

# 4WD BUYERS GUIDE

## RANGE ROVER SPORT

### MEDIUM WAGONS



**The 2012 Range Sport adds more luxury and entertainment features to what is an excellent on and off road vehicle.**

A new powered tailgate was introduced as standard from Luxury models upwards for 2012, enabling owners to set desired lift heights by a button located on the fascia or the key fob. A touch-screen with optional Dual View technology allows the driver to view the navigation display while the passenger watches a DVD. Rear seat entertainment has been enhanced with WhiteFire wireless technology.

Hi-ICE and Premium audio systems offer up to 825W of power through 17 speakers on the Premium Harmon Kardon LOGIC 7. 'Say What You See' voice command is available on premium systems. The Supercharged model can now be fitted with a 20-inch, high-gloss lacquer wheel option.

### **Previous Models**

We've been great Range Rover Sport fans since the marque was released in 2005. We were invited to the global launch' held in northern Spain and southern France, where there was ample opportunity to test the machine in demanding on and off road conditions.



But why were there two different vehicles wearing the 'Range Rover' badge? The two Range Rovers weren't even similar machines: they were not built on the same platform and had no shared body panels.

The Sport model had more in common with the latest Discovery than it did with the existing Range Rover.

The Range Rover Sport was based on the flexible-wheelbase, integrated body-frame structure that was introduced on the Discovery 3, but the Sport was noticeably shorter in the wheelbase than the Disco – 140mm to be precise – and was some 70mm lower and nearly 40mm shorter.

Inside, the Sport lacked the Disco's three-row seating, its headroom and cubic space. All seating positions in the Sport were commanding, but not quite as commanding as they were in the taller Discovery 3.

Rear seat leg and headroom weren't restricted in the Sport, but three back-seat adults didn't have the class-leading comfort the Discovery provided.

The Sport featured a first for Land Rover: a one-piece aluminium tailgate that had a touch-operated, opening window section.



The Sport's air springs' pressure settings were firmer than the Disco's and it had sharper-valved, mono-tube shock absorbers, instead of the Disco's more compliant, twin-tube units.

Complementing this firmer suspension setup was Dynamic Response: a computer-controlled, active anti-sway system. An engine-driven hydraulic pump supplied pressure to hydraulic motors on the front and rear anti-sway bars, in proportion to the amount of body sway when cornering. The system acted automatically and reduced anti-sway action in off-road situations that demanded maximum wheel travel.

Two powerplants were shared with the Discovery: the common-rail diesel V6, 24-valve, 2.7-litre engine and the Jaguar-derived, 32-valve, 4.4-litre petrol V8. But the Sport could be ordered with a supercharged version of the V8, when 220kW and 425Nm just weren't enough. The supercharged V8 put out a very healthy 287kW at 5750rpm, with peak torque of 550Nm at 3500rpm.

The supercharged engine came with a brake pack that included four-spot Brembo front callipers and large-envelope, 20-inch wheels needed to bolt over the top of them.

All the Range Rover Sport models came with a ZF six-speed, intelligent-shift automatic transmission, driving into a two-speed transfer case. An electronically-controlled locking centre differential was standard and a locking rear diff was optional.

The Range Rover Sport was fitted with the Disco 3's Terrain Response system, controlled by a pop-up rotary switch on the centre console. The Sport's interior design was noticeably 'detuned' from that of the 'other' Range and it lacked some of the larger vehicle's niceties, such as powered operation of the tilt/telescopic steering column. However, it was still a luxury package.

## On and Off-road

The Range Rover Sport was happy tooling through villages, wheeling around car parks and cruising at legal motorway speeds. In these conditions the powertrain worked smoothly and the shifts were almost imperceptible.

On sweeping back roads the Sport fairly ripped along and just loved going around corners. On lumpy bitumen the Sport's ride was noticeably firmer than the Disco 3's plush progress, but it felt more 'chuckable' than its bigger sibling.

Dirt roads set the suspension a-jiggling and the traction control and Dynamic Stability Control a-clicking, but the Sport never got out of shape.

The supercharged engine had a slightly louder exhaust note, complemented by a subtle wail from the supercharger as it spun up. The same amount of accelerator pedal movement produced a lot more urge, so around town we were able to drive it with almost no accelerator pressure. It was happy to plod about with less than 2000rpm on the clock and showed no temperament at all, but prodded into life on the open road the supercharged V8 should please all but drag fiends.



Off-road the Dynamic Response sway bars provided greatly increased wheel travel over the fixed sway bar models. We jumped into one of the support-team Discovery 3s for some off-road contrast and found the Disco's setup much more suitable for rough track conditions than the Sport's. Horses for courses.

As the rock crawl test track and the steep climb at The Wall showed the new Range Rover Sport is an extremely capable off roader, but we can't help but feel that most owners will never exploit their vehicles' capabilities.

In late 2006 a TDV8 turbo diesel was introduced, with 200kW and 640Nm (45 percent higher than the TDV6 from 2000 rpm to 2500rpm, with more than 500Nm of torque available from less than 1500 rpm to over 3700 rpm.

Each cylinder bank was fed by a dedicated variable-geometry turbocharger via separate, intercoolers. A camshaft-driven fuel pump supplied piezoelectric injectors at pressures of up to 1700 bar.

For 2008 The Range Rover Sport acquired additional touches: eight- way passenger seat functionality; electrically- adjustable steering column on Supercharged (optional on TDV6, TDV8 and 4.4L V8); and Bluetooth phone enhancement.

Pricing remained largely unchanged:  
TDV6\$87,900; TDV8\$108,900; V8\$108,900;  
and Supercharged \$136,900

For 2009 the Range Rover Sport scored exterior trim changes, a new 20-inch wheel design and more paint colours.



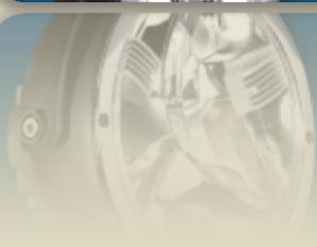
### Bush Modifications

Because the Range Rover Sport has the Discovery's suspension and engine bay layout many of the after-market bits for the Disco will fit the Sport.

Bush tyres (LTs) are now available in 18-, 19- and 20-inch sizes.



**"New HELLA LUMINATOR  
LED driving lights.  
Brilliant!"**



Brilliant!  
LED driving lights.  
New HELLA LUMINATOR

