

## Audi 80

Featuring 2.0E



**A**T A CASUAL GLANCE, THE NEW AUDI 80 looks little changed from its predecessor. But apart from bigger wheels and a new Audi family grille, there's a major improvement at the rear, under the cleverly hinged bootlid.

Where, before, the load space was awkwardly shaped and largely dominated by the upright, full-sized spare wheel, this fourth generation Audi 80 now has a bigger, much better shaped boot. Split-folding back seats are now included, too.

It's taken some major re-engineering to achieve this, though. The new 80 gains about 3½in in overall length, most of which goes into the floorpan, ahead of the rear wheels. The rear suspension has been completely redesigned for improved ride comfort and less intrusion into the boot space, while the fuel tank and spare wheel are relocated under the boot floor. The tank used to be mounted upright behind the back seats.

The new-look "small" Audi now comes with a choice of four, five or six-cylinder engines, but the

Audi 90 name (previously denoting five-cylinder models) has been dropped. All models are now called 80, whatever the engine.

The four-cylinder, 2.0-litre engine offers 90 or 115bhp, or 137bhp in the 16-valve version. The five-cylinder 2.3-litre produces slightly less power than the 16-valve 2-litre, but has slightly higher maximum torque, while at the top of the range, a muscular 174bhp V6 (first installed in the latest Audi 100) brings six-cylinder smoothness to the Audi 80 for the first time.

Audi's pioneering quattro four-wheel drive system is available on the 16-valve and V6 versions, while diesel power is represented in the new range by a four-cylinder, 1.9-litre turbo-diesel. Featuring direct injection (for maximum efficiency) and fitted with an oxidation catalyst to reduce emissions, this produces 90bhp and a substantial 134 lb ft of torque.

The 80's superb build quality and solid, reassuring feel create an immediately favourable impression, though the dark, rather sombre interior is a

# Living with the Audi . . .

little less welcoming. Despite having added nearly 3in to the wheelbase, there's no extra room for back seat passengers, but the introduction of split-folding back seats greatly increases load-carrying flexibility.

The new Audi 80 may provide more luggage space, but it's put on quite a bit of weight in the process. So, although the 2 litre is smooth and subdued, and feels reasonably willing in the mid-range, the extra weight has blunted its get-up-and-go. Maximum speed remains unchanged at 118mph, but its acceleration now feels more like that of a good 1600 rather than a 2 litre.

The Turbo-diesel feels pretty lethargic, too, but its performance is quite adequate once you've learnt to let the abundant torque do the work. It's also one of the quietest diesels you'll find, incidentally.

The extra weight, together with comparatively low overall gearing, takes its toll on fuel consumption, the 2.0E giving a rather disappointing 32<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>mpg overall.

Revised suspension and the switch to larger, 15inch wheels has improved ride comfort, but the 2.0E's expensive VR-rated tyres tend to feel knobbly over bumps around town and are noisy on coarse surfaces.

Apart from the new boot, the cabin remains much as before. This is no bad thing, thanks to a good driving position and well laid-out controls, although the pedals and steering wheel are set rather high for some drivers.

This is quite an expensive car to buy and there's a long list of costly optional extras, but a catalytic converter and important safety related items, including ABS brakes, are all standard.

Although the new 80 doesn't look dramatically different from its predecessor, it proves to be more practical and appealing than ever.

## At the Wheel

### Driving position

Firm, well-shaped seats provide comfortable support at the wheel with generous rearward travel offering ample legroom, even for taller drivers. Headroom isn't over-generous, even with the driver's seat-height adjuster set fully low, and shorter drivers found both the non-adjustable steering wheel and pedals set rather high.

### Controls and displays

Clear, sensible instruments present accurate information to the driver, and warning lamps are grouped prominently between the two major dials, where they can be clearly seen. The clutch is a trifle weighty but provides a smooth, well-cushioned take-up of the drive, while the short, chunky gear lever allows accurate though slightly notchy navigation around the cogs. The quality feel of the switchgear never fails to impress, and there's one less column stalk to worry about nowadays, as the hazard-warning switch has been moved to a more central (though less fingertip-convenient) location above the heater controls.

### Vision

The prominent bonnet-line creates a bit of guesswork for shorter drivers, while the four head restraints cause similar problems when reversing. That aside, vision is generally good and we like the neat electric door mirror control and electric headlamp load-levelling trimmer on the fascia. Both are standard on all models, as are heated windscreen washer jets.

### Driver satisfaction

While some cars reward the driver with hot-hatch handling or a superb engine, the Audi 80's appeal is more in its refined, "limousine" approach. There's

one snag, though: the absence of underbonnet activity and wind noise highlight quite prominent road roar over coarse surfaces. Performance and go-faster handling don't feature highly among the 80's priorities – not in 2-litre form, at least – but the feeling of solid, high quality leaves a lasting impression.

## Space & Comfort

### Seating and ride comfort

The firmly upholstered seats offer good location and support, but although legroom is reasonably generous, headroom is a little restricted. The revised suspension and switch to bigger wheels have noticeably improved the ride, which provides fluid but well-damped progress over most surfaces. The VR-rated tyres tend to fret and thump over pot-holes around town, though.

### Getting in and out

This is helped by the 80's wide-opening doors, with neat, plastic trims to protect the sills from unsightly scuff marks. Central locking is standard on all models and provides convenient (and silent) operation of the boot lid and door locks, as well as securing the fuel-filler flap.

### Luggage and oddments stowage

Relocating the "furniture" at the back means much better use of the load space compared with the old model, although the total volume is only slightly improved and depth under the parcel shelf is a little restricted. But there's a full 39in square available with the back seats in place, and the added versatility of split-folding back seats, now that the fuel tank has been moved out of the way. Loading is now easier, too, thanks to a raised load-deck and the 80's novel pantograph-type boot hinge. This eliminates intrusion into the load space and swings the bumper-level extremity well clear

## PERFORMANCE

### Acceleration time in seconds

STANDING START	0-30mph	0-60mph	1/4 mile
	3.7	11.4	18.4

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		2.0	4.4	7.7	11.5
IN 5TH GEAR		5.8	11.4	17.0	23.0
IN 4TH GEAR		4.3	8.3	12.5	17.2

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		12.0/8.8		11.2/8.2	
		11.4/8.3			11.6/8.9

### Maximum speeds

REV'S PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
	1	2	3	4	5
	29	50	73	109	118
	6000*	6450	5680		
					mph

\*for best acceleration

## FUEL CONSUMPTION

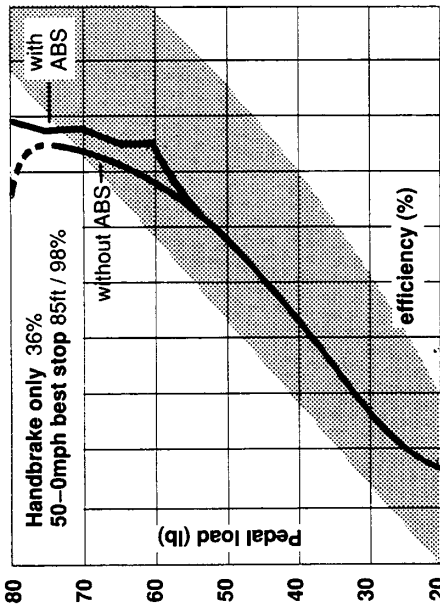
Fuel grade for tests: unleaded, 95 octane

Normal range	mpg
Hard driving, heavy traffic	27 1/2
Short journeys in the suburbs	26
Motorway - 70mph cruising	34
Brisk driving, mixed roads	33
Gentle driving - rural roads	35 1/2
<b>Typical mpg overall</b>	<b>32 1/2</b>
Realistic tank range*	66 litres/470 miles

\*based on gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience

## SAFETY

### Brakes How pedal loads affect braking



Braking efficiency shown as a percentage of gravity (ie 100% = 1.0g). Ideally the braking curve should fall within the shaded zone of this graph. If it's above, the brakes are too heavy; if it's below, they are too light - particularly on cars without ABS. When the curve becomes broken, the wheels are skidding.

### Fade test

How hard use or water affects braking. (Ideal brakes show no change.)

### Pedal load needed for 75% stop (lb)

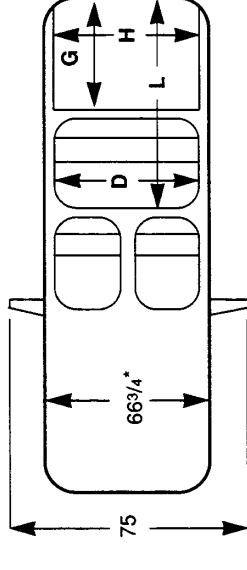
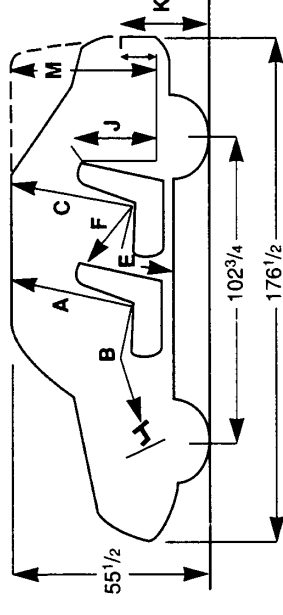
38	At start of test
45	After constant use
44	After severe use
-	After watersplash
-	Number of stops to recover

### Safety check list

Steering	true 'feel' of the road?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brakes	powerful?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	sensible effort?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	fade resistant?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Seatbelts	front - effective?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	convenient?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	rears - effective?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	convenient?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head restraints	front - effective?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	rear - effective?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interior	thoroughly padded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fuel	shielded filler?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	protected tank?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## MEASUREMENTS

### Dimensions (inches)



\* with mirrors folded

### Inside (inches)

A Front headroom (with sunroof)	35 1/4-38	G Load length	39
B Front legroom (min - max)	34-43 1/4	H Load floor width (min - max)	39-51 1/2
C Rear headroom	36	J Load height	18
D Back seat width (between armrests)	48 3/4	K Sill height (inner/outer)	3 1/2/22 3/4
E Typical rear * legroom	40	L Load length (max)	70
F Typical rear * kneeroom	29	M Load height (to tailgate hinge)	NA

\* "Typical" represents the mean measurement behind the driver's seat set at 39in legroom and the passenger's seat set at 41in

of forehead-clouting range when open. Oddments spaces inside the car are varied and plentiful, with most of them soft-lined to prevent annoying rattles.

### Heating and ventilation

With rear footwell ducts, no-nonsense rotary dials and facia vents here, there and everywhere, the heating and ventilation system promises a great deal. It doesn't fully meet expectations, though, as the airflow is quite feeble unless you resort to the higher fan speeds, and warm air from the facia vents makes it difficult to attain an ideal warm feet/cool face compromise. The electrically operated tilt-and-slide steel sunroof fitted to the test car helped to gee-up the airflow, but costs extra on all models – around £500 if you wind it yourself, but nearly £1000 for the electrically operated one.

## Safety

### Accident avoidance

Despite the 80's rather uninspiring handling, its power steering and grippy tyres give a safe, surefooted feel, with no nasty surprises in store at the limit. All-disc brakes provide firm, well-weighted responses over an unusually generous range of pedal loads, so rendering the anti-lock control – standard throughout the range, incidentally – almost redundant. Curiously, our Continental-tyred test car didn't deliver quite as impressive all-out stops as we've experienced on similarly shod Audis in the past, though the set-up is still a fine example to many.

### Injury prevention

Conscientious safety padding, head restraints all round and well-fitting seatbelts (with height-adjustable shoulder mounts at the front) bear testimony to Audi's exemplary approach to secondary safety. Additionally, there's the company's ProCon-Ten safety system, which uses steel cables to tension the front seatbelts and pull the steering wheel away from the driver in a frontal impact. Also standard are door impact bars that provide increased passenger protection from side-on crashes. Short of adding airbags, there's not much more Audi could do on the safety front; even a first aid kit and warning triangle are included.

## Money Matters

### Value for money

Despite a substantial price cut a few years ago, the 80 is still quite expensive and has a long list of costly extras. Equipment levels seem sparse compared with many rivals, though in reality they're not; it's just that Audi has adopted a different set of priorities. Depreciation has proved low in the past, reflecting the model's well-deserved reputation for longevity.

### In service

The underbonnet layout doesn't look very tidy, but the essentials are all easy to get at. Items such as hydraulic tappets, long-life spark plugs and automatic belt tensioners allow 20,000-mile intervals between major services, with just an oil change/"inspection" visit required annually. Parts are expensive, but the 10-year anti-rust

warranty is exceptionally generous, and the 80 is covered by VAG's "On Call" emergency service. This provides free breakdown recovery for up to six years, as long as the car is serviced by a dealer.

### Fuel economy

The Audi's substantially increased kerb weight takes a toll here. There's more metal to get moving and accelerate up to speed, and comparatively low gearing is needed to extract reasonable performance from the engine's modest power output. Consequently, the 2.0E delivered a rather disappointing 32<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>mpg overall in our tests, compared with 35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>mpg for a previous-generation 2-litre Sport with similar gearing. There's no low-fuel warning lamp, unless you opt for the optional Autocheck vehicle monitoring system, but its absence is no great hardship, thanks to a reliable fuel gauge.

## Durability

### Rust prevention

A 100 per cent galvanised body (backed by hassle-free, 10-year anti-rust and three-year paintwork warranties) gets the Audi off to a fine start in resisting the ravages of time. Close inspection reveals careful and methodical attention in all the right places.

### Build quality

Audis feel immensely solid and well screwed together, and have an enviable record to confirm that they stay that way. Everything has a hewn-from-solid feel to it, with evidence of careful design and construction wherever you look.

## HOW IT COMPARES

	Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Max speed (mph)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes best stop (%g/lb)	Maximum legroom – front (in)	Typical leg/kneeroom – rear (in)	Steering † turns/circle (ft)	Overall length (in)
Audi 80 2.0E (c)	1984/115	118	11.5	23.0/17.2	32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	99/80*	43 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	40/29	3.2/36	176 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Ford Sierra Sapphire 2.0EFI GLS	1998/125	117	9.7	21.0/15.2	32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	105/30*	42	39/31	2.8/35	176
Peugeot 405 1.9GTxi	1905/125	119	10.1	25.0/16.9	34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	104/27*	42 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /30 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	3.1/34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	173 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Vauxhall Cavalier 2.0i CD	1998/115	123	8.9	25.5/17.4	37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	93/32	42	38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /28 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	3.5/34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	174 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
VW Passat 2.0GL (c)	1984/115	121	10.7	24.3/17.7	35	95/37	43	43/32	3.3/33	180
Audi 80 B3 (previous model) 2.0 (c)*	1984/115	118	10.6	19.5/16.0	35 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	102/40	43 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	40 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /28 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	3.1/34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	173

\* Performance figures for 2.0 Sport (c) catalyser fitted

\* with ABS

† all power-assisted

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

### ENGINE

**Type and size** front-mounted, longitudinal 4 in line; water-cooled. 82.5mm bore x 92.8mm stroke = 1984cc. Iron block and aluminium alloy head; 5 main bearings

**Compression ratio** 10.4:1

**Valve gear** single belt-driven overhead camshaft actuating two valves per cylinder via hydraulic bucket tappets

**Fuel system** VW Digifant electronic multi-point fuel injection, three-way regulated catalyser, lambda sensor. 66-litre (14.5-gallon) tank; no low-fuel warning lamp. (Low-fuel warning on test car via optional Autocheck system.) Fuel required: unleaded only, 95 octane minimum

**Ignition system** fully programmed electronic (with selective knock control) integral with fuel system via coil and distributor

**Maximum power** 115bhp at 5400rpm

**Maximum torque** 122 lb ft at 3200rpm

### TRANSMISSION

**Clutch** 9.0in dry plate, diaphragm-spring; hydraulically operated. Pedal load/travel: 25 lb/6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in

**Gearbox** 5-speed (all synchromesh) and reverse. Ratios: first 3.55, second 2.10, third 1.43, fourth 1.03, top 0.84 and reverse 3.50:1. (4-speed automatic optional)

**Final drive** 4.11:1, to front wheels

**Mph per 1000rpm** 20.8 in top, 16.9 in 4th

**Rpm at 70mph** 3370 in top gear

### CHASSIS

**Suspension** front: independent by MacPherson damper/struts, coil springs, lower wishbones and an anti-roll bar. Rear: semi-independent by torsion beam axle, coil springs and an anti-roll bar. Dampers: telescopic all round

**Steering** power-assisted rack and pinion with 3.2 turns between full locks. Turning circles average 36ft between kerbs, with 54<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ft circle for one turn of the wheel

**Wheels** 6J x 15 steel with 195/65R15 91V tyres (Continental CV90 Super Contact on test car)

**Brakes** 9.6in solid discs front, 7.9in solid discs rear with vacuum servo and Bosch 3-channel ABS

