

# Land Rover Discovery

Featuring Td5 GS Automatic



## SCORECARD

Overtaking / pulling power

●●●○○

Fuel economy

●●●○○

Handling / steering

●●●●○

Comfort / ease of control

●●●●○

Interior space / practicality

●●●●○

Accident / injury avoidance

●●●●○

Costs in service

●●●○○

Depreciation prospects

●●●●○

**T**HE LATEST DISCOVERY IS THE MODEL'S first complete redesign since it was introduced ten years ago. It's a radical one, too, with a completely new body – except for the tailgate.

It's wider and longer than the old model and laden with "dynamic control systems". These include self-levelling air suspension with optional anti-roll activators that enable the big Disco to be hurried round bends with hardly a trace of body roll.

This set-up allows softer springs to be used, but the ride, though comfortable on smooth surfaces at speed, can become lumpy and fidgety on broken B-roads. It's a question of compromise, of course, because off-road, the ride over ruts and rocks is superb.

There's no sudden kickback through the modified steering, either, which is accurate enough for the driver to negotiate narrow country road gaps with confidence; it's quite low-g geared, however, Traction control is provided and there's a formidable array of braking wizardry, with ABS, electronic braking distribution and an ingenious hill descent control.

Two engines are on offer: a brisk but thirsty 4.0-litre V8 (17mpg if you're lucky) or the more popular 2.5-litre turbo-diesel that we chose, together with a sweet-shifting optional extra automatic transmission. They make a rather appealing combination that exudes languid, "don't rush me" affability. This five-cylinder derv-burner is a big improvement over the old four-cylinder lump in both

performance and refinement – except for an unpleasant growl at about 3000rpm.

The "command" driving position feels just right, with improved forward vision and easily reached controls in the revised fascia. Some of the switches remain plasticky, but there's an aura of well-built solidity and a quality feel to the interior. Excellent automatic air conditioning was fitted to the test car, together with two glass sunroofs, and there are numerous storage spaces throughout. There's even a "curry hook" for your takeaway!

A narrow rear door gap makes entry and exit awkward (mind the mucky back tyre!), but once aboard, back seat passengers are provided with impressive room all round. Pity, though, that the split-folding backrest, which gives huge cargo space when hinged forward, proves too upright for some.

A pair of forward-facing occasional back seats are available on all but the base model, in place of the former, less-safe sideways-mounted perches. Equipped with three-point seatbelts and head restraints, they're ideal for children (even adequate for adults on short journeys) and stow neatly into the recessed flanks when not required.

Vastly improved and hugely competent, the latest Discovery is teeming with new technology that makes it safer, better handling and more pleasing to drive than the old model, not only on tarmac where it shines, but also on the rough stuff where it's brilliant.

## PERFORMANCE

**Acceleration** time in seconds  
using accelerator kickdown

mph	30	40	50	60	70
<b>THROUGH THE GEARS</b>		2.9	6.5	11.7	18.1

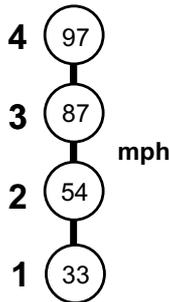
20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
<b>SPEED RANGES USING KICKDOWN</b>		4.8	8.8		
			6.4	11.6	

## Maximum speeds

using accelerator kickdown

REVS PER MINUTE	1st/2nd	3rd	4th
	4200	4225	3350

2610rpm observed at 70mph on a level track = 26.8mph per 1000rpm in top gear



## FUEL CONSUMPTION

Fuel grade: diesel	
<b>Type of use - air conditioning off*</b>	<b>mpg</b>
In the city - heavy traffic	16
In the country - quiet driving	31
<b>Typical mpg overall</b>	<b>25</b>
Realistic tank range†	about 86 litres/475 miles

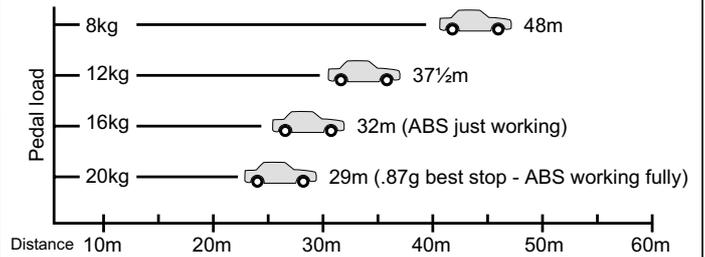
† based on fuel gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience - not nominal tank capacity

\*with air conditioning switched on, consumption will increase by 2-4% in winter and 4-8% in summer

## BRAKES

Pedal feel ●●●○○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●●○○ Handbrake ●●●○○

Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with standard ABS)  
(A good-to-average best stop is about 26m at 15-20kg pedal load)

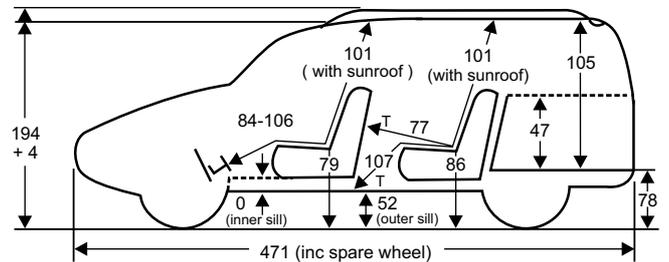


Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop:  
10kg at start of test, 16kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

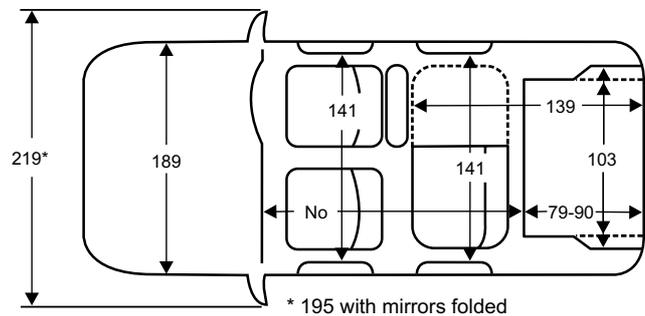
## MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres

Five-door 4 x 4



T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants



## LIKES AND GRIPES

- |                                                                    |     |                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Commanding view with good forward and side vision                  | ... | but spare wheel and (removable) head restraints narrow rearward view |
| Steering column adjustable for height                              | ... | but not reach, and it favours tall drivers                           |
| Instruments clear and easy to see, with kph switchover on odometer | ... | but tricky to decipher heat/vent display screen in bright light      |
| Well-placed pedals, and there's a footrest                         | ... | but accelerator has a long travel                                    |
| Switches flanking instrument nacelle within easy reach             | ... | but some warning lights tiny and hidden by driver's hands            |
| Remarkable absence of tyre noise                                   | ... | but wind hiss from window frames at speed                            |
| Superb range from big fuel tank                                    | ... | but it costs a small fortune to fill!                                |