

Rover 75

Featuring 2.5 V6 Automatic



SCORECARD

Overtaking / pulling power

●●●○○

Fuel economy

●●●○○

Handling / steering

●●○○○

Comfort / ease of control

●●●●○

Interior space / practicality

●●●○○

Accident / injury avoidance

●●●○○

Costs in service

●●●○○

Depreciation prospects

●●○○○

IS THIS ROVER 75 THE GERMAN IDEA OF what an executive British saloon should look like? In some ways the sleek, chrome-bedecked exterior styling is more evocative of Jaguar than P-series Rovers of the fifties. Inside, burr walnut (the real thing), parchment-coloured dials and oval shaping everywhere sets the style, with leather-clad seats on our top of the range Connoisseur.

The 75's exterior dimensions position it between the 600 and 800 models it replaces but inside, it lacks a surfeit of space – rather, four adults (who aren't too tall) are given ample comfort. There's a proper seatbelt for a fifth person, but seat shaping and a prominent centre tunnel (on a front-wheel drive car!) impinge. The boot (with plastic-clad six-inch sill) has the same capacity as the departing 800, with a full-sized spare beneath.

We have to admit that this top-drawer model's extras work very well – and are easier than most to fathom, as well. The acoustic parking aid in reverse is invaluable because you can't see much.

Out on the open road, the 75 reveals that it's a softy at heart – driver-enthusiasts seeking pin-sharp responses

should look elsewhere. What it is good at is deporting itself over surface wickedness with exceptional composure, although undulating surfaces traversed at speed can provoke some heaving motion.

The engines are impressive – even the smallest 1.8. Our 2.5 V6 is optimum with the five-speed automatic transmission, but the two-litre manual version is both swift and ultra-smooth; it's a sensible price-conscious alternative that knocks £4500 off the price with Club trim.

The (Japanese-sourced) automatic is very capable of self-selecting the right ratio, but lacks the latest, Tiptronic-type manual selection facility. Likewise, the air-conditioner is fully automatic, with side-to-side temperature variation and lots of cold, ambient air from the face vents if required – very British.

Everyone kept looking at – and saying approving things about – our test car. Apart from the nostalgia-on-wheels thing, the 75's engines, suspension and sheer insularity guarantee comfort and effortless deportment in timeless fashion. And if you prefer more excitement, the BMW badge is in the same family. It looks like a shrewd move.

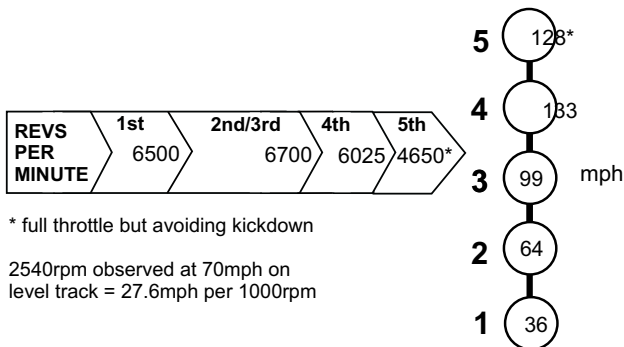
HOW THE 75 COMPARES	Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes* best stop (m/kg)	Maximum legroom - front (cm)	Typical leg/kneeroom - rear (cm)	Steering turns/ (p) circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
ROVER 75 2.5 V6 (auto)	V6/2497/177	2540	9.3	auto	28	24 /22	114	100/77	3.2/11.35	475
Alfa Romeo 166 2.0	4/1970/155	3500	9.6	24.3/16.7	29	27 /18	110	103/76	2.3/11.9	472
BMW 520i	6/1991/150	3280	9.8	26.9/19.7	33	23 /18	116	103/76	3.0/11.0	478
Toyota Camry V6 (auto)	V6/2995/188	2600	8.8	auto	24	26/18	107	109/79	3.1/11.6	476
Audi A6 2.4	V6/2393/165	3100	8.8	21.6/15.2	30	23/19	109	100/74	2.8/11.2	480
Mercedes Benz E240 (auto)	V6/2398/170	2950	9.7	auto	26	26/16	120	112/79	3.2/10.6	479
All four-door saloons						* all with ABS			(p) all power assisted	

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration time in seconds
- using accelerator kickdown

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS					
		2.0	4.0	6.3	9.3

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
SPEED RANGES USING KICKDOWN					
		3.0		4.4	
			4.0		5.3



* full throttle but avoiding kickdown

2540rpm observed at 70mph on level track = 27.6mph per 1000rpm

FUEL CONSUMPTION

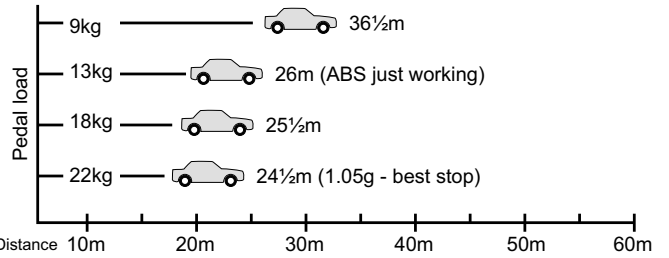
Type of use - with air conditioning off*	mpg
Urban (17mph average/heavy traffic)	17
Suburban (27mph average/6.4 miles from cold start)	20½
Motorway (70mph cruising)	34½
Cross-country (brisk driving/20 miles from cold start)	27
Rural (gentle driving/20 miles from cold start)	29½
Typical mpg overall	28

*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 ●●○○○

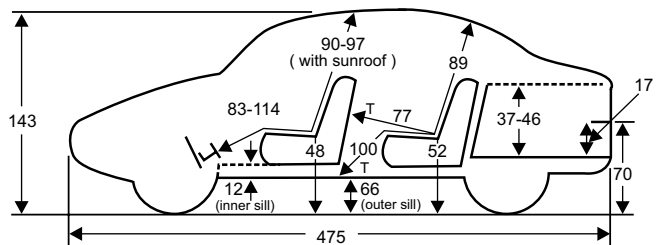
Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with standard ABS)
(A good-to-average best stop is about 26m at 15-20kg pedal load)



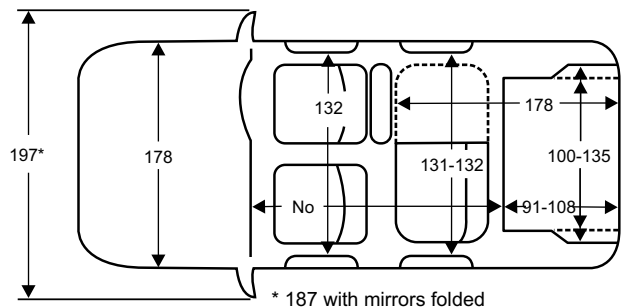
Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g stop):
10½kg at start of test, 12½kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres Four door saloon



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



LIKES AND GRIPES

- Effective electric seat adjusters ... but passengers tend to yank the control knobs off
- Stable cornering ability ... but steering rather unwieldy
- Air con works well on "Auto" ... except for too-prolonged use of air recirculation mode
- Doors open wide ... but they're too heavy and sill protection is scant
- Gas struts for bonnet and boot ... but luggage can't be made secure from interior
- Sunroof is buffet-free ... but hardly necessary with full air-con
- Full-size spare wheel on all 75s ... but it may only be a steel one
- Roomy, rattle-free oddments spaces ... but large cargo can't be handled - limited load height