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Audi RS 3 Sportback: Five Cylinders, 4WD and 340PS



Blimey, this is going to be quick. Audi has squeezed the TT RS's engine and running gear into its five-door A3 to produce the fastest version yet.

So quick, in fact, that it should be knocking on the doors of **BMW's M3** and its sister, the **RS5**. The £39,000 car will be available to order in December (for April 2011 delivery) and must, surely, vie for the title of the 'fastest ever family hatchback'.

Motive power is courtesy of the **TT RS's** turbocharged five-cylinder **TFSI** engine. This is mated to a standard seven-speed 'S tronic' twin-clutch transmission. The 340PS and 450Nm torque are transmitted to the 19in alloy wheels (shod with 235/35 front, and 225/35 rear tyres) via **quattro** permanent all-wheel drive.



The latest **Audi** to wear the 'RS' badge will sprint from 0-62mph in 4.6 seconds. Top speed is a governed 155mph and the company claims the fire-breathing five-door has "31mpg capability".

In an effort to extract maximum performance, the new car features several weight-saving measures which include vermicular graphite (especially strong for its weight) iron for the engine block, and carbonfibre-reinforced plastic front wings. The external styling is typically 'fast Audi'; discreet with a hint of menace.



Inside the lavishly-equipped-as-standard **RS 3**, **Fine Nappa** leather (with silver contrasting stitching) sports seats cosset the passenger and driver, the latter enjoying the use of a classic flat-bottomed RS steering wheel.

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