

Audi Australia Pty Ltd
Corporate Communications Dept.
6 Lord St
Botany NSW 2019
Telephone + 61 2 9695 6250
Facsimile + 61 2 9695 6222

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Press kit information

The new Audi S3

Short version	2
At a glance	6
Long version – performance	7
Exterior design	8
Interior design	11
Drivetrain	13
Chassis	17
Equipment	20
The Audi S3 and its customers	21

Annex:

- Australian specification
- Technical data
- Dimensions
- Power and torque

Short version

The new Audi S3

Dynamism, sportiness and sophistication – the Audi A3 occupies an outstanding position in the premium compact class.

Now the top-of-the-range variant is due for Australian launch. The new Audi S3 boasts 188 kW, 330 Nm and quattro permanent four-wheel drive. With its sparkling performance it pursues the ideal of complete driving enjoyment coupled with excellent everyday practicality – like all Audi S models.

The S3 redefines the standards of its class – at the level of a sports car. It races from 0 to 100 km/h in a mere 5.9 seconds, and its forward urge remains unbridled until it reaches 250 km/h. Aggressively hard-hitting, free-revving and with a sonorous acoustic profile, the powerful two-litre, turbocharged four-cylinder unit with FSI petrol direct injection proves to be a smooth, high-performance engine.

This power is transmitted by the six-speed gearbox and quattro permanent four-wheel drive to large 18-inch alloy wheels. The new S sports suspension on the S3 allows a sporty driving style combined with the ultimate in comfort. The steering characteristic of the electromechanical steering has been adapted to the sporty handling. This sporty compact car responds actively to steering movements, exhibits precise and safe handling characteristics and, thanks to quattro technology, accelerates unrelentingly out of bends.

The high dynamic potential of this three-door sports car is obvious at first glance. The single-frame grille features chrome trim, the front apron has a spoiler with large air inlets and the side sills have been restyled. There is a contrasting platinum grey diffuser built into the rear apron, along with two S-style oval chrome tailpipes on the left. Aluminium-look exterior mirrors and a body-coloured roof spoiler give added impact to the visual statement.

Interior: sporty atmosphere

The interior conveys an atmosphere of sportiness, with materials of the highest quality and meticulous craftsmanship. The elements that dominate the styling are the sports seats with dynamic and prominent side sections, the black or alternatively silver headlining, and the instrument cluster with its typical S dials and needles.

The pedals, gear knob and air vents are in aluminium look, the inlays are available in black 'Piano finish', matt aluminium or fine grain birch wood grey. The red and silver S3 emblem is to be found on the leather sports steering wheel, in the instrument cluster, on the gear knob and on the door sill trims. The seats are upholstered in leather. The two-tone leather seats are decorated with stitching in the same colour as their centre section.

TFSI in its most powerful form

The power plant of the S3 delivers all that is expected of a powerful sports engine, and does so supremely well. The 2.0 TFSI, three-times Engine of Year winner, developed by AUDI AG, combines direct injection and turbocharger technology and delivers 188 kW at 6,000 rpm. And at just 2,500 rpm it already musters up an impressive 330 Nm of torque – this pulling power remains constant up to 5,000 rpm. In the combined driving cycle the 2.0 TFSI displays another welcome character trait, consuming just 9.2 litres of fuel per 100 km – further proof of the forward-looking efficiency of TFSI technology developed by Audi.

Compared with the A3, this engine is an advanced version featuring fundamental changes. The new turbocharger with its enlarged turbine and compressor rotor generates 1.2 bar of boost pressure – an unusually high figure. A modified intercooler significantly lowers the temperature of the compressed air, thus increasing the air mass that is necessary for combustion.

The new high-performance TFSI engine features pistons with stronger pins, while strengthened connecting rods with new bearings transmit

the powerful forces to the crankshaft. The cylinder block has been reinforced, and the head is made of a new, highly heat-resistant alloy.

The exhaust camshaft timing has been adjusted to accommodate the increased power output. High-pressure injectors with an enlarged cross-section squirt the fuel straight into the combustion chamber.

For all its progressive technology, the high-performance turbo engine tips the scales at just 152 kilograms, less than comparable engines of direct competitors – with a positive impact on the axle load distribution.

To go with its sporty nature and firm handling, the new Audi S3 has a six-speed, close-ratio manual gearbox. Gearshift travel has been reduced for the S3, permitting even sportier and more precise gear changes. As is the case for all Audi S models, the new S3 drives all four wheels by means of quattro permanent four-wheel drive. An electronically controlled hydraulic multi-plate clutch, positioned at the rear for the benefit of weight balance, distributes the torque as needed – delivering plenty of grip and maximum driving safety. All the drivetrain components have been strengthened to cope with the high level of engine torque.

Handling: lightning-fast reactions

In terms of handling, the Audi S3 exhibits all the qualities of a high-performance sports car, responding immediately to steering movements and achieving high cornering speeds. The innately sophisticated suspension of the A3 – with subframes front and rear, triangulated lower wishbones at the front and four-link suspension at the rear – has been further refined.

The springs and shock absorbers have been given firmer ratings, with the result that the S3 sits 25 millimetres lower than an A3 with standard suspension.

The pivot bearings and wishbones made from aluminium reduce the unsprung weight, further enhancing dynamic response and comfort. Stiffer suspension mounts and a sportier characteristic for the electromechanical steering provide even greater precision.

18-inch alloy wheels and 225/40 tyres ensure firm adhesion to the road surface. A 17-inch brake system with sports brake pads guarantees optimum deceleration; the black painted callipers bear the S3 logo at the front.

The extras also include a leather steering wheel with flat-bottomed rim and – in the quattro GmbH range – folding bucket seats.

In the infotainment area, Audi is presenting a new generation of audio systems. The premium package is rounded off by universal interfaces for mobile phone and iPod, plus a sound system from Bose with eight high-performance speakers.

In Australia, the S3 is priced at \$65,500 rrp.

At a glance:

The new Audi S3

- Compact **dimensions**: L 4.21 m, W 1.77 m, H 1.40 m, wheelbase 2.58 m
- Dynamic **body details** such as roof spoiler and diffuser
- Sports car calibre **performance**: 0 – 100 km/h in 5.9 s, top speed 250 km/h (governed)
- Powerful **turbo engine** with direct injection: 188 kW, 330 Nm
- Extensive **reinforcements** on the engine and transmission
- Low-g geared **six-speed gearbox**
- Outstanding traction thanks to **quattro** four-wheel drive

- Firmer **suspension settings**, ride height 25 mm lower
- **Lightweight aluminium components** on the front axle
- **18-inch alloy wheels** of S design
- **High-performance brake system** with sports brake pads
- **Sportily configured, precise electromechanical steering**

- **Xenon plus headlights** and daytime running lights as standard
- **Deluxe automatic air conditioning** as standard
- **Sports seats** at front as standard
- Specially designed **S instrument cluster**
- **Multifunction leather sports steering wheel**, 3-spoke design
- Latest-generation **audio systems**
- **Sound system** from Bose
- **Navigation systems** with MMI operating logic (optional)

Long version

Power and dynamism - The new Audi S3

The previous S3 had already raised the yardstick for dynamism in the premium compact class to new heights. The new S3 now takes up pole position in its market segment – with an array of outstanding technical features, 188 kW output and quattro permanent four-wheel drive.

In common with all other S models from Audi, its impressive performance adheres to a rigorous principle – the idea of delivering an unadulterated driving experience that does not in any way undermine its suitability for everyday driving.

Performance

Two figures express its power, both of them among the best in the sporty compact class: from 0 to 100 km/h in 5.9 seconds, and a governed top speed of 250 km/h. The new Audi S3 offers the power and performance of a sports car. Its turbocharged two-litre, four-cylinder engine with FSI direct injection develops 188 kW at 6,000 rpm.

With an unladen weight of just 1,455 kilograms, each kilowatt of the S3 needs to propel only 7.73 kg – that, too, is a figure that places it among the super-speedy.

The S3, a sports car built for everyday driving, is perfectly primed for high performance in every detail. Its entire drivetrain has been reinforced to enable it to handle the engine's forces reliably. The turbocharger and engine block have undergone extensive modifications that make it supremely powerful and resilient and in all conditions.

Bite and pulling power

There are two sides to the powerful TFSI engine. On the one hand, it generates silky-smooth sports performance – with forceful response to the accelerator, revving with relish, and an ample, sonorous effect from the two oval chrome tailpipes. On the other hand, it is supremely calm.

It glides along in relaxed fashion at a torque plateau of 330 Nm, which is available as low down as 2,500 rpm and remains constant up to 5,000 rpm, with ample reserves in every situation.

The out-and-out sporty character of the new S3 is complemented by the six-speed manual gearbox. It efficiently passes on the engine torque to the quattro drive – power transmission to all four wheels secures the S3 a unique position in its class. Gripping the road securely as it emerges from bends, and with permanent driving safety in all weather conditions, quattro technology is a highly effective way of using this powerfully compact car's propulsion at any time.

The elaborate sports suspension with the four-link rear suspension gives the S3 dynamic self-steering behaviour. This fast, compact vehicle seems to crave for any bend in the road, with its imposing 18-inch alloy wheels and size 225/40 tyres; it takes corners at high speed, unruffled and with virtually neutral self-steering behaviour.

The performance package is rounded off by a high-grip 17-inch brake system with sports brake pads as standard. The brake callipers are painted black and adorned at the front with the S3 logo.

Exterior design

Powerful and athletic are two epithets that aptly characterise the exterior design of the new Audi S3. With its muscular, taut outline, the A3 was already considered a decidedly sporty car in the premium compact class. On the S3, special details lend added emphasis to its high-performance character.

At the front end, the double chrome slats in the single-frame radiator grille that bears the red and silver S3 emblem are particularly striking.

The accentuated front spoiler hints at an aerodynamic concept that is designed for increased downforces, and the enlarged inlets provide a pointer to the powerful engine's performance potential. The pronounced tapering of the front bonnet and the dynamic shape of the clear-glass headlights complete an impression of self-assuredness.

Xenon Plus headlights with daytime running lights and front fog lights are included as standard on the new S3.

The sides: wide sills

The side view of the three-door S3 likewise creates an impression of power and substance. The sides are dominated by the modified, wide sills which underscore the car's road-hugging character. The imposing S-design 18-inch wheels signal the car's potential even when stationary and the black brake callipers with the S3 logos can be glimpsed through them.

The aluminium-look exterior mirror housings and the roof edge spoiler painted in the body colour add a striking highlight to the shapely silhouette. The visual emphasis of the S3 is at its tail end: it makes the entire vehicle, which sits 25 mm lower down than the A3, appear crouched, as if ready to pounce.

The dimensions: 55 mm extra length

Compared with the predecessor model, the wheelbase has grown by 59 mm to 2,578 mm. Similarly, it has gained 55 mm in length, to 4,214 mm, and 2 mm in width to 1,765 mm. The height of the vehicle has now fallen by 16 mm to 1,399 mm. The result is a relaxed, coupé-like silhouette, the effect of which is further reinforced by the more inclined C-post and the lower window strips.

Thanks to intensive aerodynamic fine-tuning, the drag coefficient is just 0.33.

In summary, changes to the new S3 include;

Wheelbase	+ 59 mm
Length	+ 55 mm
Width	+ 2 mm
Height	- 16 mm

At the rear of the new Audi S3, the new S-specific bumper in conjunction with the roof spoiler creates a memorable impression. It integrates a platinum grey diffuser that improves downforce at the rear wheels. The two large oval tailpipes are positioned on the left-hand side of the vehicle, and have a chrome finish in the typical style of the S models.

Together with the rear lights, the shoulder line and the dynamic line, which are also clearly identifiable at the rear, help to structure the surfaces. With its trapezoidal shape, the entire section reinforces the strong, muscular appearance of this powerful compact car. The S3 emblem is likewise displayed at the rear.

Exclusive colour: Solar Orange

As well as the three standard body colours Ibis White, Brilliant Red and Brilliant Black, there are also eight optional colours for the new Audi S3 including Silver metallic, Dolphin Grey metallic, Phantom Black pearl effect, Moro Blue pearl effect, Deep Green pearl effect, Sprint Blue pearl effect, Imola Yellow and Solar Orange. The latter three colours are specifically for the S range. The colour Solar Orange is exclusively available for the new S3.

Interior design

The interior conveys a sporty atmosphere, top-quality materials and painstaking workmanship. Numerous carefully crafted details inside the car likewise serve as pointers to the power of Audi's everyday sports car.

In the centre console and rear doors/side sections, the inlays are in black 'Piano finish', but are also available in matt brushed aluminium or fine grain birch wood grey at no extra charge.

The four circular instruments have a special look, with their grey dials and white needles – they are reminiscent of the precision chronometers that are used in the world of motor sport. The instrument cluster also accommodates the computer's display that shows the road speed digitally and – a new function – can also indicate lap times on a racing circuit, as in the RS 4.

Leather sports steering wheel reminiscent of a racing car

The substantial rim of the optional leather sports steering wheel, which belongs to the new generation of Audi steering wheels, has a flat lower edge – a trait adopted from motor sport that also facilitates entry and exit.

The steering wheel is weight-optimised by virtue of a rigid but light skeleton of diecast magnesium. The steering column can of course be adjusted longitudinally and in height, as is customary in an Audi.

The S3 initials are displayed on the steering wheel, the fittings, the gear knob and the door sills, and light up to greet the driver on the optional navigation system plus. The lever and the strips, as well as the four circular, very three-dimensional air vents and the pedals, have a high-quality aluminium look. The headlining is in either black or silver. The dynamic atmosphere of the new S3 includes the front sports seats with prominent lateral supports for the back and thighs.

Silk Nappa leather is standard, with an small additional charge for two-tone leather. quattro GmbH can in addition supply seats with an orange-coloured centre section. All combinations feature colour-coordinated seams for the floor mat piping, gear lever gaiter, handbrake handle and steering wheel rim.

From quattro GmbH: folding bucket seats

The front seats are located in a low, sporty position and can be adjusted in height. Alternatively, quattro GmbH can supply 'Audi exclusive' bucket seats with folding function – providing optimum lateral support and introducing a note of motor sport flair.

As always with Audi, the interior bears the hallmark of top-quality materials and a meticulously crafted finish; the soft foam-backed skin of the instrument panel is just one example of this. Nor does the new S3 fall short when it comes to ergonomics. All the switches, buttons and levers, including the controls for the standard deluxe automatic air conditioning, are arranged logically around the leather sports steering wheel and on the wide centre console, which is connected to the centre tunnel by two webs. There are convenient-to-use storage facilities and drinks holders for all passengers – the interior fits like a made-to-measure suit.

The interior: 55 mm extra length

The longer wheelbase compared with the previous model is translated almost entirely into extra length for the interior compartment, which has grown by 55 mm in length. The rear passengers benefit from substantially more knee room (+29 millimetres). And both rows of seats enjoy substantially more shoulder room (rear +23, front +42 millimetres). The easy entry function on the front seats facilitates access to the rear compartment. Height adjustment of the front seats is a standard feature of the Audi S3.

The volume of the luggage compartment, which incorporates two handy bag hooks, is ample even for more involved logistical undertakings. The luggage capacity in the basic configuration is 281 litres, increasing to 1,011 litres with the bench seat folded down.

High-strength and ultra-high-strength steel components account for 62 percent of the new S3's panels. With its uncompromising torsional rigidity, the body provides an excellent basis for super-sporty handling and dynamic movement.

Drivetrain

The TFSI engine in the new S3, with a displacement of 1984 cm³, is the logical evolution of the Audi four-cylinder engine that is one of the group's most successful engines ever. Compared with the 1.8-litre power unit of its predecessor, in the new S3 it has gained 23 kW and 50 Nm of torque.

The competition-beating hallmark of the TFSI is the way it creates a synthesis of two performance-boosting technologies that complement each other perfectly – turbocharging, which brought Audi rally driving victories as long as 20 years ago, and FSI petrol direct injection, likewise developed by the Ingolstadt-based manufacturer.

These two technologies transformed the sports car prototype Audi R8 into a record-breaking winner of the Le Mans 24 Hours, making it a legend in its own time. By the time it was superseded by the R10 in summer 2006, it had won 64 of the 80 races in which it had participated.

Triple victory: three times "Engine of the Year"

The technology that has caused a sensation in the stiffest challenges in the world is likewise proving a success in production use. A jury of international trade journalists voted the two-litre TFSI engine their

"Engine of the Year" on three successive occasions, in 2005, 2006 and now 2007 in recognition of its innovative technological package.

An FSI engine uses fuel more efficiently than a conventional indirect injection engine. It generates more power on lower fuel consumption when operating at part loads – another typical example of "Vorsprung durch Technik" from Audi.

In the FSI engine, the fuel is injected at a pressure of up to 110 bar into the combustion chambers, where a homogeneous fuel-air mixture of $\lambda = 1$ (one part fuel to 14.7 parts air) is formed.

Flaps in the intake tract, which also features a two-stage variable intake manifold, induce a rolling type of movement in the incoming air. The injectors atomise the fuel into this "tumble" inside the combustion chambers.

During direct injection, as the fuel evaporates it extracts heat from the combustion chambers. This effect solves the fundamental problem encountered in conventional turbocharged engines – the high amount of heat generated, and the engine's resulting tendency to knock, which normally necessitates a reduced compression ratio.

On the TFSI, Audi's engineers achieved a compression ratio of 9.8:1 – an extremely impressive figure for a turbocharged engine. This substantially improves the engine's thermodynamic efficiency. The intake camshaft, which can be adjusted continuously through 42 degrees crankshaft angle, contributes towards optimum cylinder charging. Two balancing shafts rotating at twice the crankshaft speed compensate for the second-order mass forces.

Fundamentally stronger: the engine block

Compared with its starting version with an output of 147 kW, the 188 kW engine of the S3 represents another evolutionary leap. Pistons with stronger pins and new rings as well as reinforced connecting rods with new bearings transmit the powerful forces to the crankshaft.

The cylinder block has been reinforced at the main-bearing pedestals and the main-bearing cap. The cylinder head consists of a new, extra-lightweight aluminium-silicon alloy that exhibits high temperature resistance and strength.

The exhaust camshaft timing and the high-pressure injectors with increased cross-section have been adjusted to accommodate the increased power output.

The new turbocharger has a larger turbine and compression rotor than the basic unit. Its cast steel casing – produced as a single piece including the manifold – withstands exhaust gas temperatures of up to 1,050 degrees. The turbocharger generates a boost pressure of 1.2 bar instead of 0.9 bar on the starting version.

The intercooler: 850 kg of air per hour

An intercooler drastically lowers the temperature of the compressed air, thus increasing the amount of air that is necessary for combustion. Both its housing and the mesh through which the air passes are made from aluminium; the depth of the mesh has been increased, resulting in considerably greater efficiency. The intercooler is capable of an air throughput of up to 850 kilograms per hour or, put another way, over 650,000 litres of air.

The new high-performance turbo engine tips the scales at only 152 kilograms, significantly less than comparable engines from direct competitors – with a positive impact on the axle load distribution and therefore on handling characteristics. With its compact dimensions – it is just 652 mm long, 648 mm wide and 666 mm high – the TFSI is ideal for transverse installation.

Whatever tasks the driver wishes the engine to perform, the powerful TFSI accomplishes them with ease, thanks to its 188 kW at 6,000 rpm. As a high-performance sports engine, it revs up effortlessly, responds intrinsically well to the throttle and produces strikingly sonorous acoustics.

The four-valve engine with undersquare configuration is simultaneously impressive for its powerful traction. It puts 330 Nm of torque onto the crankshaft even at engine speeds as low as 2,500 rpm, and is able to maintain this high level of torque up to 5,000 rpm.

Road performance: power and efficiency

The 2.0 TFSI accelerates the new Audi S3 from 0 to 100 km/h in just 5.9 seconds, then on to a governed top speed of 250 km/h. Over the standard driving cycle it consumes just 9.2 litres of fuel over 100 km – further proof of the forward-looking efficiency of TFSI technology developed by Audi.

Like the predecessor model, the new S3 is equipped with a closely spaced six-speed gearbox. Three-shaft technology and the weight-saving magnesium casing mean that it is compact and light – entirely in keeping with its decidedly sporty overall configuration. The gears and shafts have been reinforced with an eye to the higher torques to be transmitted, and gearshift travel is now shorter; gear changes are accomplished swiftly and with ease, along the precise gate.

In common with all other S models, the new S3 has four driven wheels – an advantage that its direct competitors cannot match. The nerve-centre of the quattro drive technology that was developed specifically for transverse engines is an electronically controlled, hydraulically actuated multi-plate clutch: this is where the engine's power joins forces with the transmission's intelligence.

This clutch is located at the end of the propshaft, in front of the rear axle differential – the installed position at the rear improves the axle load distribution. A package of plates running in an oil bath within the clutch housing can be pressed together by controlled hydraulic power. The higher the pressure becomes, the more drive torque is diverted continuously to the rear axle.

The hydraulic multi-plate clutch: a pressing matter

The design, with a separate oil supply and two axial piston pumps for a rapid pressure build-up, permits lightning-fast reactions when the driving conditions change – the clutch's control unit constantly analyses the situation on the basis of a wide range of data.

Depending on the degree of slip between the front and rear axles, an oil pressure that squeezes together the package of plates builds up. At its extreme, as much as 100 percent of the drive torque is diverted to just one set of wheels. The superimposed electronics are able to regulate the oil pressure and therefore the torque distribution as dictated by the situation. This equips the Audi S3 with maximum traction and slip-free acceleration from the moment it starts to move.

It also provides ample reserves for the transmission of cornering forces – S3 drivers consequently know they will benefit from optimum safety and lots of driving fun whatever the conditions. From the clutch to the wheel bearings, the drivetrain has been reinforced in every critical area, thus enabling it to transmit the engine's high propulsive power with confident ease.

Chassis

The premium compact A3 already features a very mature chassis design, all components of which have undergone some decisive improvements compared with the previous model. The engineers have refined it even further for use in the top sports model – the S sports suspension exhibits the qualities that one would expect of a sports car.

The springs and dampers are correspondingly firmer, in line with the car's ultra-sporty character, and the body is slung 25 mm lower. At 1,522 mm at the front and 1,506 mm at the rear, the new S3 now has a wider track. Imposing 18-inch wheels made from cast aluminium with size 225/40 tyres are standard.

The front axle: even more lightweight aluminium components

The front suspension uses a classic design principle – a McPherson structure with spring struts, triangular lower wishbones and an anti-roll bar. The aluminium subframe is bolted to the longitudinal member, keeping the forward structure very rigid. The wishbone consoles are equally of aluminium. On the S3, the pivot bearing and the triangulated wishbone are likewise made from aluminium – this optimises the weight distribution between the two axles and benefits the unsprung weights, which are important for the handling characteristics and ride comfort.

The front-axle bearings have been updated compared with the A3, for an even more spontaneous steering response and even more precise handling.

The electromechanical steering familiar from the A3 has been matched to the S sports suspension, with the result that it gives the driver optimum feedback from the road in every situation. It remains largely unsusceptible to feedback from the drivetrain.

Unlike a hydraulic assembly, it only uses energy whenever the steering is actually being turned. The S3 reacts to all steering commands with high precision and spontaneity. The self-steering behaviour is neutral right up to the very high handling limit, which signals itself to the driver through slight understeering.

The rear axle: three wishbones and one trailing link.

The rear axle, notable for its excellent handling from the A3, has remained unchanged in terms of its basic components; its springs and dampers have been adjusted to settings typical of a sports car. The four-link structure comprises two lower wishbones, one upper wishbone and one trailing link. All links are made from high-strength steel grades.

The three wishbones are connected to the aluminium subframe by means of relatively rigid mounts, in the interests of optimum directional stability; the subframe, which also supports the anti-roll bar and the quattro final drive, is bolted to the floor assembly.

The coil springs and gas-filled shock absorbers are arranged separately, permitting a larger through-loading width in the luggage compartment.

Benefit: soft longitudinal response

The elaborate structure combines a whole raft of advantages. It is lightweight and compact, and can absorb the longitudinal and lateral forces acting on it independently. The advantage of this is that each bearing can be tuned precisely depending on its function. On the one hand, the engineers have achieved a very high degree of transverse rigidity for optimum driving dynamics, while on the other hand the trailing links are set up soft enough to provide outstanding ride comfort.

The brake system is closely in tune with the talents of the Audi S3. Four large-dimension, ventilated disc brakes provide safe, dependable deceleration. The front discs measure no less than 345 mm in diameter. The black-painted callipers, sporting the S3 emblem, house sports brake pads that combine high performance with incisive response.

The brake management: ESP and EDL

A brake assist system that automatically builds up full pressure in the system in emergency situations is part of the standard specification, as is the ESP electronic stabilisation program. It integrates such features as the electronic differential lock EDL, which applies the brakes to enhance traction when accelerating whenever the grip beneath the wheels is inconsistent.

ESP intervenes subtly and precisely. If the driver presses the brakes hard, he experiences the pedal as direct, taut and progressive, with short free travel.

Equipment

It is in the very genes of all Audi S models that they come with highly sophisticated, exclusively sporty equipment. The new S3 has a host of features that are taken straight from the luxury car class.

These include xenon plus headlights as standard equipment. They are combined with economically dimmed bulbs that constantly produce light for daytime running – a safety technology that Audi has played an instrumental role in pioneering. The adaptive light cornering lights are also available as an option. A headlight washer system and front fog lights round off the lighting technology.

By way of passive protection there are six airbags, including the sideguard head airbag system, extending all the way from the A to C-post, as well as the front airbags and the side airbags integrated into the seats. In the event of a rear-end collision, the front seats cushion the upper body and support the head thanks to their special shape. Belt force limiters are fitted on all outer seats.

As with all Audi models, DataDot is a standard feature.

Driver information system: lap time display

The driver information system includes a digital speedometer and a new type of display for lap times on a racing circuit. There are other features supplied as standard which enhance comfort and convenience. Both front seats are adjustable in height, and a stand-up sun screen is integrated into the rear shelf. The deluxe automatic air conditioning gauges the position of the sun by sensor and then takes it into account in its control strategy, allowing the temperature to be adjusted in two separate zones for the driver and front passenger.

The interior's character is dictated by various exclusive details. The sports seats are upholstered in full leather and the multifunction leather sports steering wheel is standard, or optionally available with a flat-bottomed rim – this steering wheel can also be supplied with buttons for radio and telephone operation.

Aluminium applications, inlays in piano finish and headlining in a choice of black or silver create further sporty notes.

This powerful, compact car is also outwardly very distinctive – thanks to elements such as the roof spoiler, the front and rear aprons, the diffuser, the prominent sills and the S sports suspension with the large 18-inch wheels.

High-end sounds: sound system from Bose

There are also ultramodern, attractive features for the S3 in the field of communication – a standard universal mobile phone preparation and the latest-generation radio system of double DIN format with 6-stack CD changer.

The top-of-the range sound system from Bose, which operates with a six-channel amplifier and eight high-performance speakers, is also standard on this luxury vehicle.

The Audi S3 and its customers

The concept outwardly identified by the letter S represents an established philosophy at Audi; it has been the embodiment of sports power for over two decades. The S1 from 1985, the legendary final stage in the evolution of the Sport quattro for the Rally World Championship, came to epitomise triumphs in competition racing.

After this, Coupe S2 was the first production car allowed to use the letter as part of its name, making its first appearance with a 147 kW

(200 bhp) five-cylinder turbo engine as the successor to the "Ur-quattro" in 1990. The S2, too, now featured quattro four-wheel drive.

This combination of a turbo engine and quattro still enjoys immense appeal. A direct line of evolution can be traced between the S2, with its dynamic but refined character, and the new S3, which now spearheads the compact car line. In total, Audi has sold more than 170,000 S models, including 32,000 of the first-generation S3. The S3 is lean and precise in focusing on maximum sports performance. Alongside the S4, S6 and S8, it rounds off the successful S range.

On the growing market for high-powered compact cars, the new S3 is aimed at customers who express a keen interest in technical innovations.

They are young – with an average age of 38 – generally male, and with a relatively high income. On top of the driving fun and performance that the A3 offers, these customers are looking for a car offering considerable everyday utility for sport and leisure activities, but suitably differentiated by its exclusive equipment and visual finish.