
2010 Audi A8

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Launched at the Design Miami exhibition in Florida this week, the new Audi A8 is on sale in the UK now for deliveries starting next March, with prices from £54,760. As ever, Audi's flagship saloon is an aluminium construction. Although it is considerably bigger than the previous A8, Audi engineers have managed to reduce the weight by 110kg, increase the torsional rigidity by 24% and improve the official fuel consumption figures by up to 22%.

The latest **A8** is lower than all its main rivals, which include the impressively sophisticated **Mercedes-Benz S-Class**, but its generous length and width still make Audi's new model the largest car in this sector of the market. Styling changes, based on the new A4 and thereby retaining the Audi 'family' image, were aimed at achieving a more imposing, luxury appearance for the **A8**.

New **A8** interior designs have been packaged into two specification levels for UK customers –**SE** and **SE Executive**. The latter includes features such as electrically operated boot closing, the Audi Parking System Advanced with rear parking camera and larger 19-inch wheels in place of the 18-inch

design fitted to **SE** models.



Quattro 4wd with asymmetric torque distribution, and a new eight-speed **Tiptronic** transmission, including a longer top gear ratio than before, is standard on all models at launch but an ultra-economical, front-wheel drive 3.0-litre, 204PS (201bhp) **TDI** will be added during 2010. Power units, all of which have been improved in efficiency, comprise as before a wide range of petrol and diesel engines up to the most powerful **V8 FSI** and **TDI** models. Energy recuperation technology is standard in all models and the 3.0 TDI version also has engine stop-start.

All-LED headlights are now optional across the range, as is the new **Multi Media Interface (MMI)** touch-screen, and anticipatory **SatNav** system with its night vision which can spot otherwise invisible pedestrians. Also available is a sports differential, standard on the **4.2 TDI** and optional on other models, working with Audi's 'drive select adaptive dynamics' system which enables the driver to fine-tune throttle response, steering assistance and transmission shift points according to personal preferences or prevailing road conditions. A long list of options includes dynamic steering, with a variable ratio which is claimed to provide improved steering feel. Ride comfort has been improved by new suspension struts and increased capacity for the adaptive four-mode system of air springs.



The new cruise control and swivelling cornering lights are both adaptive to input from the **GPS navigation system**. Rapid advances in this technology will see an optional link to **Google Earth** during 2010, enabling **3D navigation** images. **Audi** also claims that, eventually, full Internet connection via **UMTS** will be possible, making the **A8** a **mobile WLAN hotspot**.

A basic form of **Audi's new pre-sense system** is standard in all new **A8s**. Reacting to **ESP** input, the pre-sense technology closes all windows, tensions the front seat belts and activates the hazard flashers at appropriate moments of maximum braking or skidding. More advanced pre-sense functions are available as options. How long will it be before these cars don't need a driver at all? We are not joking.



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