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[Sleeping Beauty №16: Mercedes-Benz 280 SE 3.5 Coupé](#)



Those looking for a practical, well-made classic car with a prestigious badge need look no further: the closed version of the stylish Mercedes W111/112 two-door is a car built for long journeys in comfort. Later versions were fitted with a 3.5-litre V8 and, while the convertible version is now a very expensive car to buy, its coupé cousin is just as good for a fraction of the price. At the moment..

Both coupé and convertible were built throughout the 1960s but it was only in 1969 that an eight-cylinder version became available. They were based on the older, 'fintail' model saloon so required considerable manual work by skilled craftsmen to complete them. Hence a selling price of almost double that of the saloon.

When the 3.5-litre V8 was announced, it was not the only revision: a new, lower radiator grille gave the cars a fresher look for the start of another decade. The new engine was mainly intended for the US market, and the Stuttgart company retained the six-cylinder '280 SE' badging, adding '3.5' as an indication of what lay under the bonnet.

The interior of the car was on a par with an Aston Martin or Maserati, with fine wood veneers and thick, punched leather in the typical Mercedes style of the time. Needless to say, the cost of restoration of this – and the many unique-to-the-model mechanical parts – may be expensive. However, with convertibles touching 100,000 euros, the prospect of a good coupé for a third of that has its attractions.

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