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THE NEW AUDI TT COUPE

A cult car and an icon. From the day it made its U.S. debut in autumn 1999, the Audi TT took the sports coupe segment by storm, sharpening the brand's profile in the process. Now the second generation of this successful model is making its debut. The new TT Coupe embodies sheer dynamism in its design, engine output and performance.

The exterior design

The first generation TT has become a milestone in automotive design, an icon. The design adhered to pure geometric lines, embodying a functional purity and austerity harking back to the Bauhaus style of the 1920s. The core motifs were the circle and the curves of the roof line and front and rear overhangs. This timeless architecture guaranteed that the Audi TT was an eminently recognizable presence on the road and simultaneously gave decisive momentum to the development of the entire brand.

Audi has lovingly retained and stylishly enhanced the TT's genetic code. On the new TT the geometric shapes merge fluidly into a uniform whole. A low, narrow greenhouse is supported by slim pillars sitting on broad, powerful shoulders. The base body beneath is compact in looks, conveying a feeling of confidence and strength. The convex and concave curves of its surfaces lend it the character of an athletic sculpture straining forward.

The front end has gained greater expressiveness and resolve. The single-frame radiator grille serves as its defining element. The large air inlets hint at the potential of the engines, and the sharply cut, sloping headlights emphasize the car's mature appearance. The rear styling, characteristic of the TT, conveys power and dynamism through its wide wheel arches. The lights generate a three-dimensional effect thanks to their visual depth. The powerful exhaust tailpipes, the wide diffuser and the centered rear fog light echo the world of motorsport.

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When the new Audi TT is stationary, its electrically operated rear spoiler is visible only as an unobtrusive lip. When the car reaches a speed of 75 mph, the spoiler is extended in a two-dimensional curve motion, thereby improving the downforce on the rear axle. When the car's speed drops below 50 mph again, the spoiler automatically retracts. The underbody design also helps to reduce lift.

The interior

The original TT was itself one of the few coupes on the market to offer genuine sports car design in its interior. In the new model, too, the fluid dynamism of the exterior is echoed in the interior.

A sweeping line provides a transition between the interior trim of the door and the instrument panel. It embodies the classic circles motif of the TT in a number of ways, such as in the three center air vents. All lines converge in the instrument cluster, with its two large scales for speed and revs. New features include a large digital speedometer in the display of the driver information system.

The new standard-spec sport steering wheel fits snugly in the driver's hands. Its solid rim, trimmed in high-grade leather, is flattened at the bottom similar to the Audi R8. The driver's and front passenger's sports seats are fitted even lower down than in the predecessor model, providing a truly sporty seating position allied to firm side restraint. Like the steering column, they can be adjusted longitudinally and in height, offering a perfect sporty seated position for every driver.

The body

The new Audi TT, like its predecessor, is initially available as a 2 + 2-seater coupe; a roadster model is scheduled for later launch. The dynamic impression that it creates stems from its modified proportions. The coupe is 5.4 in. longer and 3.1 in. wider than its predecessor, but only 0.2 in. higher. It is now 164.5 in. long, 72.5 in. wide and 53.5 in. high. The TT's wheelbase is 97.2 in.

The interior, too, has benefited from this increase in size: by 1.1 in. in front shoulder width to 53.2 in. and by 0.9 in. in rear shoulder width to 47.5 in. In the basic configuration, the luggage compartment beneath the large lid accommodates 13.1 cu. ft. of luggage. It grows to approximately 24.7 cu. ft. when the rear seat backs are folded down, and its length of 66.9 in. is ample for two golf bags. With these practical characteristics, the TT Coupe sets standards in its class.

The body of the new TT is constructed using the Audi Space Frame (ASF), a ground-breaking aluminium technology developed by the company in the early 1990s for the first A8 series. The ASF combines aluminium and steel for the first time. Aluminium accounts for 69 percent of the weight of the body. Fully galvanized steel components are located principally at the rear of the floor panel. The doors and luggage compartment lid also are made of steel. This ensures that the axle loads are distributed evenly, thus considerably improving vehicle handling.

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The bodyshell of the TT weighs 454 lbs., 308 lbs. of which is aluminum and 146 lbs. steel; were it built entirely of steel, it would be 48 percent heavier. Its low weight is one of the key factors behind the impressive road behavior of the new TT Coupe. The unladen weight of the TT 2.0T is just 2,965 lbs. – placing it at the forefront of this performance class. And the 3.2 quattro weighs only 3,218 lbs.

The new-style ASF on the Audi TT features properties that are truly worthy of a genuine sports car. Its static torsional rigidity has been improved by approximately 50 percent over its predecessor. In terms of crash safety, the new TT is utterly uncompromising.

The drivetrain

The new Audi TT is powered by two transversely installed engines – a four-cylinder turbo (TFSI) and a V6. Both units provide it with high levels of power and performance. Their performance enables the TT Coupe to perform impressively on the road.

The optional S tronic dual-clutch gearbox and standard quattro drive for the V6 – both of them exclusive technologies in the sports coupe segment – transmit the engine's power into propulsion.

The four-cylinder turbo engine (TFSI), develops its power from a swept volume of 1,984 cc (2.0 liters). An international jury of experts voted it “Engine of the Year” for two years in succession, in 2005 and 2006 – praise indeed for its innovative technological package. The TFSI combines the Audi-developed gasoline direct injection technology FSI, which has impressively demonstrated its superiority in the R8 racing car, with a turbocharger – a perfect combination.

The four-valve engine responds spontaneously to the throttle and is ultra-refined. It puts 207 ft.-lbs. of torque onto the crankshaft even at engine speeds as low as 1,800 rpm, and is able to keep this high level of torque constant up to 5,000 rpm. The nominal power output of 200 hp is delivered between 5,100 and 6,000 rpm. The 2.0 T accelerates the Audi TT Coupe from 0 to 60 mph in just 6.1 seconds with the standard S tronic dual-clutch gearbox.

Even more power is on tap from the V6 engine, with its 3,189 cc (3.2 liters) capacity. It develops a maximum torque of 236 ft.-lbs. between 2,500 and 3,000 rpm, and at 6,300 rpm delivers a power output of 250 hp. The characteristic features of the long-stroke unit are the continuous adjustment of all four camshafts – by 52 degrees on the intake side and 42 degrees on the exhaust side – and the extremely narrow cylinder angle of just 15 degrees.

On the road, the 3.2-liter V6 unit reveals itself to be high-torque and high-revving. It produces a fascinatingly sonorous response at every engine speed, emphasising above all the intake sound. The TT 3.2 quattro sprints from a standing start to 60 mph in 5.3 seconds with S tronic, 5.5 seconds with the standard manual transmission.

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The standard-spec transmission is a six-speed manual gearbox in a weight-saving magnesium casing. A technical highlight, and a unique feature in its class for the TT, is the optional S tronic dual-clutch gearbox. The system's dual-clutch technology enables it to change gear in just 0.2 seconds, producing no discernible interruption to the power flow. In manual mode, the driver does the gear-changing, either by tapping the selector lever or by pulling one of the shift paddles mounted behind the steering wheel, like on a racing car.

The four-cylinder TT is a front-wheel-drive model, while the V6 features permanent four-wheel drive. Its quattro drive system operates with an electronically controlled and hydraulically actuated multi-plate clutch. In order to improve the distribution of axle loads, the clutch is placed at the rear of the TT. The mechanical construction and control efficiency of the unit have been further enhanced relative to the predecessor model. In normal conditions, the clutch directs 85 percent of the torque to the front wheels, but in extreme circumstances it is able to transmit as much as 100 percent of the forces to one of the two axles.

The chassis

The sport suspension on the new TT Coupe also helps to deliver top-class dynamics. This is thanks in part to its elaborate layout, as well as its 0.4 in. lower center of gravity. The Audi dynamic suspension layout has been redeveloped and retuned. Emphasis has been placed on the wider track, the larger wheel cross-sections with diameters ranging from 17 to 19 inches and the extensive elastokinematic measures.

The front suspension is pivoted on an aluminium subframe. It has a wide track of 61.9 in. The steering comprises a rack-and-pinion assembly that supplies its electromechanical servo assistance as a function of road speed. The steering is characterized by direct transmission and a high degree of precision.

A new feature compared with the torsion-beam design of the predecessor is the four-link rear suspension with a track of 61.3 in. In this instance, the coil springs and shock absorbers are separate. The trailing links absorb the propulsive and braking forces. As an aid to ride comfort, their configuration is relatively soft.

On the other hand, the three wishbones per wheel are connected rigidly in order to introduce the transverse forces into the body precisely.

The TT 2.0 T features 17-inch cast aluminium wheels, fitted with 225/50 R 17 tires as standard. The 3.2 quattro features forged 17-inch lightweight alloy wheels, fitted with 245/45 R 17 tires. All Audi TT models are fitted with newly developed disc brakes on every wheel. The new brake pads develop particularly high friction coefficients that improve brake responsiveness and performance. The newly developed electronic stabilization program is designed to maintain a dynamic driving style that promotes the TT's self-steering behavior, which is in the range of neutral to slightly understeering. This sporty characteristic delivers thrilling agility, maximum driving fun and magnificent handling.

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Audi's high-tech damping system, Audi magnetic ride, is available as an option. It is an innovative technology that resolves the age-old conflict between comfort and driving dynamics. The shock absorber pistons on the TT do not contain conventional oil, but instead use a magneto-rheological fluid in which microscopically small magnetic particles are enclosed. When a voltage is applied to them, they alter the damping characteristics within milliseconds. This adaptive system simultaneously maintains astonishingly high levels of ride comfort and thoroughly sporty dynamism with perfect roll stabilization, according to the specific driving scenario and the preferences of the driver. The driver can choose between the basic programs "Standard" and "Sport" at a switch. None of the TT's competitors offers a similarly advanced technological concept.

The equipment

All variants of the new Audi TT Roadster come generously equipped as standard, with the new 140 watt audio system, a driver information system, automatic climate control, aluminum trim, cruise control, tilt and telescoping flat-bottom three-spoke steering wheel, and automatic wind deflector.

A comprehensive list of options includes a S line package featuring aggressive body styling, special interior trim, and 19-inch alloy wheels. Audi Magnetic Ride adds electronically controlled dampers that adjust in milliseconds to driver input for a sporty or comfortable ride. 18-inch alloy wheels are available on all models for sportier handling characteristics. DVD-based navigation is optional and uses Audi's MMI technology.

An optional Enhanced Interior Package adds fine Nappa leather covered upholstery, door trim, armrest, and hand brake. The storage package is part of the enhanced interior package and does not include the ski bag.

The Audio package includes a 255 watt, 12-speaker audio system with noise compensation and Sirius Satellite Radio.

Another special option is the Audi Exclusive Interior package that includes black leather seats with colored leather seat inserts, door inserts, and stitching. Available colors are Silver, Signal Orange, Crimson Red, and Saddle Brown.

Xenon plus headlights with the adaptive light cornering function also can be found on the extensive list of equipment options. They are fitted in conjunction with a headlight styling package that Audi includes as standard on the 3.2 quattro and optional on the 2.0T.

An optional iPod[®] interface also is available. It is located in the glove box to help protect the iPod and keep it out of sight. The adapter also charges the iPod while it is connected and the car is turned on.

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For photos and more information on the new TT and other Audi models, please visit www.media.audiusa.com.

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