

SHIFT BUYING GUIDE

LAND ROVER DEFENDER

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WHAT IS IT?

One of the most iconic vehicles on the planet, right up there with the VW Beetle. One of the most significant exports from Great Britain to the rest of the world. The Land Rover Defender has been produced in various forms since 1948, continuing till 2016. The actual "Defender" nameplate was debuted in 1984, and models from this year onwards is considered "modern". Before 1984, it was called just the "Land Rover", with Series I, II and III differentiating model years. Known for its go-anywhere attitude and rugged off-road capabilities, the Defender turned into an automotive icon for anyone wanting to experience the freedom of the open world. It is also incredibly utilitarian and quite easy to fix and maintain thanks to its body-on-frame chassis, off-road ready drivetrain and sparse electronics. While restoration tends to be costly and the lack of creature comforts make it difficult to live with on a daily basis, many still do it.



WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO IT?

Most of the Defenders you'll see on sale have either already been restored or are complete heaps of junk from decades of abuse. If it's junk, restore it - most of the parts are fairly easy to source since Land Rover is still making replacements that fit nearly all the models. Parts interchangeability is high as well, even between brands, but stick to original LR equipment where possible. Original motors last a while, but if it's weak, change it. Or get it rebuilt by experts (see extreme right).

For upgrades, look to Land Rover's official parts catalogue. They have pretty much everything you'll need, but if you feel they won't cut it, try Hofele or Kahn Design, both aftermarket brands produce dedicated parts (from headlights to grilles to body kits and wheels) for the Defender, for both 90 and 110.

For the interior, an easy way to modernise the Defender and increase comfort is to go for a pair of seats from some other car. We've seen people swapping in bucket seats from RX8s to BRIDE buckets. Reupholster the dash with leather, or swap in a dash from one of the newer models and you're good.

PROS 

- ~ Unbeatable off-road, if you know what you're doing
- ~ Easy to fix, takes abuse like nothing else on (or off) the road
- ~ You'll find replacement parts for nearly forever (when replacements don't work, retrofitting is easy and cheap)
- ~ Very little (but regular) maintenance required
- ~ Imposing, handsome and timeless looks
- ~ Not much can go wrong with it if taken care of
- ~ Lots of potential in terms of personalisation

CONS 

- ~ Comfort? HAH. What comfort?
- ~ Lack of standard air-con in older models makes life...sweaty
- ~ Restoration can be fairly expensive and time consuming
- ~ Oil leaks are a distinct possibility at all times
- ~ Noisy in diesel form, unreliable and irksome in petrol form
- ~ High cost of purchase for restored example

PRICE? DEPENDS ON MODEL YEAR, RESTORATION QUALITY AND OVERALL CONDITION (OBVS)

~10,00,000 TK (FULLY RESTORED)
~4,00,000 TK (RUNNING/NEEDS TLC)

WHAT DOES THE EXPERT SAY?

Defenders starting from 1993 onwards offer the best power with its turbo diesel, convenience with its power steering and best value in terms of replacement parts. So 1993-2000 are the best ones for our country. For daily use and going into narrow lanes the 90 is unbeatable. Although the 110 is super practical and the better choice for bigger families.

Restoration to original condition requires 3-5 lakhs. More if you need an engine or gearbox. If you upgrade to modern wheels, interior and accessories you should be looking to spend around 8-10 lakhs.

They require nothing more than an oil change every 3000 km's, provided you have rebuilt it completely with genuine parts. It should last a lifetime. Average service cost is 12-14k taking into account the usual belt replacement or clutch cylinder replacements. They are super efficient. Returns 10km/l when healthy. Even more on highway runs.

The iconic Defender is great off road due to its amazing gearing. It's always on 4x4 so most of the times you won't need to select low range or differential locks. Combination of these make it unbeatable off road. They are charming to work on if you have the right parts and tools because they are so simple and basic. Overall you must have passion for it. It's not everyone's cup of tea! //

~~ Asad Moyeen, owner of Motorwerks Ltd. (restorers of classic cars, Land Rover specialists)



CAR SPOTTING



Spotted:
Land Rover
Defenders



SHADMAN AL SAMEE

AUTO NEWS

Honda streamlines its lineup with new Insight hybrid



The Honda Insight was the first mass produced hybrid to be launched globally in 1999. It looked weird, drove weird, people didn't really understand it, let alone buy it. The Toyota Prius came in, looked just as bad, but its second iteration it caught on with the help of celebrity endorsements and worldwide hate. To say the Insight and the Prius had a significant role to play in making the petrol-electric hybrid popular as it is

today would be an understatement, but in all fairness, the Insight never really lived up to its true potential.

Over the past year and a half, Honda has been steadily working on bringing back its mid-90s mojo. They're making sleek, desirable cars which combine performance, efficiency and brilliant dynamics all into great packages you'd want to own. The Civic, the Accord and more recently the CRV are all cars you

really don't have to be told twice to consider buying. But where are the hybrids?

They've decided to take the Insight name and put it on a brilliant new design that takes cues from the Accord. It has Honda's new mustachioed family face, rearward sloping fastback style 5-door design, and near perfect proportions that manage to hide all the bulk that comes with an Integrated Motor

Assist (IMA) hybrid system. It neatly slots in between the Civic and the Accord.

It's part of Honda's return to form, but is it too late to the part? Toyota has been working hard to electrify most of their global model range. All the while, Tesla is breathing down everyone's necks with their "just hybrids won't cut it" mantra. Only time will tell, but one thing is for sure: Honda's Insight deserves the chance to shine.