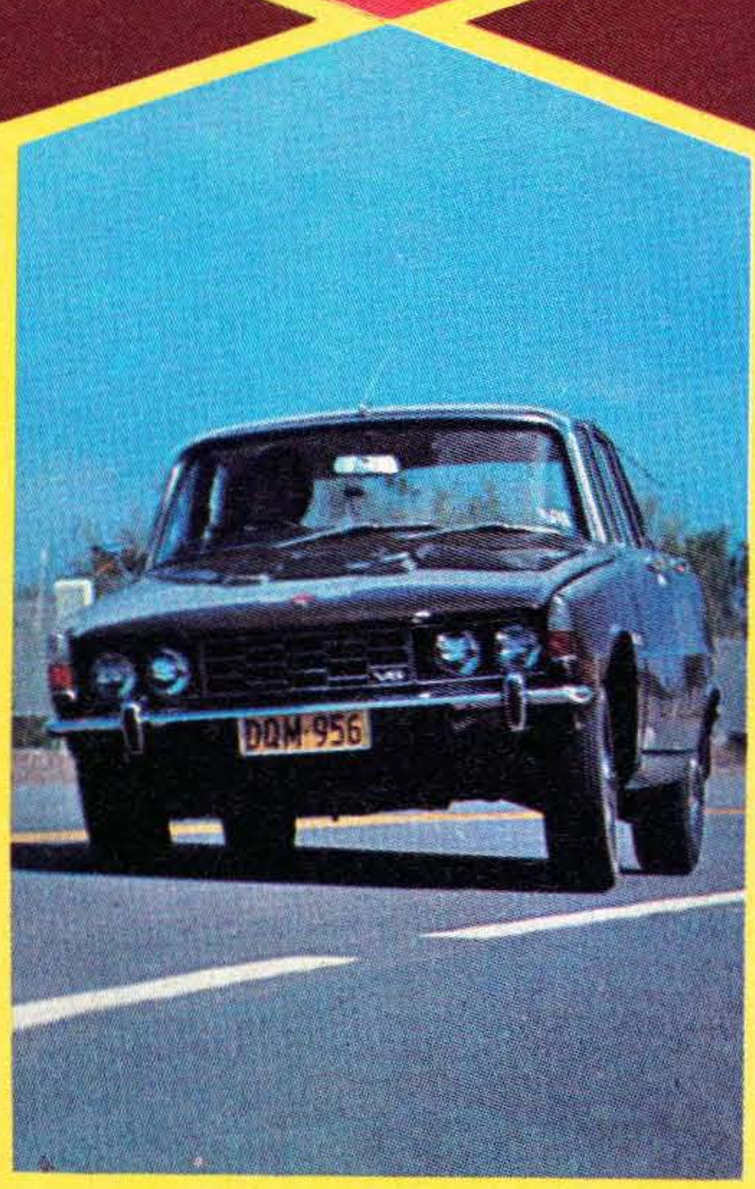
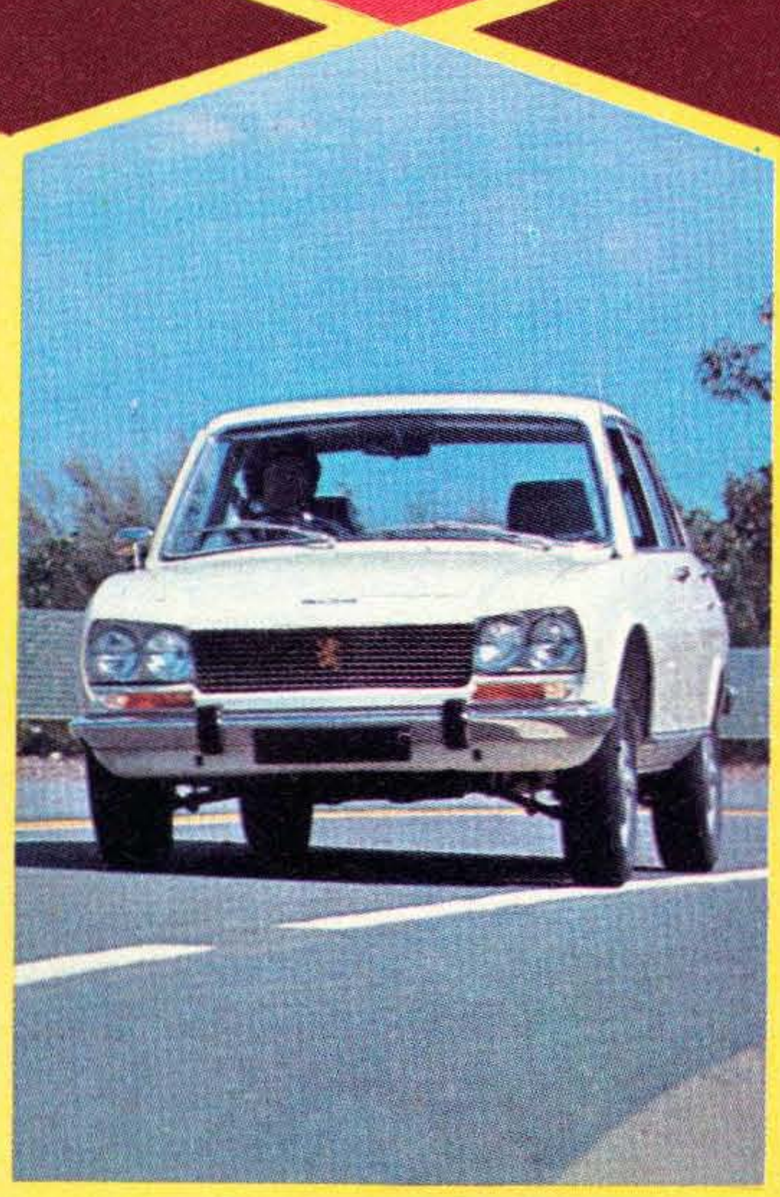
BMW 3.0S

ROVER 3500 V8

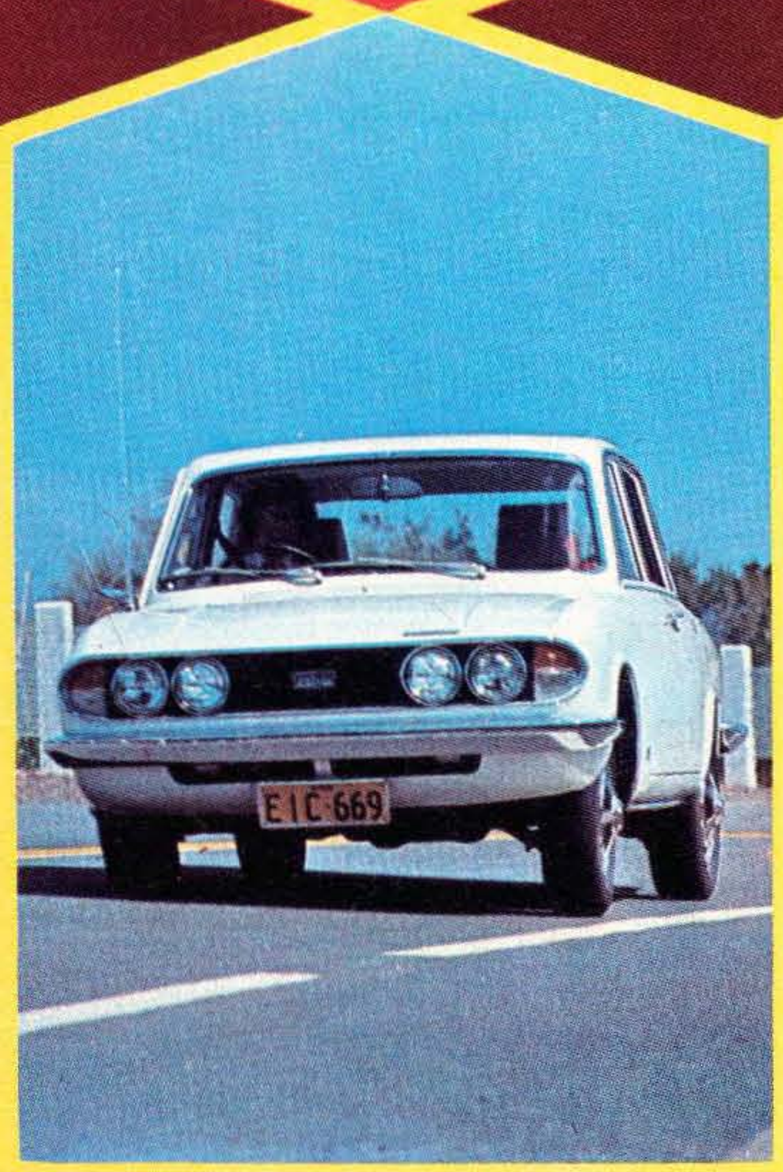
PEUGEOT 504





LUXURY 6

TRIUMPH 2.5PI



VOLVO 164E

JAGUAR XJ6 4·2

Modern MOTOR

giant 6-way luxury car test

Triumph Rover BMW Peugeot Jaguar Volvo

LUXURY6

PRESTIGE, performance and price have their various impacts on the purchasing habits of Australia's motorists in the luxury car class. We stack-up six cars in a comprehensive workout that explodes some popular fantasies . . .

THE ENTIRE LUXURY car class accounts for little more than an average 3 percent of the total vehicle market in Australia, and at its maximum, a mere 3.4 percent of the top State markets (NSW and Victoria).

Yet this market sector attracts enormous attention. There are numerous reasons, including the surprising number of units sold for such a small country (Mercedes, the dearest car in the class sells more units per capita in Australia than any export territory in the world).

This category also attracts considerable attention for its high prices, its variety, its dream-appeal for the average motorist, or simply because of its pure glamor and prestige.

It is also an area of automotive marketing where the quality aspects of vehicle engineering take priority over the commercial aspects — something that doesn't entirely typify the mass vehicle markets.

You will therefore find that all brands are involved in proclaiming advanced safety design in some area of their advertising programs.

Motorists are offered such bonuses as "totally relaxed driving", "wall-to-wall luxury", "complete silence", and buyers can be assured of actually receiving them on purchase of the product — something that isn't always the case with the general run of mass market advertising fibbery.

The whole program of marketing reflects a refreshingly un-hysterical approach, so that a potential customer can seriously indulge in the business of selective buying without wading through masses of distorted brochure lingo and other forms of literary pollution.

TRIUMPH boot is fully carpeted, with spare under floor but has high loading lip. It took the standard Samsonite test pack except for the two No 1 (largest size) cases.

TRIUMPH 2.5PI

Cylinders: .....6, in-line
Bore & Stroke: .....2.94in. x 3.74in.
Capacity: .....152 cu in.
Compression: 9.5:1
Aspiration: ..... Lucas, fuel inj.
Max. power: . . 132 (SAE) bhp @ 5450rpm
Max. torque: .....152lb.ft @ 2000rpm
Transmission: ..... Automatic
Final Drive Ratio: 4.1:1
Suspension, Front: ..... Ind. coils. MacP. w'bones
Rear: ..... Ind. coils semi-trail arms
Wheels: 5.5
Tyres: 185HRX13
Steering, type: ..... Rack & pinion
ratio: ..... —
turns lock to lock: 4
Brakes, type: .....disc/drum, servo
size: .....Disc 9.75/9in.
Turning circle: 34ft
Overall length: ..... 15ft 2.5in.
height: .....4ft 8in.
width: .....5ft 5in.
Wheelbase: .....8ft 10in.
Track, front: ..... 4ft 4.5in.
rear: ..... 4ft 4.87in.
Ground clearance: .....6in.
Weight: 2629lb
BHP/ton: 112

VOLVO boot is biggest of all — takes spare in sidewell plus all test cases except one No 3 and spare can still be reached. It has vinyl floor.

VOLVO 164E

Cylinders: .....6, in-line
Bore & Stroke: .....3.5in. x 3.1in.
Capacity: ..... 181.2 cu in.
Compression: 10.0:1
Aspiration: ..... Bosch, fuel inj.
Max. power: . . 175 (SAE) bhp @ 5800rpm
Max. torque: ..... 177lbft @ 2500rpm
Transmission: ..... Automatic
Final Drive Ratio: 3.73:1
Suspension, Front: ..... Ind. coil springs unequal length w'bones
Rear: .....Coil springs, anti-roll bars
Wheels: 5½Jx15
Tyres: 165HR15
Steering, type: .....Cam & roller power assisted
ratio: 15.7:1
turns lock to lock: 3.7
Brakes, type: ..... 4 disc, servo h'brake drum
size: .....10.7/11.6in.
Turning circle: .....32ft 10in.
Overall length: ..... 15ft 5.2in.
height: ..... 4ft 8.6in.
width: ..... 5ft 8.3in.
Wheelbase: ..... 8ft 11.1in.
Track, front: .....4ft 5in.
rear: .....4ft 5in.
Ground clearance: ..... 6.5in.
Weight: 2912lb
BHP/ton: 139

JAGUAR boot looked shallow, took all cases except two No 1. The spare is stowed under the floor, boot is poorly finished in vinyl.

JAGUAR XJ6 4.2

Cylinders: .....6, in-line
Bore & Stroke: .....3.625in. x 4.1732in.
Capacity: ..... 288.4 cu in.
Compression: 8:1
Aspiration: .....Twin HD8 SU
Max. power: ..... 245 (SAE) bhp @ 5500
Max. torque: .....283lb.ft @ 3750rpm
Transmission: ..... Automatic
Final Drive Ratio: 3.54:1
Suspension, Front: ....Ind. coils, w'bones, anti-roll bar
Rear: . .Ind. coils, t'verse links, radius arms half shaft upper link
Wheels: 6x15
Tyres: E70VR15
Steering, type: ..... Rack & pinion power assisted
ratio: ..... —
turns lock to lock: 3½
Brakes, type: ..... 4 disc, servo
size: .....11.8/10.4in.
Turning circle: 36ft
Overall length: ..... 15ft 9.6in.
height: ..... 4ft 4.8in.
width: ..... 5ft 9.75in.
Wheelbase: .....9ft 1in.
Track, front: .....4ft 10in.
rear: ..... 4ft 10.3in.
Ground clearance: .....6in.
Weight: 3432lb
BHP/ton: 159

Just defining the luxury market has been a point of contention in itself for some time. Adaps, the motor industry statistical authority, has a reasonable grasp of the situation and their figures are generally accepted by the industry — except when they don't prove completely convenient — at which time the industry promptly devises its own scales.

However, a recent Adaps market breakdown of the luxury class that appears to be well-accepted shows a January 1972 sales pattern like this:

Volvo	903	18.9%
Mercedes Benz	645	13.5%
Triumph	640	13.4%
Peugoet	487	10.2%
Jaguar	418	8.8%
Rambler	289	6.1%
BMW	288	6.0%
Rover	216	4.5%

If you took these figures as being representative of the average market breakdown, you would be slightly insane — since there is no such thing as an *average* market breakdown in the luxury car class. Many of the cars are fully imported, so sales in any period could be doubled or halved by stocks newly arrived or drastically overdue.

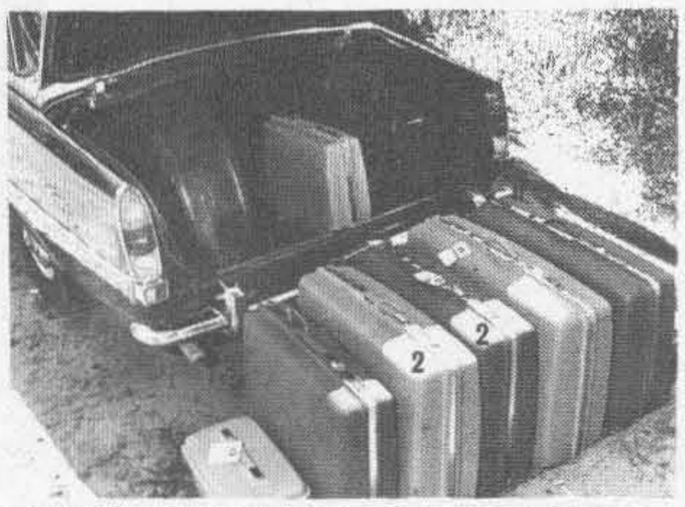
Every conceivable problem affecting the motor industry at large rebounds on the luxury market in particular, since there are part-assembled, nearly fully-assembled and fully-imported models.

Irrespective of fluctuating figures, our omission of a Mercedes in this six car comparison must seem strange to the outside observer. We agree.

After months of negotiations with Sydney's Yorkstar Motors, we failed to turn up a test car for the comparison workout. The general Yorkstar (and indeed Mercedes Australia) attitude seemed to be that the Mercedes isn't really comparative with the rest of the cars that claim listing in this class, the over-riding suggestion of course being that the Mercedes is somehow vastly superior, although I suspect the real reason is a deep-rooted fear that the beloved product of the Fatherland mightn't show-up too well in some areas. This would undoubtedly be a well-founded fear, since Mercedes have traditionally been down on power and way up on prices — a factor not encouraged by the inordinately high mark-up that each Mercedes carries.

Since organising six luxury cars at the same time, into the same place, over several days can be a devastatingly frustrating experience without introducing an unco-operative element we promptly set about lining-up a private car, which proved simple. However, as if by a stroke of fate, Mercedes announced the impending 280 DOHC series on the eve of our final test program, and since a road test car would not have been available for several weeks after the deadline, we deleted Mercedes from this comparison. A great pity — especially since the new series of car would have contributed greatly to the comparison.

The six cars chosen for the test are still highly comparable, despite wide ranges in engineering style — and more importantly price.



ROVER has smallest boot because of big spare; but holidaymakers can bolt this on bootlid which doubles usable space. The boot failed to accommodate the two No. 2 cases and the beauty case.

ROVER 3500 V8

Cylinders:	8 in vee formation
Bore & Stroke:	3.5in. x 2.8in.
Capacity:	215 cu in.
Compression:	10.5:1
Aspiration:	Twin HIF6 SU
Max. power:	184 (SAE) bhp @ 5000
Max. torque:	226lb.ft @ 3000rpm
Transmission:	Automatic
Final Drive Ratio:	3.08:1
Suspension, Front:	Ind. upper & lower arms, horizontal coils
Rear:	De Dion, Watts, track rod, coils
Wheels:	5.5x14
Tyres:	185HR14
Steering, type:	Burman recirc. ball power assisted
ratio:	26:1-21.5:1
turns lock to lock:	4½
Brakes, type:	4 disc, servo
size:	10.7in.
Turning circle:	31ft 6in.
Overall length:	15ft
height:	4ft 8.7in.
width:	5ft 6in.
Wheelbase:	8ft 7.4in.
Track, front:	4ft 5.4in.
rear:	4ft 3.4in.
Ground clearance:	6.1in.
Weight:	2868lb
BHP/ton:	143

BMW was impressive, with flat-floor, odd-bits bin, but spare under floor. It loaded all cases except one No. 2 over the high lip.

BMW 3.0S

Cylinders:	6, in-line
Bore & Stroke:	3.404in. x 3.150in.
Capacity:	184.4 cu in.
Compression:	9:1
Aspiration:	Twin Zenith 35/40
Max. power:	200 (SAE) bhp @ 6000
Max. torque:	188lb.ft @ 3700rpm
Transmission:	Automatic
Final Drive Ratio:	3.45:1
Suspension, Front:	Ind. coils, MacP struts lower links, anti-roll bar
Rear:	Ind. coils, semi-trail arms.
Wheels:	6Jx14H2
Tyres:	195HR14
Steering, type:	ZF-Gemmer worm and roller power assisted
ratio:	18.05:1
turns lock to lock:	3.9
Brakes, type:	4 disc, servo, h'brake drum
size:	10.7in.
Turning circle:	34ft 5in.
Overall length:	15ft 5in.
height:	4ft 9.1in.
width:	5ft 8.9in.
Wheelbase:	9ft 8.6in.
Track, front:	4ft 8.9in.
rear:	4ft 9.6in.
Ground clearance:	5.5in.
Weight:	3046lb
BHP/ton:	146

PEUGEOT was spacious, but couldn't fit one each of No. 1, and No. 2. It had flat vinyl-covered floor and spare in drop-down compartment under floor.

PEUGEOT 504

Cylinders:	4, in-line
Bore & Stroke:	3.4 x 3.1in.
Capacity:	120.2 cu in.
Compression:	8.35:1
Aspiration:	Twin-choke Solex
Max. power:	98 (SAE) bhp @ 5600
Max. torque:	124lb.ft
Transmission:	Automatic
Final Drive Ratio:	3.87:1
Suspension, Front:	Ind. MacP struts, w'bone anti-roll bar
Rear:	Ind, semi-trail arms, coils, anti-roll bar
Wheels:	5½x14
Tyres:	175HR14
Steering, type:	Rack & pinion
ratio:	22.2:1
turns lock to lock:	4½
Brakes, type:	4 disc servo
size:	10.2in.
Turning circle:	34ft
Overall length:	14ft 6in.
height:	4ft 8in.
width:	5ft 5in.
Wheelbase:	8ft 10in.
Track, front:	4ft 8in.
rear:	4ft 5in.
Ground clearance:	7in.
Weight:	2632lb
BHP/ton:	89

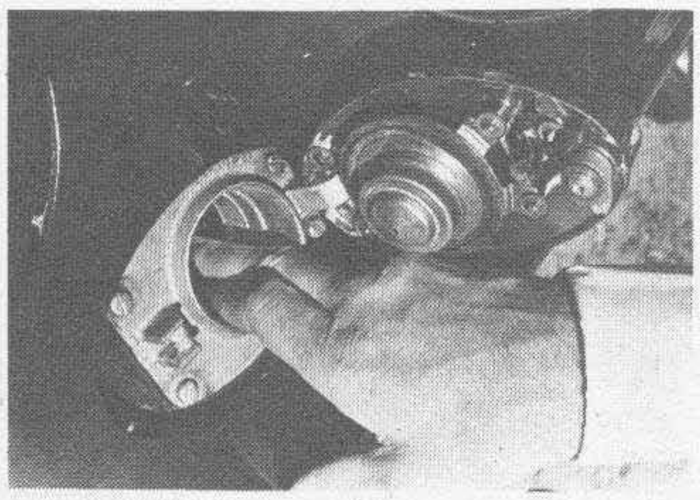
In practice, many buyers seem to have a preconceived idea of luxury before they go out to buy, and this is usually based on image. We aim to demolish the image concept at the start, so we'll start by evaluating the six products in general under that nebulous title. . .

IMAGE, PRESTIGE OR WHATEVER

If you took a cross-section census among 100 people and asked them to name the top five luxury cars, you probably wouldn't get one mention of the Peugeot 504 — so it's a good place to start under the image heading.

Particularly because of its outstanding specification. Though less than half the price of the top car considered in this comparison, it competes with all five others on equal grounds in almost every area — including luxury, ride, comfort, specifications and safety.

It suffers from a distinct lack of promotion and because it appears small it is generally rated out of the



TOP DESIGN ideas — Jaguar used lockable racing-style filler on horizontal panelwork, but protected paint from spitback with diaphragm on the aperture.

luxury class. A quick look at our comparison chart shows the Peugeot has no peers in terms of cabin spaciousness and is actually superior to the rest in several categories, (the notable exception is performance).

It is most definitely the least understood luxury car on the market, and it is desperately in need of some strong psychological promotion.

The Jaguar suffers if anything from an inflated image that guarantees most units are sold long before they clear Customs. A poor reputation in stamina, service and spare parts is not entirely the fault of the product, and we hope Leyland Australia will eliminate any deficiencies in this area.

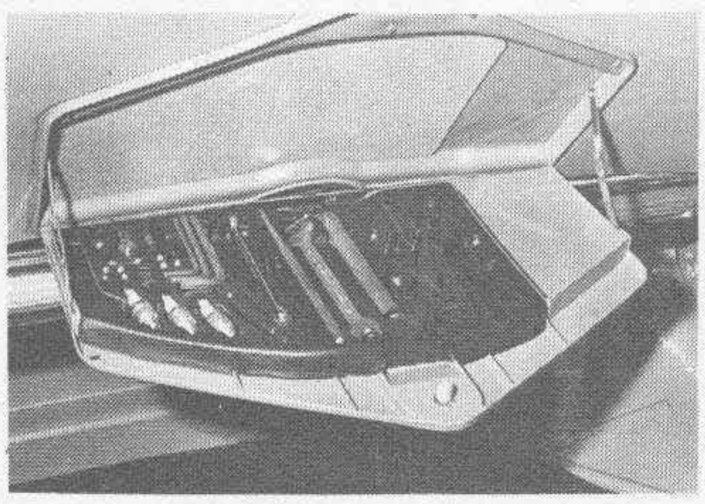
Volvo has the most rapidly-rising name in terms of intangible prestige. It's almost as good a name to drop at a party as Alfa Romeo and Mercedes Benz, and in it has earned its reputation justifiably because of its suitability to this country's rugged motoring demands. The product has survived the transition to local assembly with an amazingly improved standard of finish.

BMW has the reputation for being the best sports sedan in the world, and this is quite simply well-earned. It needs more promotion, more push and more distributor support, but it is getting there rapidly.

Rover has a cast-iron reputation in certain sections of the luxury-buying market, although it tends to cater to the more sedate motorist. Its popular reputation is waning with its age, although it's amazing how many people still think it's the safest car in the world — all that early safety advertising really worked.

Triumph has been passed around so badly that it could rapidly become a forgotten marque. It has a great reputation in Australia for top value-for-money in a overall economy luxury package — and it earned that reputation. British Leyland must consolidate its ownership of the marque, if it is to prosper on the local market.

We give no points for image,



BMW fold-down total tool kit in the boot lid impresses every observer. It has cut-out panels, and is form-insulated against vibration.

status-appeal or prestige, since these concepts are imaginary and personal. To us, the real grounds for comparison is in value for money. In this area, the Peugeot is so far ahead it really deserves separate classification. The others merely fall loosely in behind: **1 Peugeot, 2 Triumph, 3 Jaguar, 4 Volvo, 5 BMW, 6 Rover.**

STYLING & DESIGN

Amazingly, styling gets a low-key preference among buyers in the luxury class — and is generally supplanted by symbolical concepts of style, such as a lunging cat, or a central roof aerial, or a traditional grille. Once again, this is closely coupled with the status-appeal of the product.

And functional design is a major consideration in the styling of all the cars. Most bodies have been engineered primarily for safety, visibility, aerodynamics, strength or to accommodate mechanicals of specified dimensions. After these considerations have been satisfied, the stylist may be allowed to sculpt for aesthetic appeal.

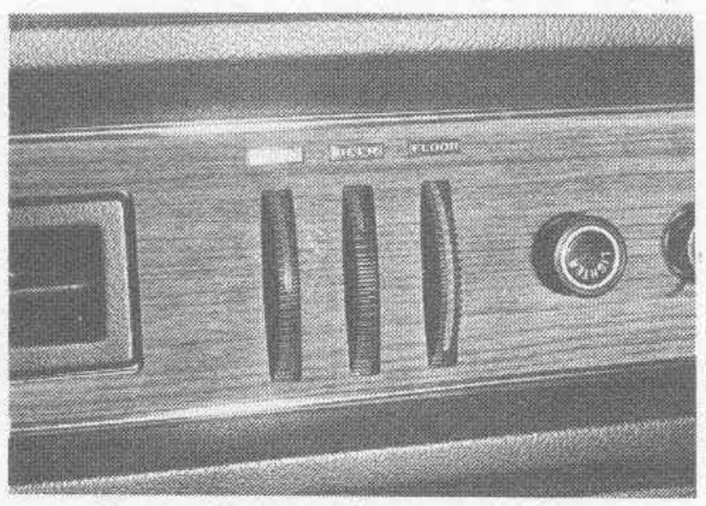
The Rover is suffering a little from age, but still pleases many buyers — purely because it was so far advanced in its time. However, its exterior proportions limit the accommodation within all areas of the package and it suffers in comparison with newer designs in this respect.

The other bodies are a motley mixture of clinically squared function-mobiles, and highly-styled mobile sex symbols. All results are impressive for their variety and originality.

To attempt a scorecard on this aspect of engineering would be, in our view, suicidal. . . onto the next category.

ENGINES

Lifting the bonnets on the six cars is something like getting six shots at a lucky dip. Sure, there are four in-line sixes, but two have fuel injection (one Lucas, one Bosch), one has a single overhead camshaft, and another twin overhead cams. Even the style and



VOLVO rotating ventilation controls, with show-through centres for light at night are easiest of all to adjust.

engineering approach isn't vaguely similar between the four.

The Peugeot, incredibly, has an in-line four and the Rover rates a V8.

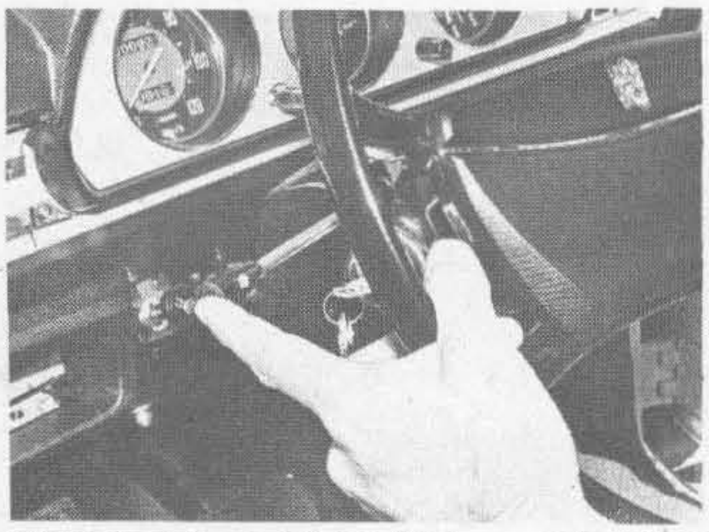
The comparative output data is condensed in the specifications charts and it's worth comparing, bore/stroke rating (only two are undersquare — both British), carburetion, power output related to torque (all are strong on the latter), and the bhp/ton figure — though this is inconclusive without considering such factors as gearing, aerodynamics etc. and tends to be a superficial statistic.

More interesting is the under-bonnet layout. The hinging system is an even split of front and rear, with the BMW, Jaguar and Triumph preferring the front-hinge system. The Peugeot is rear hinged, but with triple safety locks. The BMW has a lock-down system and the Triumph, Rover, Peugeot and Volvo all have variations of the manual stay (the Jaguar has no stay at all, hence its nickname of Mademoiselle Guillotine because of its performance on windy days).

Working space is cramped on BMW, Jaguar and Rover and relatively spacious on the other three. All have accessible dipsticks, and most are accessible in the fuel delivery area (with the exception of the injected units and the fuel pumps which are normally hidden or in other areas because they're electrical). BMW, Triumph and Peugoet all lack adequate protection of the fan.

Most have clearly accessible brake reservoirs of varying design and most have a fluid reservoir warning light (Jaguar, Peugeot, BMW, Rover). The Peugeot also includes brake pad warning light which is earthed through the MacPherson struts by those mystifying little wires in the top of the struts, visible in the under-bonnet area.

All under-bonnets are crowded with gear and all feature a booster for the brakes. Few are well-finished in this area (Peugeot, Volvo and BMW are) and only the Volvo has an under-bonnet light.



PEUGEOT has brilliant driving position that includes best steering-wheel control lever of all cars. It gives headlights/flashers and screen washers/wipers at the fingertips.

All are awkward in some areas — the Peugeot has a messy oil-topping system and awkward spark plugs, Jaguar and Rover are fiddly right through and so on.

Performance from the various units is difficult to compare, and even more difficult to assess when driving in cockpits so well isolated from the sensations of motion and noise.

All fuel injection versions are hard to start and lumpy in their operation when cold. The Volvo is noisy, the Rover sluggish, the Peugeot inadequate, the Jaguar outdated and the BMW is brilliant. It gets our top rating as the only really impressive, modern engine, with good flexibility, high output, and reasonable noise level. **1 BMW, 2 Jaguar, 3 Triumph, 4 Peugeot, 5 Rover, 6 Volvo.**

TRANSMISSIONS

For the sake of universal evaluation we chose automatic transmissions for all models. The BMW was easily the most impressive. The shift action is light, and though the T-bar is down on the console, the gear positions are thrown-up in color-coded squares on the centre of the instrument console. Kickdown response is quite fast (some anticipation is still needed) and the change is smooth in drive and range.

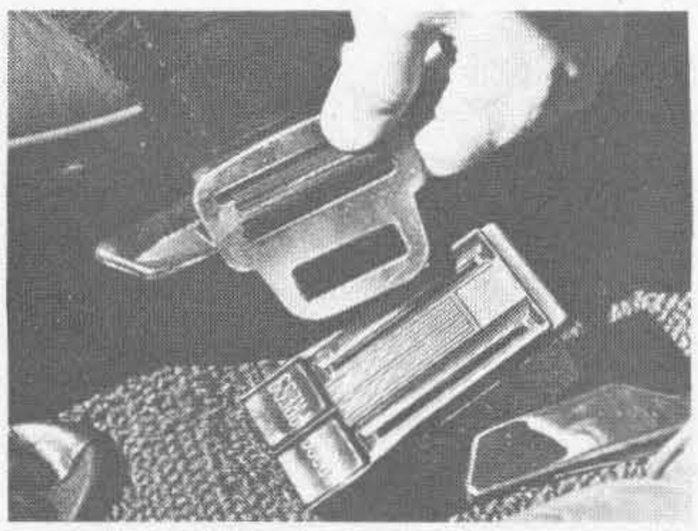
The Peugeot is at the opposite end of the scale — so smooth you can't detect a shift, but unbearably sluggish in the kickdown. However it compensates when operated manually, and the lever can be used to hold slots up and down the box with great gusto.

Most of the other gearboxes fit this pattern. Staff opinion was divided on quadrant design, lever location and so on, so we'll avoid specific comment.

The Rover and Jaguar were smooth, but the latter has good kickdown response.

The Volvo has a rougher shift but swaps ratios faster and the Triumph is somewhere in-between.

For all-round performance we rate



PLUG-IN seat belts are the Triumph strong-point. The operation is one-handed, belt location is perfect and adjustment is simple.

them this way: **1 BMW, 2 Jaguar, 3 Volvo, 4 Triumph, 5 Rover, 6 Peugeot.**

RIDE, HANDLING & STEERING

Six cars — and six concepts. If you take ride alone, nothing can touch the Jaguar (including cars not included in the comparison). If the preference is handling, BMW could possibly edge out first, but for all-round value, the Peugeot is impossible to beat.

The comparative photos on our test corner tell part of the story. Cornered hard on their limit, the cars behaved quite differently.

The BMW held 80mph at 5500rpm in second and moved from a near-neutral poise into oversteer induced by rear-wheel tuck. This forced the car into a four-wheel slide on the limit. It was the hardest car to drive to its limit, and the hardest to control at its limit — probably because that limit is so high.

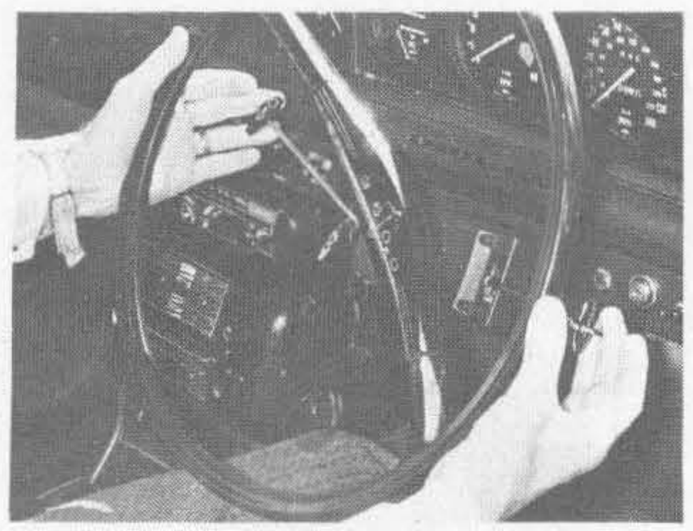
The Jaguar drifted quickly into oversteer on any corner when pressed hard, and took the test bend at 75mph in second at 5000rpm. It felt great, but looked bad from the outside.

The Triumph was surprising, — and plough understeer didn't prevent an 80mph apex at 5500rpm in second accompanied by lots of body roll and some tyre scream. Control was easy, and steering heavy but progressive.

The Rover went into a full-bore front-end slide at 70mph and 4500rpm but gave progressive warning of its intentions. The feeling from the cockpit was one of isolation from the activities on the road surface below.

The Volvo cocked-up in roll which quickly produced oversteer with lots of body sway. Correction was dead easy, and the speed rating was 85mph in second.

The Peugeot was incredible. Running out of steam, it had to take the corner in top because second was too low, and where the run-up allowed the other cars to build-up enough speed to require a braking application on entry in most instances, the Peugeot just went on accelerating into the corner.



ROVER'S column stalks have excessively long movement but still rate tops with owners. Wheel is large, but instruments, switchgear are well-placed.

It arrived at the entry point at 75mph and came out the other side above 80mph!

It was flat, neat and undramatic the whole way and more power would undoubtedly have given it the highest cornering speed of all cars.

The Peugeot has a good ride compromise too, but suffers in comparison with the Jaguar from lack of isolation from road shock. However, equipped with radial tyres it is still a quiet-riding car on any surfaces that don't have bumpy cross-strips. The steering is light and progressive, and the car corners completely smoothly and progressively at all times. It has a remarkably high capability of sustained cruising.

The Jaguar ride is vastly superior to all cars in the class. It is so isolated from road shock that it would be possible to cross a silent cop or median strip without feeling or hearing it. At the same time, the performance driver will not find the heavily

(Continued on page 99)

6-LUXURY CARS

(Continued from page 14)

rubber-insulated suspension lacks feel.

The steering is heavily power assisted but still progressive, although the wheel is horribly out of date.

The Volvo is firm and sporting, with the ride/handling compromise undoubtedly swung in favor of handling.

However it is a smooth enough car on the boulevarde, and the sort of owner who wants to get it all out of shape in a corner will also revel in its controllability. The wheel is large but pleasantly shaped and steering feel is good.

The BMW is a little disappointing for its over-assisted power steering which tends to be insensitive. It is also unprogressive as it approaches its limits and few drivers apart from professionals would attain its limits in a lifetime of ownership. However it is remarkably fast and inspiring to drive, and at the same time has a supple, forgiving suspension.

Both Rover and Triumph are a little slushy in handling compared with the others due to the creeping plague of old age. The heavy V8 in the Rover gives a fair old dose of straight-on motoring on the limit in corners, and the Triumph rolls heavily, with high steering loadings and too much tyre distortion.

However, both ride exceptionally well and offer good comfortable ride/handling for their price. The Triumph has a nicely dimensioned wheel while the Rover's is too large — but reduction would only increase the steering loadings. Neither car is inadequately suspended for its market demands.

Evaluation must fairly be split into three areas — ride, handling and ride/handling compromise. These are the ratings . . .

Ride: 1 Jaguar, 2 Triumph, 3 Peugeot, 4 Rover, 5 BMW, 6 Volvo.

Handling: 1 BMW, 2 Peugeot, 3 Volvo, 4 Jaguar, 5 Triumph, 6 Rover.

Ride/Handling: 1 Peugeot, 2 Jaguar, 3 Triumph, 4 BMW, 5 Rover, 6 Volvo.

BRAKES

After two days of performance testing, we still didn't have any conclusive findings. Using every piece of equipment available to us, we recorded identical stopping times for all six cars with comparative g loadings. We got varying pedal efforts, but we didn't get fade from any of the cars after six (and usually more) continuous maximum stops.

The net finding is that all six cars will pull up from 60mph in around 3.5 seconds average. Pedal pressures varied from as little as 35psi on the Jaguar on one stop, to 55-60 on the Peugeot.

The Volvo was consistently the best, recording identical g loadings, stopping rates and pedal efforts on stop after stop.

The Rover and Triumph in particular demonstrated pronounced weight transfer and distinct nose-down attitudes under forceful braking and the Peugeot also tended to dip.

The Jaguar with its anti-dive front suspension geometry was the flattest. The BMW was the least consistent, and occasionally locked one brake, but usually equalled the other times.

The ratings are largely academic, since the results are so similar. But if anything, we'd prefer the Volvo to get rating 1, followed by Jaguar, then the rest rated collectively.

INTERIORS & COMFORT

The variation in interior design is phenomenal, and so are the results. The Peugeot again rates surprisingly high on comfort and functional design although its relatively cheap pricing and mass production manufacturing technique take the luxury edge away.

However all the equipment is there, and the seats undoubtedly rate as the best of the six cars from an overall viewpoint. The car is comfortable, amazingly quiet, completely accomodating and beautifully laid out. It lacks detail attention to finish, and that luxury touch.

Jaguar has all of this, it is comfortable and the quietest of the six. But the cockpit is badly laid out and the available space is poorly used. It is doubtful if this will concern most owners because the impression and feel of luxury is so complete.

The Rover looks good, feels good at first and certainly imparts luxury. But the poorly used cabin space reflects the car's age, and the comfort is only average for long trips. Controls, instrumentation and equipment are both complete and well laid-out, showing the properly designed car of 1964 can still be competitive today.

The Triumph also offers amazing luxury, comfort and convenience for its occupants. It is curiously British and old-fashioned in some respects but will satisfy most owners. It is quiet, smooth and comfortable, and the ride approaches the Jaguar's.

Volvo offers its owners a driver's working area with lots of luxury touches and a good smattering of extras and equipment to give a sense of prestige.

Driving position is excellent, but the seating standard has a greatly exaggerated reputation since lateral location is poor. The car offers good finish and an appearance and feel of luxury way above its price tag.

The BMW is the most spartan and functional and it works well for the business-like driver. At the same time, it is typically teutonic and clinical and lacks that feeling of warmth that pure luxury imparts — the same feeling that a lot of buyers expect.

If you want to go places in a hurry, you will feel completely engineered into the structure in the BMW, but if you want to relax and stooge about in luxury you'll have to look someplace else. We have four ratings:

Comfort: 1 Peugeot, 2 Jaguar, 3 Triumph, 4 Rover, 5 Volvo, 6 BMW.

Finish: 1 Volvo, 2 Triumph, 3 BMW, 4 Rover, 5 Peugeot, 6 Jaguar.

Equipment: 1 Jaguar, 2 Rover, 3 Triumph, 4 Peugoet, 5 Volvo, 6 BMW.

Luxury: 1 Jaguar, 2 Rover, 3 Triumph, 4 Volvo, 5 Peugeot, 6 BMW.

BOOTS & CARRYING CAPACITY

The variation in body design shows up more in the boot than in any other compartment. The standards of layout and usable space vary noticeably from car to car, yet all except the Rover hold a remarkable amount of luggage. In fairness to Rover, which is by far the oldest design, the boot space can be effectively doubled by removing the spare wheel and attaching it to the boot locating point covered by a dummy emblem.

With the spare in the boot, the best we could do with the standard Samsonite pack was fit all but two Number Two size cases (medium) and the beauty case. With the spare wheel removed, fitting the two Number One size cases and an additional Number Three case was a cinch, so families that want that holiday hole in the boot can still get it.

The BMW with its carpeted floor and vinyl sides loaded all except one Number Two size case because of clear, inobstructed areas. However the spare was rather inaccessibly placed in the left underside of the boot compartment. A marked contrast is the toolkit which is recessed into the boot lid for instant accessiblity. A small odd-bit bin is thoughtfully provided.

The Triumph boot is fully carpeted but would not accept the two Number One size cases — all the rest fitted-in comfortably. Both spare and tools are hidden under the carpet.

The Peugeot loaded all cases except one each of the Number One and Number Two size cases. It has the poorest finish, with rubber mats on the floor and exposed metal sides. The load area is flat, and though the spare is stowed under the floor, there's no accessibility problem because it drops down via a neat pull catch just inside the edge of the boot. A measley toolkit hides in the left sidewell, and the jack is bolted into the engine firewall, so it suffers no access problems.

The Volvo boot gobbled up an amazing amount of luggage — all cases except a Number Three (small) case. This is despite a spare wheel tucked in the right side wheel arch where it is

reasonably accessible and accompanied by the tool kit. The fuel-filler protrudes slightly. Cover material is vinyl, with a rubber floor mat.

The Jaguar is deceptively large for a low-profile body shape, and refused to accept only the two Number One cases. The spare is under the floor where access is difficult, and the covering material is a cheap but durable vinyl — rather out of character with the product.

All boots are lit and only the Rover and Jaguar have low sill heights to eliminate hauling luggage over a high lip. All lids are spring counterbalanced and work quite well.

Rating goes chiefly on capacity, with a minor consideration for finish: 1 Volvo, 2 BMW, 3 Peugeot, 4 Triumph, 5 Jaguar, 6 Rover.

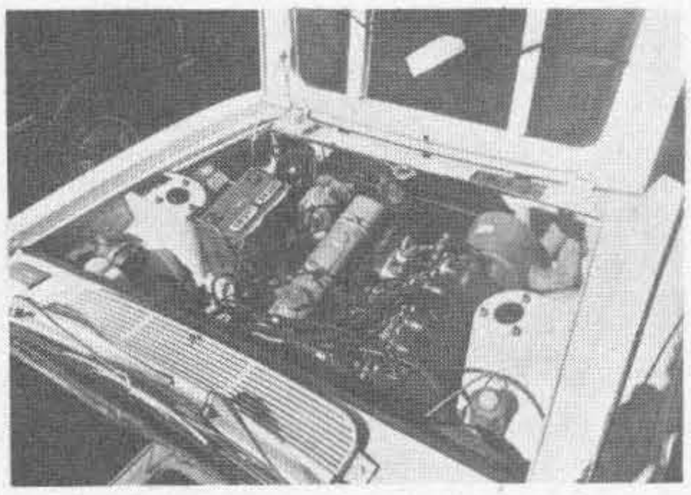
FUEL, FILLING, CAPACITY

Only the Volvo has an inadequate cruising range for Australian conditions when average fuel consumption for hard running is calculated. Rover and Peugeot are close to the borderline, but Triumph, BMW, and Jaguar all give exceptional cruising ranges for flat-out motoring.

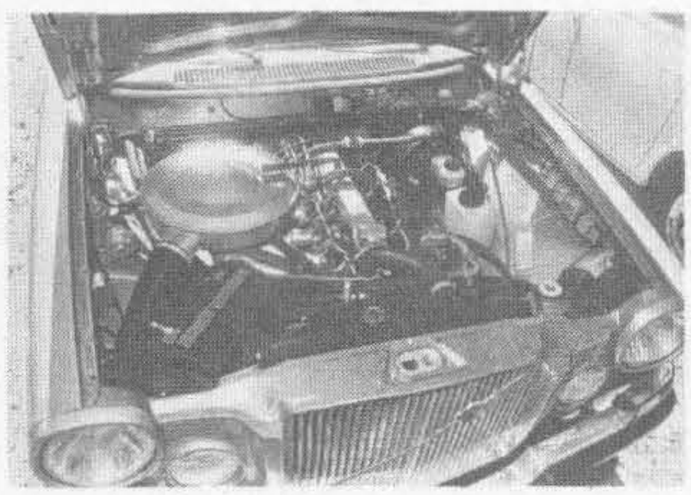
It's interesting to note the Jaguar and Peugeot are running low compression engines, in which we've successfully tried standard fuel without serious problems. This makes for cheaper tankfills too — if such considerations are significant in the luxury car class.

All cars start on automatic chokes which burn more fuel, and since all have automatic transmissions all were worked hard on test, the fuel consumption could be expected to improve considerably for the average light-footed driver.

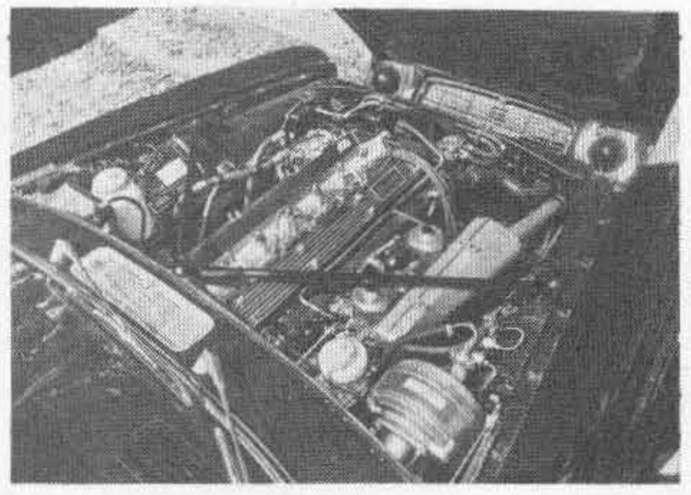
The location of fuel filling points is varied. The BMW cap is tucked behind the numberplate but is not lockable. The Triumph is under a flat-type cut-out panel on the rear left lower panel and it doesn't lock. The Rover cap has an English racing-type filler on the panel near the rear screen and though lockable, spillage is likely to occur due to the location of the aperture.



TRIUMPH has forward-hinged bonnet, good u/bonnet finish, reasonable access, quick-fill battery, but unprotected fan.



VOLVO has unique crossbar set-up that transfers pedal action across the firewall to remote booster. Finish, access is good.



JAGUAR is most impressive u/bonnet, and most crowded. Bonnet has no stay, fan is protected, many vitals are hard to reach.

TRIUMPH 2.5PI	
Shoulder room, front:	52in.
rear:	51.5in.
Hip room, front:	54in.
rear:	54in.
Leg room, front: seat forward/back	39/46in.
Leg room, rear: seat forward/back	28/33in.
Head room, front:	32in.
rear:	34in.
Top speed:	112mph
Standing quarter:	18.6
0-30	4.0
0-40	6.2
0-50	8.7
0-60	11.5
0-70	15.9
0-80	21.6
0-90	28.6
0-100	—
Acceleration, passing range:	
20-40	4.0
30-50	4.2
40-60	6.5
Fuel consumption: (Overall)	22mpg
Fuel tank capacity:	14gall
Price:	$4909
Warranty:	6/6000
Insurance:	$158.10
Registration:	$101.60
Minor and major service:	$7/$23/$36
Spare Parts Cost:	
Pads/linings:	$25.15
Mufflers, complete:	$52.80
Windscreen:	$36.00
Shock absorbers (4):	$63.80

VOLVO 164E	
Shoulder room, front:	55in.
rear:	56in.
Hip room, front:	54in.
rear:	55in.
Leg room, front: seat forward/back	39/48in.
Leg room, rear: seat forward/back	27/39
Head room, front:	33in.
rear:	34in.
Top speed:	112mph
Standing quarter:	17.1
0-30	3.9
0-40	5.4
0-50	7.1
0-60	9.6
0-70	12.2
0-80	15.8
0-90	21.4
0-100	28.4
Acceleration, passing range:	
20-40	2.9
30-50	3.2
40-60	4.3
Fuel consumption: (Overall)	17.7mpg
Fuel tank capacity:	12¾gall
Price:	$7942
Warranty:	6/no mileage limit
Insurance:	$158.10
Registration:	$115.65
Minor and major service:	$25/$35
Spare Parts Cost:	
Pads/linings:	$36.96
Mufflers, complete:	$50.32
Windscreen:	$142.50
Shock absorbers (4):	$28.81

JAGUAR XJ6 4.2	
Shoulder room, front:	54in.
rear:	53.5in.
Hip room, front:	52.5in.
rear:	51.5in.
Leg room, front: seat forward/back	35/39.5in.
Leg room, rear: seat forward/back	37/45in.
Head room, front:	35.5in.
rear:	33in.
Top speed:	122mph
Standing quarter:	17.6
0-30	3.1
0-40	4.7
0-50	6.8
0-60	9.4
0-70	12.8
0-80	16.3
0-90	22.5
0-100	29.5
Acceleration, passing range:	
20-40	4.3
30-50	4.7
40-60	4.6
Fuel consumption: (Overall)	15.9mpg
Fuel tank capacity:	23gall
Price:	$11,000
Warranty:	12/12,000
Insurance:	$197.40
Registration:	$139.25
Spare Parts Cost:	
Pads/linings:	$29.05
Mufflers, complete:	$91.63
Windscreen:	$140
Shock absorbers (4):	$31.04

The Peugeot hides its filler under a flap on the left flank and this is spring loaded for easy access. Unfortunately gas station attendants are also prone to bending it back or leaving it open entirely. Spillage is not likely and there is provision for the drips to be taken away.

The Volvo has the least aesthetic filler cap, located on the right upper rear flank. A feeble attempt has been made to subdue its location by extending the body trim strip into the filler cap, but it still shows. Filling is easy, and the spout does not spitback, but spillage will stain the paintwork.

The Jaguar uses a locking chrome lid on the horizontal panel behind the rear screen. A diaphragm at the top of the spout is designed to limit the possiblity of fuel spillage.

All systems accept gas readily with no spitback and the tanks fill to the top without air bubbles. The variety of gauges give accurate and steady readings and warnings of fuel reserve vary from 2 to 5 gallons.

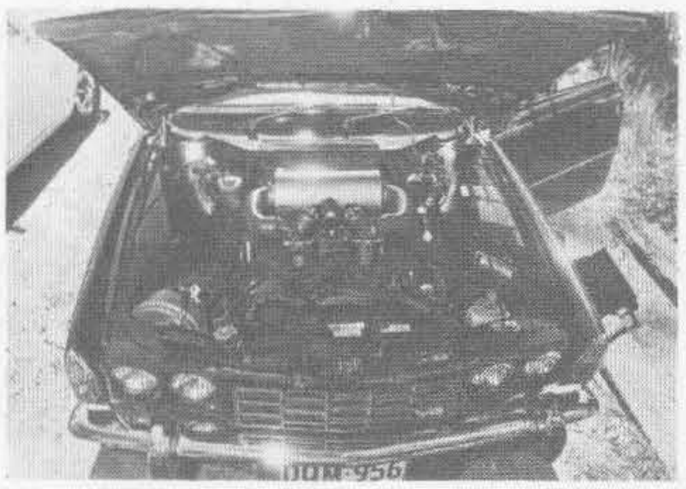
SUMMARY

More than ever, our standard advice to "try before you buy" applies to these cars. A Rover fanatic associated with the staff took the opportunity during one of the photographic sessions to do just that, and came away an unconverted Rover fanatic.

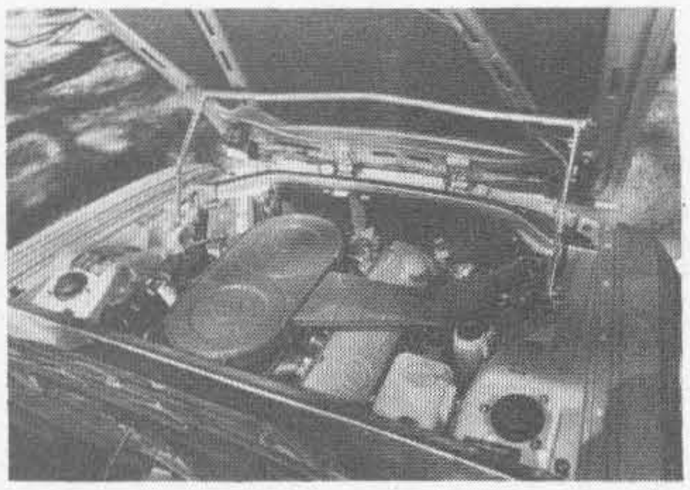
Staff members who variously favored Jaguar, BMW and Peugeot remained unshaking in their convictions after a constant exposure to the variety of the six cars, and others switched their views quite drastically.

It merely proves that most people have a preconceived idea of their ideal luxury machine. We hope this test shook the preconceptions, without alienating most motorists from the concept of luxury motoring.

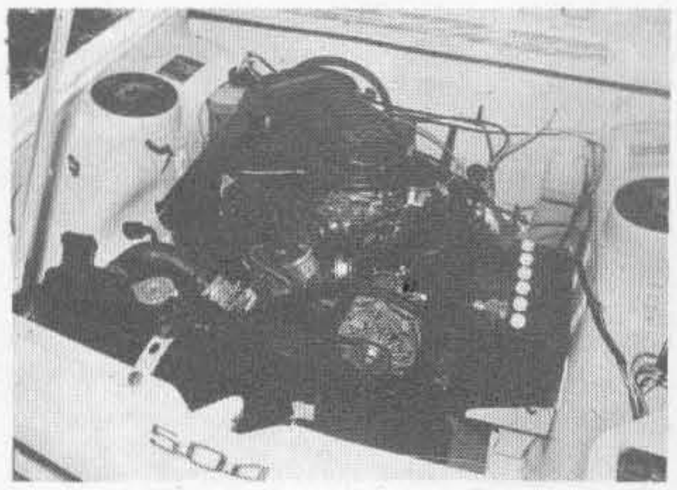
There is a wide enough cross-section in specification and price to suit most tastes and whims. Compare specifications, performance and equipment, and drive them. For many it could be the opportunity to move up out of something mundane into something magical. ■



ROVER is jam-packed with gear, yet most essentials are reachable. Fan is protected, mechanical stay is heavy, u/bonnet finish is poor.



BMW is impressive, has sturdy stay, safety-lock down on forward hinge, good finish, quick-fill battery, but unprotected fan and only average accessibility.



PEUGEOT has smallest engine, is therefore roomiest. Accessibility is good except for spark plugs, and messy oil filler system. Jack/handle are stowed here, battery has quick-release safety knobs.

	ROVER 3500 V8	BMW 3.0S	PEUGEOT 504
Shoulder room, front:	51in.	57in.	54in.
rear:	50.2in.	52in.	52in.
Hip room, front:	57in.	56in.	52in.
rear:	58in.	52in.	50in.
Leg room, front: seat forward/back	32/42in.	31/39in.	40/46in.
Leg room, rear: seat forward/back	25/31in.	27/35in.	36/39in.
Head room, front:	34.5in.	37in.	37.7in.
rear:	33in.	34.5in.	35.4in.
Top speed:	112mph	128mph	105mph
Standing quarter:	18.1	16.9	18.8
0-30	3.8	2.7	3.4
0-40	5.8	4.7	5.8
0-50	7.6	6.4	7.9
0-60	11.0	8.6	11.8
0-70	13.8	11.6	17.2
0-80	19.8	14.7	24.8
0-90	26.4	18.9	32.2
0-100	—	25.8	—
Acceleration, passing range:			
20-40	3.8	5.0	5.9
30-50	4.9	5.2	5.8
40-60	5.2	5.1	5.6
Fuel consumption: (Overall)	17.4mpg	21mpg	22mpg
Fuel tank capacity:	15gall	16.5gall	12.3gall
Price:	$7442	$11,375	$4698
Warranty:	12/12,000	6/6000	6/no mileage limit
Insurance:	$98.55	$182.25	$83.05
Registration:	$117.15	$138.00	$101.10
Minor and major service:	—	$10/$28	$8/$24
Spare Parts Cost:			
Pads/linings:	$50.60	$32.24	$26.00
Mufflers, complete:	$105.98	$94.60	$20.39
Windscreen:	$61.15	$200	$63.42
Shock absorbers (4):	$60.22	$82.50	$62.44