

1956 Aston Martin DB2

- Lot sold
USD 194 622 - 243 277
GBP 160 000 - 200 000 (listed)
Year of manufacture 1956
- **Chassis number** AM300/1106
- **Number of seats** 2
- **Drivetrain** 2wd
- **Lot number** 2
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Engine number** VB6J/633
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Description

1956 Aston Martin DB2/4 MkII Fixed-Head Coupé
Coachwork by Tickford
Registration no. VFJ 544
Chassis no. AM300/1106
Engine no. VB6J/633

The need to widen the appeal of the already-successful DB2 resulted in the launch in October 1953 of the 2+2 DB2/4. Extensive revisions to the car's rear end arrangements made room for two occasional seats and more luggage, the latter being accessed via a hatchback rear door, one of this now-common feature's earliest applications. In addition, a raised roofline, one-piece windscreen, larger bumpers and other detail styling changes differentiated the newcomer from its predecessor. Otherwise, the DB2/4 remained much the same as the DB2, employing the latter's rectangular-tube chassis, trailing arm independent front suspension and well-located live rear axle. The W O Bentley-designed, 2.6-litre, six-cylinder, twin-cam power unit came in tuned (125bhp) Vantage specification as standard for the 2/4. Despite this, the redesign's inevitable weight gain was not fully compensated for until the arrival of the 3-litre, 140bhp engine in 1954. The car's top speed was now 118mph (190km/h) with 60mph (97km/h) reached in around 11 seconds.

David Brown's acquisition of Tickford Ltd in 1953 led to bodywork for the revised MkII model, launched at the London Motor Show in October 1955, being manufactured by the Newport Pagnell coachbuilder. For the first time there was a third body type on offer: a fixed-head coupé in 'notch back' style. Very attractive, the latter afforded accommodation similar to that of the drophead version but was priced the same as the three-door sports saloon.

While mechanically very little different from its predecessor, the DB2/4 MkII was readily identifiable by its subtly altered lines, the most significant change being a ¾" increase in roof height that afforded greater headroom. Flashing indicators and discreet tail fins made an appearance, as did chromed trim strips running from the front wheelarch tops to the door shuts, below which the bonnet sides were now fixed, thus lightening the bonnet assembly. Interior improvements included better seats and a proper fly-off handbrake. The Aston six had been enlarged from 2.6 to 3.0 litres part way through production of the DB2/4 MkI and continued unchanged in the MkII, though a special series VB6J engine suffixed 'L' or 'L1' producing 165bhp was available as an option. Of the 199 DB2/4 MkIIs produced up to October 1957, saloons accounted for the majority with 24 built as drophead coupés, 34 as fixed-head coupés and four supplied as chassis only.

One of the 34 fixed-head coupés made, 16 of which were delivered in the UK, the car we offer is one of the rarest and thus most desirable of all post-war Aston Martins. Chassis number 'AM300/1106', fitted with engine number 'VB6J/633', was delivered on 24th May 1956 via Aston Martin agent Joseph Stierli & Co to its first owner, a Dr Bergamo of Scapa SA, Stabio, Switzerland. The car was finished in the striking two-tone livery of Ice Blue with Peacock Blue hardtop and blue-grey interior, and came with partially chromium plated road wheels. Conversion from left- to right-hand drive was undertaken subsequently. The accompanying copy build sheet lists one J Copeland of Harwood House, East Grinstead, Sussex as second owner.

When acquired by the current owner more than 30 years ago, the car was in very poor condition. Since then, every aspect has undergone restoration, much of the work being carried out by renowned marque specialists Aston Service Dorset, as confirmed by their letter on file dated 30th October 1995: 'We are well acquainted with the owner's restoration of this car. We have been responsible for rebuilding the engine and gearbox, for work on the chassis, suspension and braking system and for the final fitting out of the car. We are also aware of the large sums of money expended elsewhere in repainting the car and in re-trimming the interior, all to the owner's own high standards and regard to originality. It is now a fine example of the Aston Martin DB2/4 MkII.'

In more recent years the Aston has been maintained by Wren Classics of Shaftesbury and is described by the private vendor as in generally excellent condition. The owner advises us that only some 100 miles have been covered since the restoration's completion, though it should be noted that the odometer is not working. A significant addition to any important private collection, this example of a most desirable 'factory coachbuilt' Aston Martin is offered with sundry invoices, old-style logbook, current MoT/tax and V5C registration document, the latter incorrectly recording the engine number.

Bonhams 1793

Title Mr

First name Bonhams Collectors' Car department

101 New Bond Street

London

W1S 1SR

United Kingdom

Phone +44-2074685801

Fax +44-2074477401

<http://www.bonhams.com>

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