478. N. Yorkshire **[JKW15]**



**W123 280CE**, 1986 registration, 185,000 miles, automatic, electric sunroof, windows and passenger mirror, central locking, in fair unrestored condition, my daily drive for 4 years, a lot of money spent in that time. MOT until March 2020, exhaust is blowing, £4,250 for a quick sale. Tel: 01244 880958. Email: rck991@aol.com. Chester **[JKW20]**



**C36**, 68,000 miles, owned for 10 years, covering approximately 3,000 miles per year, very good condition, has been featured in this magazine twice (I have both editions), an outstanding example of the model, serviced annually by Mercedes-Benz specialists, on the anniversary of the MOT which will occur prior to the sale, has an AMG number plate which will accompany the car, £7,750 ONO. Tel: 07786 344909. Tyne & Wear **[JKW12]**



**CL500**, 2007, black, cream interior, FSH, immaculate condition, Distronic Plus cruise control, Linguatronic voice control, stamped service book, all manuals, 3 former owners, 2 sets of keys, HPI clear, 113,000 miles, glass electric sunroof, £7,750. Tel: 07866 345345. Motherwell **[JKW24]**



**190E Zender**, 170,000 miles, MOT February, a lot of money spent on the vehicle, receipts to show all works carried out including new battery, full major service, distributor, rotor arm, spark plugs, rocker cover gasket, thermostat, gear stick, HT leads, major welding underneath the car as per MOT Advisory, £3750. Email: amin.7388@yahoo.co.uk. London **[JKW26]**



**SLK320**, V6, auto, 2004, only 62,000 miles on the clock, lovingly cared for by present lady owner since 2011, 2 previous owners, final edition of this model, all extras, air-con, wooden steering wheel, 2 tone leather seats, never smoked in, all electric seats, front & rear park sensors, AMG wheels, £5,000. Tel: 07958 677410. Hornchurch **[JW10]**



**420 SEL**, 1995, long-wheel base, only done 47,300 miles, FMBSH and MOT's, very good condition inside and out, only 2 previous owners, metallic blue, navy blue leather, full specification, electric heated rear seats, electric front memory seats and heated, cruise control, climate control aircon, electric sunroof and windows, just had full major service, MOT September 2019, ex-chairman's car, has been very well maintained, runs smooth, £5,690. Tel: 07711 358218. Email: alkhaja11@googlemail.com. Croydon **[JKW28]**



**420 SEL**, 1995, long-wheel base, only done 47,300 miles, FMBSH and MOT's, very good condition inside and out, only 2 previous owners, metallic blue, navy blue leather, full specification, electric heated rear seats, electric front memory seats and heated, cruise control, climate control aircon, electric sunroof and windows, just had full major service, MOT September 2019, ex-chairman's car, has been very well maintained, runs smooth, £5,690. Tel: 07711 358218. Email: alkhaja11@googlemail.com. Croydon [JKW28]



**S500**, long AMG body styling, AMG wheels, one owner from new, 54,000 miles, full Mercedes-Benz main dealer service, dry stored for over 5 years, just been recommissioned, drives lovely, sun roof, coms pack, electric rear seats, £POA. Tel: 07802 793000. Cheltenham [IJW4]



**SL55 AMG Komp**, last of the proper ones, only 37,000 miles, full MB service record, massive spec, panoramic glass roof, extended leather, alcantara roof lining, very luxurious indeed, Sat Nav, TV, Bose, electric memory foam heated seats with cooling, massage and heating, just had a health check at Mercedes, ball joints replaced, stunning collectable car, FMBSH, all keys, complete book packs, £24,995. Tel: 07961 808069. London [JKW29]



**W211 E55**, E-Class, 2004, immaculate, FMBSH, 43,500 miles, last serviced in May 2019, MOT until May 2020, no dents, rust, scratches or material marks anywhere, 2 previous owners, owned for 4 years, £16,500. Tel: 07958 311550. Beaconsfield [JKW27]



**SL320**, 105,000 miles, stainless steel exhaust, leather re-coloured, excellent paint, body, wheels, just spent £1,000s, new fabric hood, comes with hard top, £8,750 ONO. Tel: 07836 321353. Basildon [EFW12]

## INTERNATIONAL MERCEDES



**280SE**, auto, 1972, Mozelle Green, right-hand drive, 108,473 km's, excellent condition, original documentation available, Johannesburg based, private sale, make an offer, Tel: +27 (0)83 6474729. Johannesburg. South Africa [CM31W4]



**280SL**, 1976, orange, black interior, \$22,000. Tel: +001 56149 85600 or +001 56143 63131. Email: swolf@brooksiderealty.com. Florida [HIW5]



**600 Grosser**, 1972, LHD, Ex-USA now in Australia, very good condition, lots of recent refurbishment done including chrome, suspension and interior, drives superbly, shipping arranged, call for more information and photos, £POA. Tel: +61 397 001770. Melbourne. Australia [BCW2]



**600 Grosser**, 1972, silver, black leather interior, sunroof, new chrome front and rear bumpers, recent mechanical work done on front end, excellent condition, great to drive, hydraulics and air suspension all in first class condition, shipping can be arranged, £60,000. Tel: +61 3 9700 1770. Melbourne. Australia [CDW19]



**560SL**, totally original, 1989, white, blue interior, incredible condition, 2 owners, left hand drive, originally from Florida, spent last 15 years in Maryland, only driven in the summer, serviced by Mercedes, more recently serviced privately by head Mercedes mechanic, international Shipping included, £30,000 ONO. Tel: +1 443 660 6080. Baltimore. USA [ABW10]

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**W128**, 1959, owned since 1983, lovingly restored back to original condition, paying great attention to detail, a rare fuel injector model, only 1,974 were ever produced from 1958 to 1959, has won many awards, drives beautifully, £POA. Tel: 0061 411 188334. Sydney. Australia [ABW18]



**W121**, 1960, Australian delivery, meticulously rebuilt back to its original condition, won numerous awards including best engine bay out of 120 competitors, beautifully restored, \$57,000. Tel: 0061 411 188334. Sydney. Australia [ABW19]



**190 W201**, 2.3-16v, historic Mercedes-Benz driven by John Watson in the 1984 Nürburgring race, the car is the prototype #10 built by hand ordered by Mercedes-Benz in October 1983, registered in January 1984, model went for sale in September 1984, after the race the car went back to road trim, 1 of 20, £POA. Tel: +49 15111 130018. Barcelona, Spain [IJW5]



**420SEL**, 1987, very good condition, beautiful car, garaged, only 120,000 miles, \$6,600. Tel: 001 8182 486315. California, USA [DEW15]



**280SE**, 1969, coupe, hard top, grey, Black Interior, automatic, 6 cylinder, currently under Restoration, \$90,000 when complete. Tel: +001 56149 85600 or +001 56143 63131. Email: swolf@brooksiderealty.com. Florida **[HIW4]**



**SL500**, starts, runs, shift nice and smooth, hydraulic pump for the tops has been rebuilt and works like new, new starter put on a few days ago, receipt to prove, everything works, almost 25 years old so it's not perfect, could use a detail, £POA. Tel: 16032 641094. New Hampshire. USA **[CM30W2]**



**E200K**, estate, 2002, Avantgarde, last of W210 model, fantastic colour, full leather, automatic, soft close tail gate, tow bar, 170,000 miles, 2 key, national car test January 2020, complete service history, all switches operational, Tel: +00 353871 785355. Donal. Dublin **[JW1]**



**220 Fintail**, 1963, engine from 230S, around 70,000 miles after overhaul, disk brakes all around, long final drive ratio, needs suspension overhaul, paintjob in very good condition, minor paintwork needed, £POA. Tel: +0030 69772 08559. Email: kpapaioa@yahoo.gr. Athens. Greece **[HIW13]**



**W124 AMG**, cabriolet, auto, 1995, 1 of 14 right-hand drive AMG built car, immaculate condition, UK registered car, £61,000. Tel: +0065 65683 66817. Email: grace\_nlb@yahoo.com. Singapore **[HIW14]**



**220SE**, 1961, cabriolet, yellow (DB608), dark brown leather interior, tan canvas top, 68,000 miles, excellent condition, owned the car for over 40 years, always garaged, stored during winter months, POA. Tel: 51947 27863. Canada **[GHW9]**



**250SL Pagoda**, 1967, delivered new to Mercedes-Benz Toronto, Horizon Blue (304), navy blue top, manual transmission, original and factory fresh, always registered on the road, previously owned by M.M (figure skating champion) for 47 years, lady driven, very well preserved, 67K original miles (with ministry papers), service stamped until 43k miles, stamped from the first service at 769 miles, original keys, spare tire and tool set, engine bay parts remains 95% factory original, everything works except the power antenna, zero rust and bondo, bubbles you see are 100% paint bubbles, resprayed when it was keyed some years ago, done rather poorly through insurance, only needs new paint, tires and antenna, two piece hub-caps, white wall tires from factory (641), brand new seats and carpets were done professionally, brand new top in the exact navy blue (723), numbers match for everything including the engine, transmission, axles, and steering box, optioned with hardtop garnish molding (600), £POA. Tel: 001 (647) 937-9498. Canada **[LKW18]**



**220 S**, 1957, 64,000 miles, cabriolet, white, original red leather interior, black top, stored in climate controlled garage, purchased in Germany, shipped to the US in the 80s, all original paperwork, freight and other documentation, a truly beautiful example, drives very well, \$100,000 USD (serious offers only). Tel: +001 30387 71578. Email: Danbu208@gmail.com. Colorado, USA **[GHW18]**



**190E**, 1989, in mint condition, garage stored for all 30 years, no rust, 77,000 miles, new tires, retractable sunroof, \$4,000. Tel: +001 60980 41105. New Jersey, United States **[GHW12]**



**220 CB**, 1952, black, tan leather, restored, original overhauled engine (3,000 miles), correct top material, leather carpeted boot, original Telefunken radio, new SS exhaust, showroom condition, \$115,000. Email: mailto:syuber@gmail.com. United States **[GHW7]**



**190SL** 1959, great colour combination, older restoration, matching numbers, original Solex carburetors, Becker Europa radio, with a hardtop and soft top, \$92,500. Tel: +1 561 637 2333. Florida **[EFW12]**



**280SL**, 1984, convertible, auto, gold, 80,000 miles, hard/soft top new, very well maintained, MOT, two keys, some service history, runs smoothly, €25,000. Tel: 003534296 67632. Ireland **[EFP2]**



**320E**, 1994, cabriolet, last hand-made E Class Mercedes, 102,000 miles, wonderful condition, no scratches or dents, starts right up & runs smoothly, garage-kept, new roof runs smoothly, new radio (Mercedes radio included too), upholstery in perfect condition, \$17,300. Tel: +001 72087 85018. Email: ma\_brown@me.com. Colorado, United States **[GHW23]**



**280SE AMG**, 1983, Classicweiss (737), anthracite cloth (051), saloon, 64,949 miles, beautifully preserved Pre-Merger AMG, documented back to new delivery at the Werk Sindelfingen Mercedes-Benz plant on August 5th of 1983, never sold in the USA with factory 5-speed manual transmission, unused Oris tow package with original built sheet (included), performance and convenience AMG modifications done when new, mechanically perfect with no accidents and zero rust, \$25,850 OBO. Tel: +001 23920 47434. Florida, USA **[GHW8]**

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**W108 280S** 1971, 33,614 carefully driven original miles, no accidents, dents or scratches, car starts and runs perfectly, automatic transmission, aircon, original unrestored condition, has a few rust spots which are typical for this year, \$9,000 ONO. Tel: +1 404 435 3004 or Email: mns0613@gmail.com. Hialeah, Miami **[EFW3]**



**280SE**, 1971, 3.5, dark blue exterior, blue interior, coupe, 38,000 miles, show condition US model, DOT-mandated side marker lights removed when car repainted several years ago, originally 903 blue, now 904 dark (Midnight) blue, original blue leather & French walnut, original 38,000 miles, everything works, a truly stunning example, \$125,000 OBO. Tel: +001 41 551 70573. California, USA **[GHW10]**



**280 SL 180 G**, 1970, red leather, black soft top with hard top, Air Con, manual transmission, original Becker radio, approx. 2,500 sorting miles since restoration by marque expert in 2013, build date "8/1969" titled as 1970, 150 photos available upon request, before during and after restoration. Please contact: Dave Tobin at Tobin Motor Works NY USA call +1 607-215-0707 or dave@tobinmotorworks.com New York, USA **[CM27W19]**



**280CE W123**, rally model, 1979, 16 cyls, double overhead camshafts, fuel injection, M110 engine, 182hp, automatic, c123, coupe, racing label #789, vehicle designed by Friedrich Geiger and Bruno Sacco, 2-rear wheel drive, 2-doors, MFD by Daimler-Benz ag Stuttgart, 6-cylinders inline, double overhead camshafts, torque 235 nm (173lbf) @ 4,500 rpm, all-wheel disk brakes, MB SLK r17 alloy wheels 8j ront, 9j rear, staggered, new Sumitomo rally tires 235x50r17 tyres front and 275x45r17 rear, 4x Hella rally 500 lights special series 500w, CB radio, new front 2 x 5-point 3" red racing belts, wheelbase 106.7 inch, engine and transmission glacial protective plate, 4-speed automatic transmission 722.1, radio, cv band, a/c installed, the Mercedes-Benzenes rally Paris-Dakar 1980, Acropolis rally, Greece, 1980, up to 238 km/h, tested 120 km/h, \$19,950. Tel: +001 95477 88543. Florida. United States **[GHW16]**

**450 SL**, 1977, yellow/tan, 151,000 miles, wooden Nardi wheel, wood shift knob, built-in radar detector, both tops pristine, all maintenance records, garage kept, non-smoking female owner, \$15,000. Tel: +001 8569835457 **[GHW]**

## PARTS, MISC & ACCESSORIES



**Set of 4 Mercedes wheels**, ref. Q44013151145E17", Tarazed alloys, fitted with winter tyres Michelin Pilot Alpin, PA3 MO. 245 45 R17 99V, little used, original invoiced price £1,615.49, bought autumn 2013, £600. Email: bazanaius@gmail.com Leicestershire. **[CM31W9]**



**Set of genuine Mercedes seats**, W203 C-Class, full black leather interior, VGC front seats, working electrics for reclining and height adjustment, rear seat backrest VGC, missing a button on the middle headrest, base seat has some damage, looks like a burnt mark which was there when I got the car, out of a 2000 C240 Advantgarde, collection only, £POA. Tel: 01749 840862. Radstock **[BCW1]**

**GLA shallow boot tub**, Part No: A1568140041, in excellent condition, £35. Tel: 01455 290841. Market Bosworth **[CD]**

**2 Michelin tyres**, brand new, pilot sport 3, 225/40ZR20, £POA. Tel: 07776 228046. Crewe **[CM31]**

**E220 coupe parts**, large quantity, including internal and external trim, lights, electrics, engine, etc., to be sold as one lot, £POA. Tel: 07703 029823. Gloucester **[CM31]**



**8-hole alloys**, set of 4, in reasonable condition, suites 124 series E class and 129 SL or similar, size 8Jx16 H2 ET34, no. 124 401 14 02, £160 ONO. Tel: 01323 504532. Eastbourne **[ABW1]**



**5 x Mexican hat alloys**, Intra 6.5 Jx14, £200. Tel: 07711 327852. Saint Margaret's at Cliffe **[KLP2]**



**Winding handle**, backrest sides, 1 Pair, R107 SL, Plastichrome seat trims, part number 107 913 06 28 / 107 913 05 28, new, unused, some very slight pickling on Plastichrome, hence £20 plus P&P. Tel: 01723 864918. Scarborough **[ABW12]**



**5 spoke wheels**, black and silver, original Mercedes Benz fitment, factory TPMS, fits a 2016 AMG C43 4Matic, larger size to cover the larger discs on this vehicle, Vredestein Quattrac 5 all-weather tyres, tyres are 4-5 mm tread, front 18x7.5 225/45/18, Rear: 18x8.5 245/40/18, would be compatible with most C-Class with 18 or 19 wheels, £600. Tel: 07900 215457. Hertfordshire **[ABW17]**



**Inner seat plastic trim**, 1 pair, W116, seat belt stalk side, R/H and L/H, part numbers 116 918 02 30 / 116 918 01 30, colour code Blue (5045), new, unused. £50 ONO plus P&P. Tel: 01723 864918. Scarborough. **[ABW13]**



**Speaker grille covers**, rear parcel shelf, 1 pair, W126, part number 126 820 21 12 / 126 820 22 12, L/H and R/H, colour code blue (5076), new, unused, £50 plus P&P. Tel: 01723 864918. Scarborough **[ABW14]**



**Becker Mexico Stereo Autoradio 374**, new, never been used, warranty ticket serial number Q2108970, includes sound filter plus connecting wires package, manufacturer documents, instruction packet, brochure showing Becker's previous Autoradios, in original box, £1,000 ONO. Tel: 0208 2951643. London [ABP1]



**OE Seat base cover**, grey cloth, suit W124 series pre 1989, part number 124 910 0147, colour code grey (7135), new, unused, £150 ONO plus P&P. Tel: 01723 864918. Scarborough [ABW15]



**OE Castor bush repair kits**, 1 pair, W126, part number 126 330 1335, suit 89/90 560SEL/SEC and other W126 models, no longer available from MB, £100 plus P&P ONO. Tel: 01723 864918. Scarborough [ABW16]



**17-Inch Alloy Wheel**, Mercedes A-Class W176, B-Class W246, 225/45R17 tyre, part number: A2464011400, £120 ONO. Tel: 07936 151814. [CM30W3]



**Exhaust**, manifold, Mercedes MB track 1000, excellent condition, £POA. Tel: 07831 804009. Doagh [CM30W7]



**Complete engine/gearbox and front and back axles**, from a 1966 SEL Fintail, £1,500. Tel: 07711 327852. Saint Margaret's at Cliffe [KLP4 & KLP5]



**8 suppressor plugs**, part number: A0001565610, for a Mercedes v8 engine, new parts never used, £250 plus postage. Tel: 003 538 724 57174. Email: tbmanagement@yahoo.com. County Meath [LKW10]



**Winter tyres and alloy wheels**, set of 4, Mercedes Benz 17" 235/65/R17 108 V, from an M Class, great for winter/snow, £POA. Tel: 07956 805798. Caterham [LKW13]



**Set of Mercedes-Benz roof bars**, to fit W140 S-Class, £50. Tel: 07711 327852. Saint Margaret's at Cliffe [KLP3]



**4 x 16-inch alloy wheels**, 7 1/2 Jx16 H2, part number 140401102, suits W140 S-Class, comes with tyres 2 of which are good winter/snow tyres, £140. Tel: 07711 327852. Saint Margaret's at Cliffe [KLP1]



**E-Class alloys**, genuine Mercedes, excellent condition, full matching set of Continental winter contact tyres, fitted with 6mm tread, 235/40/r 18 95v, centre caps included, £650 OVNO. Tel: 07989 961039. Leicester [IJW17]



**Mercedes baseball cap**, leather. £10 Tel: 07975 822643. Bedfordshire [KLW18]



**R230 panoramic roof**, removed from a SL 2004 Mercedes, very good condition, black, 03 - 09 models, £500 ONO. Tel: 07828 279875. West Yorkshire [FGW9]



**W211 E320 differential**, original, estate. £250. Tel: 07975 822643. Bedfordshire [KLW17]



**W211**, E-Class, sports grille (black & chrome), fits pre-facelift cars from 2002-2006, brand new, with original fittings, £60 ONO. Tel: 07721 999642. Nottingham. [KLW3]



**Haynes workshop manual**, C-Class, 1993 to 2000, petrol & diesel, hardback, unmarked pages, like new condition, £3.95 post UK only. Tel: 07399 359072. Canterbury [KLW13]



**Mexican hat alloys**, 280SL R107, 1982, excellent condition, including long bolts, £60 each or £250 for 5. Tel: 07818 420620. West Sussex [JKW9]

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**W125 estate roof bars**, genuine Mercedes Brand new (old stock), in original packaging, part number (124 840 0218), two sets available, bargain £100 per set. Tel: 07930 009666. Stoke On Trent [HIW18]



**17" Homan wheels with tyres**, set of 4, wheels in very good order, no kerbing, tyres good, plenty of tread, 1 nearly new, removed from my 2005 R230 SL350, no centre caps, buyer collect, £295 ONO. Tel: 07708 481776. Hampshire [HIW8]



**G-Wagen Gold Portfolio**, 1981 - 2005, 160 unmarked pages, great photos, excellent condition, only £6. Tel: 07399 359072. Canterbury [GHW11]

**Interior**, W110 Fintail, red, £150 Tel: 07957 935405. Surrey [AB]

**Spare parts**, W110 Fintail, tow bar, front and rear bumpers, windscreens, £POA. Tel: 07957 935405. Surrey [AB]

**Mercedes Enthusiast Magazines**, every issue to date, all in mint condition, collection only, £200. Tel: 07771 902912. Cambridgeshire [AB]



**CL55 AMG leather steering wheel**, Never used price, £750 Ono. Tel: 07925 551590. Basingstoke [EFW6]



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**CLK430 Cabriolet** 2001, good condition, well looked after, blue metallic, good tyres, blue roof replaced two years ago, grey leather interior all good, she drives really well, 113,000 miles, serviced regularly and runs well, MOT until October 2017, new battery in June 2017, xenon conversion, Bose base boost system for music.

**E230 Coupe** 1994, blue/black over silver/grey, beige leather interior, sunroof, long MOT, very good condition, no rust, excellent engine and gearbox, lovely to drive, with many recent new parts to include, engine wiring loom, tyres, exhaust, suspension, £3,250 ONO. Tel: 07851 250111. Southampton [LKW45]

**280SL** 2000, red with cream interior, excellent condition, fully loaded, 45,000 miles, full service history, £13,750. Tel: 07800 36076. East Sussex

**123-service 230TE** 1985, seven seats, automatic, Thistle Green metallic, this is a one off, collectors car with many extras and in superb condition, current recorded mileage is 7,519, top specification, heavily loaded with many extras, steel sliding sunroof, air conditioning, all electric windows, sun dim glass, graduated tinted front shield, electric mirrors, self levelling suspension, recommended at the beginning of the year, pristine condition, £23,800. Email: geminternational@newworld.com Hampshire [LKW48]

**230E** 1984, two lady owners from new, cherished and meticulously maintained, 112,000 miles from birth, genuine, cylinder head off with brand new set of tyres, will be sold with 12 months MOT nearest office, £15,000. Tel: 01225 425096. Bath [LKW43]

**190D** 1987, manual, five-cylinder 2.5, diesel, MOT has 11 months left, 65,000 miles, good condition, blue cloth interior, sunroof, radio/cassette player, car has been owned and garaged for the last four years, £2,500. Tel: 07791 661436. Glasgow [LKW44]

**650B** 2002, factory original, LHD, imported from Germany in 2002, 47,000 miles from new, finished in rare, Tekite Grey metallic, full black nappa leather interior, complete service history, original fully stamped service book, every MOT certificate since 2005, air conditioning, Command sat nav, electric sunroof, a truly outstanding example, unmolested and still...

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the roadside junkyard owner who had a plane that'd been crash-landed on Interstate 80 in the past and was just sat rotting in his yard. Everyone was friendly, some clearly unhinged, but everyone was always happy to chat.

**It took a little over seven days, and we averaged 458 miles per day at an average speed of 55.2mph**

In seven days we stumbled upon four car shows, visited countless truck stops and maxed out on the Bonneville Salt Flats at 137mph – that, admittedly not helping much with the fuel economy. While largely following the Interstate for speed, the occasional turn-off to take some pictures, or just break up the monotony did provide some fantastic distractions. The ML, of course, drove flawlessly throughout, as did the Lexus, but it was the Mercedes-Benz that was the better, more comfortable cruiser and, no doubt to the relief of those who had set up the trip, the Benz was more parsimonious, bettering that electrically-assisted RX400h by around 3mpg over the entire journey. Had we spent a bit more time around town it might have been a slightly different outcome, but the job was done, and Mercedes-Benz used pictures from it for many years at shows around the globe as a demonstration of how good its diesel SUVs are.

# STATESIDE TO SIDE

The chance in a lifetime arose when Mercedes-Benz decided it would prove the 2005 ML320 CDI was more economical than a new rival by sending a selected team on a 3,208-mile road trip across America...

WORDS & IMAGES KYLE FORTUNE

**F**ifteen years ago, almost to the day, but the memories of one Mercedes-Benz drive remain as clear as they might had it been a few weeks ago. The big drive, a coast to coast across America, starting in New York and ending some 3,208 miles away in San Francisco. It took a little over seven days, and we averaged 458 miles per day at an average speed of 55.2mph. Over the entire journey we consumed fuel at a rate of 31.0mpg. I'll admit I had to look up those numbers, but the reason I have them saved is because the entire trip was all about fuel economy, and specifically that of a 2005 ML320 CDI.

Mercedes-Benz had a point to prove, its diesel ML was more fuel efficient than the then new kid on the block, the petrol-hybrid Lexus RX400h. What better place to prove that than in diesel-disliking America? Two MLs and one Lexus were brought along for the exercise, as was a fuel truck – US diesel then too high in sulphur for the ML's sophisticated 221bhp turbodiesel. I was there too, as were a couple of other journalists, an engineer (for all those numbers), a PR man and photographer. I'd met none of them previously, but still occasionally bump into them to this day, at motor shows or drives around the world.

Our coast to coast route would largely follow Interstate 80, the Lincoln Highway, leaving New York and going through Cleveland, Chicago, Lincoln, Cheyenne, Salt Lake City and then Reno until homing in on the final destination of San Francisco. I'll admit big parts of the drive were a little boring at times, even if US traffic always seems to throw up the odd surprise, but at every stop there was a story to be told and every single person would chat. That was the most memorable thing about the seven days on the road: the people we met.

The truckers, the bikers on their way to Sturgis, the man we were talking to when filling up at Bonneville Salt Flats who said he would be the only person we'd meet who knew where Leighton Buzzard was – coincidentally where my sister lived at the time. The lady chauffeur,

△ Driving across America to prove a point seemed like a great idea to Mercedes-Benz.

**The numbers might have been bettered, but the memories remain fresh, even some 15 years later.** Every time I see an ML, or indeed an RX400h, I'm immediately taken back to that big drive in 2005, the fun I had, the people I met and the cowboy hat I bought. On second thoughts, some things are best forgotten, and that hat is one of them...

▷ The ML topped out at an indicated 137mph on the Bonneville Salt Flats.

▽ At the finishing post in San Francisco the ML came out victorious over the Lexus.



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