The AUSTIN A95 de Luxe (With Automatic Transmission)

Two-Pedal Control and Over-90 m.p.h. Performance Offered by a Roomy and Competitively Priced Car

OFFERING many of the most attractive virtues of a big car, the Austin A95 is a model which cleverly avoids many of the limitations which make purchase of a big car impracticable for large numbers of motorists. Genuinely roomy and with exceedingly comfortable furnishing, it has the fast and effortless gait which small cars find hard to imitate. On the other hand, its overall width is conveniently moderate for narrow country lanes or crowded city traffic, its overall length is not so great as to exaggerate the problems of parking and garage space, and it sells at a price which bears comparison with much more starkly utilitarian models. Including the purchase tax charged in Britain, the tested version with a fully automatic transmission and de luxe equipment sells for little more than £1,200, and acceptance of a simplified specification allows the same basic car to be obtained for less than £1,000.

Improved to an extent so large that it should really be judged as a new model, the Austin A95 nevertheless has behind it the factory's experience with the A90 which was introduced in October 1954. Engine power has gone up, the wheelbase has been lengthened, and much improved appearance as well as higher speed and greater roominess have been secured, but the relationship to an earlier model remains close enough to suggest immunity from teething troubles.

In an age of close-coupled saloons with limited rear-seat headroom and legroom, the genuine spaciousness of this model requires emphasis. A driver with really long legs can adjust the driving seat to make himself truly at ease, and even then the amount of kneeroom available for back seat passengers remains adequate. Rear-seat headroom is well above average, foot-room in the rear compartment is ample, and overall width at both front and rear is enough to make three-abreast seating truly practicable even if not to invite it as a regular practice. Behind this spacious body, quite a big luggage locker (unobstructed by the spare wheel) has a low-loading flat floor, and at the front of the body a full-width parcel shelf below the facia panel supplements a rather shallow lockable cubby-hole. The lid of this cubby hole opens flat to serve as a picnic table.

With a raised compression ratio since last year, but still a single carburetter in contrast to the two carburetters of the faster A105 model, the 2.6-litre six-cylinder Austin engine now develops substantially more power without becoming in any way fussy or temperamental. On the nicely chosen rear axle ratio which goes with the automatic transmission, we recorded a timed maximum speed of 92 m.p.h. (a clear 5 m.p.h. improvement upon our last test of an A90), 80 m.p.h., which represents fractionally over 4,000 r.p.m. being a reading which appears quietly and almost uninvited on the near-accurate speedometer when one is driving at less than full throttle on open roads. It is not unfair to say that the A95's willingness to run fast contributes to an overall fuel consumption of only 20 m.p.g. being recorded despite a demonstrable ability to give 24½ m.p.g. when cruising at 60 m.p.h. on level going. At low speeds the model submitted for test was not altogether silent, our impression being that some minor fault such as a loose silencer baffle had developed in the exhaust system.

In Brief

Price (including automatic gearbox and de luxe equipment, as tested) £810 plus purchase tax £406 7s. 0d. equals £1,216 7s. 0d.

Price with synchromesh gearbox and without de luxe equipment (including purchase tax), £998 17s. 0d.

Capacity	2,639 c.c.
Unladen kerb weight ...	27 cwt.
Acceleration:	
20-40 m.p.h. in Drive range	4.4 sec.
0-50 m.p.h. through gears	13.3 sec.
Maximum direct top gear gradient	1 in 10.4
Maximum speed	92.0 m.p.h.
"Maximile" speed	87.7 m.p.h.
Touring fuel consumption ...	23.1 m.p.g.

Gearing: 19.8 m.p.h. in top gear at 1,000 r.p.m.; 33.9 m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed.

Two-Pedal Driving

Our test car was fitted with the very attractive optional extra feature of a fully-automatic transmission, comprising a hydraulic torque converter, and a three-speed epicyclic gearbox operating in accordance with car speed and throttle opening. It cannot be doubted that such very creditable figures as acceleration from rest to 50 m.p.h. in 13.3 seconds could be bettered by an expert driver using the alternative 4-speed synchromesh gearbox, the high rotary inertia of the torque converter obviously taking some "snap" out of the car's getaway. For the normal motorist who rarely operates a gear lever in the manner necessary to get utmost

AMPLE legroom and headroom remain in the rear compartment with virtually any setting of the individually adjustable front seats. Fixed armrests on the doors, and folding central armrests, are provided in both front and rear compartments, and the rear doors have safety catches which can be set to prevent them being opened accidentally by children.

The AUSTIN A95 de Luxe

performance, however, this transmission gives very brisk performance without over-revving of the engine, in response to simple pressure upon the accelerator pedal. The automatic transmission shows up to greater advantage on steep hills than in acceleration on the level, pulling the fully laden car smoothly and briskly away from rest on a 1 in 4 hairpin corner where by no means every car will find both the tractive effort and the wheelgrip to make a re-start.

Accelerated away from rest at full throttle the test model changed up from 1st to 2nd gear at 34 m.p.h., and went into top gear at 57 m.p.h. The highest cruising speed at which pressing the accelerator down to the floor would cause a change down from top to 2nd gear was 50 m.p.h. Extra roominess and much enhanced appearance are by no means the sole advantages which have accrued from the lengthened wheelbase of this model, which also sits down on the road in a much more confident manner than did its predecessors. With the same 59/41 distribution of unladen weight between front and rear axles as previously, it nevertheless contrives to escape from the former A90 model's tendency to spin the inside rear wheel if accelerated whilst still cornering. In no sense a sports car, this model shows a restrained degree of roll and tyre squeal if cornered really hard, but behaves excellently within the range of normal driving and holds naturally to its course on straight and almost-straight roads. Needing only 3¼ turns from lock to lock, the steering has a large and well-placed wheel, and whilst not light during low speed manoeuvres the steering is never so heavy as to embarrass a lady driver. There is quite good self-centering action, but the top of the big steering wheel can come into the line of vision of a short-bodied driver.

The "big car" air of this model is partly a result of its riding characteristics, for whilst the ride is not as smooth as in some modern cars (perhaps because of sturdily heavy axles and brakes increasing the unsprung weight), the moderately firm springs seem able to cope with any surface and any load without strain, the suspension certainly being at its best in fast main-road running. Seats which are not merely well-shaped, but which also have a pleasant yet not exaggerated degree of foam-rubber softness, do much to enhance riding comfort. Our test model was subject to a certain amount of shake on any road surface over a narrow band of speeds around 65 m.p.h., originating apparently in the front suspension although not producing kick in the steering, but the front wheels had not been individually balanced so there is probably a ready cure for this.

Since the automatic transmission does not allow use of 2nd gear to assist the brakes down long hills, but only 1st gear with its useful limit of 35-40 m.p.h., the

IMPROVED performance including a top speed of over 90 m.p.h. comes from raised compression ratio in the 2.6-litre six-cylinder engine. Low loading on to a flat floor is a feature of the luggage locker, the tools having their own shelf above the 16-gallon fuel tank.

need for ample braking power on this over-90 m.p.h. model is accentuated. With 188 sq. in. of lining area, in drums of 11-inch internal diameter which almost fill the 15-inch road wheels, few owners will find any cause for complaint, although a tendency for the rear wheels to lock before maximum front braking effort has been applied increases somewhat when repeated hard applications have warmed up the front brakes. For ordinary retardation, very moderate pedal pressures suffice and the braking is completely smooth. Somewhat hidden behind the steering wheel, the pull-out handbrake proved properly effective.

Reference has already been made to the comfortable driving position, and whilst the facia panel (which like the edge of the parcel shelf now has its top padded with leather-covered rubber) is less tidy than some, the spacing and varied nature of the minor controls avoid risk of confusion between them after dark—tiny lights glow to show the positions of the starter, choke, screen wiper and panel lighting controls as soon as the ignition is switched on. There is a good ashtray on the facia panel, and two ashtrays behind the front seats which by their fragility and proximity to the knees of passengers cry out for redesigning. The horn ring also was unreliable in action on the test car, and we found it wiser to use the central button. The big rear window made reversing easy, and a big rear-view mirror also took full advantage of it.

A minor annoyance on the test car which might be accentuated in winter weather was the incompatibility of the fast idle provided by the choke with an automatic transmission, half a minute of warming up being wise, to allow the choke to be pushed almost home before attempting to manoeuvre the car in confined spaces. Somewhat sudden response to initial movement of the throttle meant that rather delicate use of the right foot was needed to "inch" the car along really smoothly in stop-go traffic.

BROAD and curved, the rear window is big enough to make reversing easy. Direction signal flashers have amber lenses, spaced apart from the red stop and tail lamps.

Apart from foglamps and windscreen washing sprays, the A95 de-luxe saloon has very full and practical equipment. The interior heater and screen de-mister has its air intake duct incorporated in the bonnet top so that it does not obstruct access to the engine, and for really hot weather there is a by-pass around the heater element as well as a water tap. The instrument panel mounted in front of the driver carries the speedometer, fuel level, oil pressure and coolant temperature gauges, and there is a clock, although no ammeter is provided. Windscreen wipers when switched off go to the end of their travel before stopping. The flashing turn indicators have amber lenses which cannot be confused with the stop lamps, and the side-lamps are on the wing where they can be seen by (but do not dazzle) the driver. Folding armrests are provided on the individual front seats as well as at the centre of the rear seat. The interior rooflight, which operates as soon as a front door is opened, also has a switch on it accessible from any seat in the car.

Whilst petrol rationing has during recent months concentrated public attention upon small cars, it cannot be doubted that the moderately large car, of competitive performance yet reasonable in price, also continues to be needed all over the world. By introducing this brisk and comfortable model, with options in respect of equipment and transmission type, the Austin factory seems likely to claim a very wide slice of the market, both in Britain and in other parts of the world.

Specification

Engine

Cylinders	6
Bore	79.4 mm.
Stroke	89 mm.
Cubic capacity	2,639 c.c.
Piston area	46.2 sq. in.
Valves	Pushrod, o.h.v.
Compression ratio	8.25/1
Carburetter	Zenith 42 VIS downdraught
Fuel pump	AC mechanical
Ignition timing control	Centrifugal and vacuum
Oil filter	Full-flow
Max. power	92 b.h.p.
at	4,500 r.p.m.
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	2,625 ft./min.

Transmission

Clutch	Fluid torque converter
Top gear	3.91
2nd gear	5.63
(With maximum torque conversion, 12.1)	
1st gear	9.03
(With maximum torque conversion, 19.4)	
Reverse	7.85
(With maximum torque conversion, 16.9)	
Propeller shaft	Open with needle-roller universals
Final drive	Hypoid bevel, 11/43
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m.	19.8
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed	33.9

Chassis

Brakes	Girling hydraulic, 2 l.s. front
Brake drum internal dimensions	11 in. x 2¼ in.
Friction lining area	188 sq. in.
Suspension:	
Front	Independent by coil springs and wishbones
Rear	Semi-elliptic leaf springs and anti-roll torsion bars
Shock absorbers	Lever-arm hydraulic
Steering gear	Cam and peg
Tyres	6.40—15 (tubeless)

Coachwork and Equipment

Starting handle	Not provided on cars with automatic transmission
Battery mounting	On right of engine
Jack	"Steadylift" bipod, bevel-geared
Jacking points	External, one on each side of body

Standard tool kit: Jack, combined jack-handle and wheel brace, key for lowering spare wheel tray (replaces starting handle), tyre pump, grease gun, screwdriver, sparking plug spanner, ignition feeler gauge, tappet feeler gauge, tyre valve key, tool bag.

Exterior lights: 2 headlamps, 2 sidelamps, 2 stop/tail lamps, number plate lamp.

Number of electrical fuses	Two
Direction indicators	Amber front and rear flashers, self-cancelling
Windscreen wipers	Twin-blade electrical, self parking
Windscreen washers	Optional extra
Sun vizors	Two, universally pivoted

Instruments: Speedometer with decimal trip distance recorder, fuel contents gauge, oil pressure gauge, coolant thermometer, clock.

Warning lights: Dynamo charge, headlamp main beam, direction indicators.

Locks:	
With ignition key	Ignition, luggage locker, petrol filler cap, either front door
With other keys	Glove box
Glove lockers	One on facia, with lid
Map pockets	None
Parcel shelves	One below facia panel, one behind rear seat
Ashtrays	One front, two rear
Cigar lighters	None
Interior lights	One in roof, with courtesy switches on front doors.
Interior heater	Fresh air type, with screen de-misters
Car radio	Optional extra
Extras available	Radio, screen washers, foglamps
Upholstery material	Leather facings, p.v.c. on non-wearing surfaces
Floor covering	Pile carpet

Exterior colours standardized. Six basic colours, some with alternative flash colours.

Alternative body styles: Standard saloon. Same model available with 4-speed synchromesh gearbox, with or without overdrive. A105 model has twin-carburetter engine in same basic car.

Maintenance

Sump	12 pints, S.A.E. 30 (below freezing, S.A.E. 20)

Automatic gearbox and torque converter: 15 pints automatic transmission fluid (to fill, add 10 pints, idle engine for 1 minute before adding further 5 pints).

Rear axle	3 pints, S.A.E. 90 hypoid gear oil
Steering gear lubricant	S.A.E. 90 gear oil
Cooling system capacity	25 pints (2 drain taps)
Chassis lubrication	By grease gun every 1,000 miles to 19 points
Ignition timing	5° after t.d.c. static
Contact-breaker gap	0.014-0.016 in.
Sparking plug type	Champion N88 long-reach 14 mm.
Sparking plug gap	0.025 in.

Valve timing: Inlet opens 5° b.t.d.c. and closes 45° a.b.d.c.; exhaust opens 40° b.b.d.c. and closes 10° a.t.d.c.

Tappet clearances (hot):	
Inlet and exhaust	0.012 in.
Front wheel toe-in	0-¼ in.
Camber angle	¾°-1°
Castor angle	1½°
Steering swivel pin inclination	7°
Tyre pressures	Front and rear, 25 lb.
Brake fluid	Girling (Crimson)
Battery type and capacity	Lucas GTW9A, 12-volt, 51 amp./hr.

Make: Austin **Type:** A95 de-luxe (with automatic transmission)
Makers: Austin Motor Co. Ltd., Longbridge, Birmingham.

Test Data

CONDITIONS: *Weather: Mild and dry with light breeze. (Temperature 47°—61°F., Barometer 30.1—30.2 in. Hg.) Surface: Smooth tarred macadam and concrete. Fuel: Premium-grade pump petrol, approx. 95 Research Method Octane Rating.*

INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h.	1% slow
Speedometer at 60 m.p.h.	1% fast
Speedometer at 90 m.p.h.	1% fast
Distance recorder	accurate

WEIGHT

Kerb weight (unladen, but with oil, coolant and fuel for approx. 50 miles)	27 cwt.
Front/rear distribution of kerb weight	59/41
Weight laden as tested	31 cwt.

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Mean of flying laps of banked circuit	92.0 m.p.h.
Best one-way timed ¼-mile on straight	93.7 m.p.h.

"Maximile Speed" (Timed quarter mile after one mile accelerating from rest)

Mean of four opposite runs	87.7 m.p.h.
Best one-way time equals	88.2 m.p.h.

Speed in Gears (Automatic change-up speeds at full throttle)

Max. speed in 1st gear	34 m.p.h.
Max. speed in 2nd gear	57 m.p.h.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

31.0 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h. on level.
29.5 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h. on level.
27.0 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h. on level.
24.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h. on level.
22.0 m.p.g. at oonstant 70 m.p.h. on level.
18.5 m.p.g. at constant 80 m.p.h. on level.

Overall Fuel Consumption for 1,090 miles, 54.5 gallons, equals 20.0 m.p.g. (7.1 litres/100 km.)

Touring Fuel Consumption (m.p.g. at steady speed midway between 30 m.p.h. and maximum, less 5% allowance for acceleration), 23.1 m.p.g.

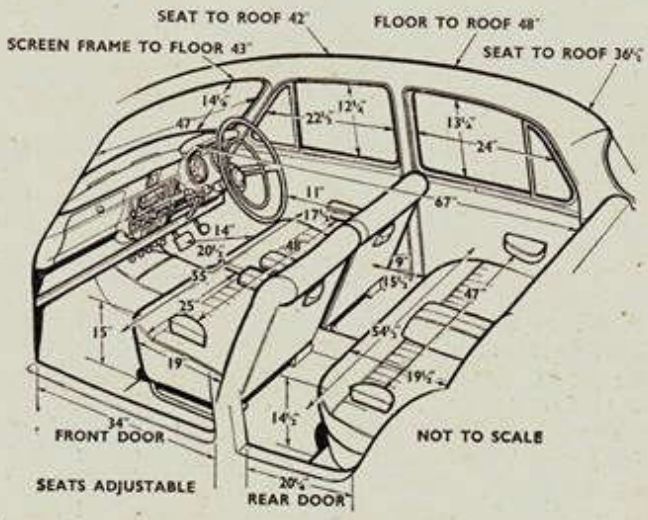
Fuel tank capacity (maker's figure) 16 gallons.

STEERING

Turning circle between kerbs:

Left	38 ft.
Right	37½ ft.

Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock 3½



ACCELERATION TIMES from standstill

0-30 m.p.h.	6.0 sec.
0-40 m.p.h.	9.2 sec.
0-50 m.p.h.	13.3 sec.
0-60 m.p.h.	18.9 sec.
0-70 m.p.h.	28.6 sec.
0-80 m.p.h.	41.5 sec.
Standing quarter mile	22.1 sec.

ACCELERATION TIMES in "Drive" range

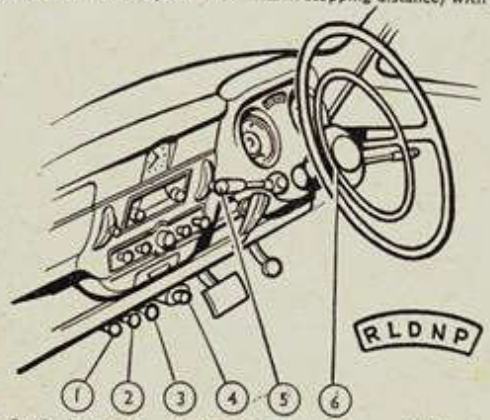
0-20 m.p.h.	3.8 sec.
10-30 m.p.h.	4.4 sec.
20-40 m.p.h.	5.4 sec.
30-50 m.p.h.	7.3 sec.
40-60 m.p.h.	9.7 sec.
50-70 m.p.h.	15.3 sec.
60-80 m.p.h.	22.6 sec.

BRAKES from 30 m.p.h.

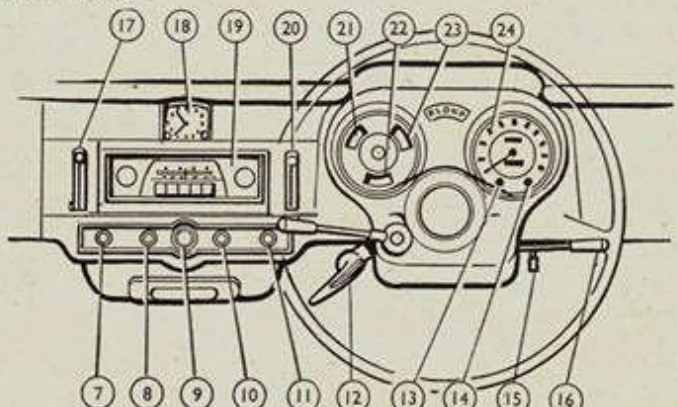
0.93g retardation (equivalent to 32½ ft. stopping distance) with 110 lb. pedal pressure.
0.78g retardation (equivalent to 38½ ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure.
0.62g retardation (equivalent to 48½ ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure.
0.27g retardation (equivalent to 112 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure.

HILL CLIMBING at sustained steady speeds

Max. gradient on top gear approx. 1 in 10.4 (Tapley 215 lb./ton)
Max. gradient on 2nd gear approx. 1 in 6.7 (Tapley 330 lb./ton)



1, Fresh air control. 2, Bonnet catch release. 3, Heater fan switch. 4, Headlamp dip switch. 5, Transmission selector lever. 6, Horn ring and horn button. 7, Choke control. 8, Panel light switch. 9, Ignition and lights switch. 10, Windscreen wipers control. 11, Starter switch. 12, Handbrake. 13, Headlamp high beam indicator light. 14, Dynamo charge warning light. 15, Trip re-setting knob. 16, Direction indicator switch and warning light. 17, Demister control.



18, Clock. 19, Radio controls. 20, Heater air control. 21, Coolant thermometer. 22, Fuel contents gauge. 23, Oil pressure gauge. 24, Speedometer and distance recorder.