

Rover Sport: Power at a price

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CARS.COM

When I first reviewed the Range Rover Sport, I said it had a nice chassis but wouldn't blow you away with its acceleration. Since then, I've driven the 2009 Range Rover Sport with a supercharged engine, and the difference is notable.

Most folks I know don't live on drag strips, but they do have to merge and pass on the highway, and that's where this car shines. What's interesting is that it also shines in the day-to-day duties most of us put our cars through.

The Range Rover Sport is a different car from its sibling, the Range Rover. It sits a lot lower and it's about 7 inches shorter in length, about an inch narrower and 3 inches shorter in height.

The interior features some very nice wood trim and high-quality leather and carpeting. The seats are some of the more comfortable ones in any SUV or car I've driven.

There's plenty of headroom, even with the moonroof, and that helps you sit more upright if that's your thing.

With the supercharger, the Range Rover Sport makes nearly 400 horsepower, which helps when passing and

2009 Range Rover Sport

Starting MSRP: \$58,375 to \$71,825

merging.

Mileage, as is to be expected with a large SUV, isn't so hot: The EPA estimates it at 12/18 mpg city/highway. Oh, and it requires premium gas. Don't buy this thing unless you can afford to drop a good bit of cash when you fill up.

The steering requires a light touch; in my book, Land Rovers have the perfect steering setup for luxury SUVs. It's very, very light when moving around a parking lot and during other low-speed maneuvers, and there's not a lot of play in the steering. I think the best way to sum all this up is to say that when you drive a Range Rover Sport, you don't feel like you're driving a slow, wallowing pig of a truck. You just feel like you're driving a big, tight car — and I mean that as a compliment.



LAND ROVER

The Range Rover Sport: Like driving a "big, tight car."

