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[Audi RS4 Avant for 2012 Geneva Debut](#)

Lead

After a four-year break, the Audi RS4 is back. Available only as an estate ('Avant') model, it not only retains the previous model's V8, but also picks up a design flourish or two from an older, four-ringed icon.

Making its debut at the forthcoming Geneva Motor Show, the new RS4 receives the same, naturally aspirated 444bhp V8 found in the [RS5](#). Interestingly, Audi uses the closely related [S5 Sportback](#) as the reason the RS4 will only be an estate. What's more, Audi's barnstorming estates have always outsold their saloon equivalents, and the manufacturer believes that the market is moving away from highly tuned four-doors.

Maybe BMW should cancel that M version of the [6 Series Gran Coupé](#), then?



So, while the [upper echelons of Audi's performance range have recently undergone a displacement diet](#), the RS4 retains the same 4,163cc capacity as its predecessor. But much has changed during the model's absence from the catalogue - not least the introduction of squared-off wheelarches, reminiscent of the Ur-Quattro of the 1980s. Other sporty trimmings include new bumpers, chiselled side-sills, 19in wheels and that Audi RS-model staple: matt-aluminium-finish door mirrors.



Inside, the colour scheme is a Henry Ford affair, although both the roof lining and sports seats can optionally be specified in Moon Silver. Behind a chunky, flat-bottomed steering wheel sit paddles for the 7-speed, dual-clutch S tronic transmission. The latest RS4 has 174mph capability (when de-restricted from the standard 155mph electronic limit) and the zero to 62mph sprint is covered in just 4.7 seconds.



The RS4 Avant will debut on the Audi stand at the Geneva Motor Show this March. It will share stand-space with the equally potent [TT 'RS plus'](#), as well as the all-new A3.

Photos: Audi

Gallery

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