GENERAL

audi a4 cabriolet audi s4 cabriolet quick reference

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Introduction

When the sun is high and the breeze is just right, nothing feels more exhilarating than a convertible that marries performance with luxury. Audi's lineup of cabriolets—particularly the **Audi A4 Cabriolet** and the **Audi S4 Cabriolet**—offers a compelling blend of German engineering, cutting edge technology, and stylish design. Whether you're a seasoned Audi enthusiast or a first time buyer, understanding the nuances between these two models is essential for making an informed decision. This article provides a detailed, quick reference guide to help you compare, contrast, and ultimately choose the cabriolet that best suits your lifestyle.

Why Choose an Audi Cabriolet?

Convertible driving is more than just an open top experience; it's a statement. Audi's cabriolets stand out for several reasons:

- Dynamic Design: Sleek lines, a retractable roof that folds in seconds, and a chassis tuned for balanced handling.
- Advanced Powertrains: From efficient turbocharged engines to high output sport models, Audi offers a range that caters to both daily commutes and spirited drives.
- Technology Integration: MMI infotainment, Virtual Cockpit, and driver assist systems make every journey comfortable and safe.
- Brand Heritage: Audi's commitment to precision engineering and quality craftsmanship gives owners confidence in reliability and longevity.

Model Overview

Audi A4 Cabriolet

The A4 Cabriolet is Audi's entry level convertible, combining everyday practicality with the thrill of open air motoring. It features a 2.0 liter turbocharged four cylinder engine, producing around 184 horsepower. The car's focus is on smooth power delivery, fuel efficiency, and a comfortable ride, making it ideal for city driving and weekend getaways.

Audi S4 Cabriolet

The S4 Cabriolet, on the other hand, is Audi's performance oriented convertible. Powered by a 3.0 liter twin turbo V6, it delivers approximately 349 horsepower, delivering a more dynamic driving experience. The S4's chassis tuning, sport suspension, and upgraded brakes set it apart for those who crave acceleration and handling precision.

Quick Reference: Side by Side Comparison

Feature	Audi A4 Cabriolet	Audi S4 Cabriolet
Engine	2.0L Turbo 4 Cylinder	3.0L Twin Turbo V6
Power (hp)	184 hp	349 hp
Torque (lb ft)	236 lb ft	369 lb ft
0 60 mph (s)	7.5 7.8	4.9 5.2
Top Speed (mph)	130	155
Transmission	7 Speed Dual Clutch	8 Speed Dual Clutch
Fuel Economy (city/hwy)	26/34 mpg	19/28 mpg
Price (starting MSRP)	$38,500	$55,000
Standard Features	MMI Touch, Virtual Cockpit, 18 inch wheels	All A4 features + Sport Suspension, 19 inch wheels, upgraded audio
Optional Packages	Premium Package, Sport Package	Advanced Package, Premium Package, Sport Package

Performance & Handling

Audi A4 Cabriolet Performance

The A4 Cabriolet’s 2.0 liter turbo engine delivers a smooth, linear power curve that is ideal for cruising and city navigation. Its 7 speed dual clutch gearbox ensures quick shifts, while the quattro all wheel drive system provides stability and traction across varied road conditions.

Audi S4 Cabriolet Performance

The S4’s twin turbo V6 is tuned for high output and responsiveness. With an 8 speed dual clutch gearbox, the S4 can accelerate from 0 to 60 mph in under five seconds. The sport suspension lowers the center of gravity, while the upgraded brakes (with larger rotors and ventilated discs) guarantee precise stopping power. Audi’s Dynamic Ride Control (DRC) allows drivers to select between Comfort, Sport, and Sport+ modes, tailoring the handling to personal preference.

Interior & Comfort

Design Language

Both models share Audi’s signature minimalist interior, featuring high quality materials, ergonomic layout, and a digital instrument cluster known as the Virtual Cockpit. The A4’s cabin emphasizes comfort and accessibility, while the S4’s interior integrates sport seats with additional bolstering and a more aggressive trim palette.

Seating & Space

- A4 Cabriolet: Two seats, 24.3 inches of rear legroom, 18.9 inches of headroom.
- S4 Cabriolet: Two seats, 24.5 inches of rear legroom, 18.9 inches of headroom.

Both models provide ample headroom and legroom for the driver and front passenger, but rear passengers are best suited for short trips due to limited space.

Climate Control

The A4 offers dual zone automatic climate control, while the S4 adds a third zone for rear passengers and an optional heated rear seat. Both models feature ventilated front seats for added comfort during warmer months.

Technology & Infotainment

MMI Touch Interface

Audi's MMI (Multi Media Interface) Touch system is intuitive and responsive. It supports voice command, smartphone integration (Apple CarPlay and Android Auto), and navigation with real time traffic updates.

Virtual Cockpit

The digital instrument cluster replaces traditional gauges with customizable displays, allowing drivers to view speed, navigation, and performance data in a single screen.

Driver Assistance

Standard safety features include adaptive cruise control, lane keeping assist, forward collision warning with automatic emergency braking, and a 360° parking camera. Optional packages add traffic sign recognition, blind spot monitoring, and a night vision system.

Fuel Economy & Efficiency

The A4 Cabriolet's smaller engine and lighter weight result in better fuel economy, especially in city driving. The S4's larger engine and sport tuning reduce mileage, but it compensates with higher power output. Both models are efficient for a convertible, thanks to Audi's advanced turbocharging and lightweight materials.

Maintenance & Ownership Costs

Routine Maintenance

Both models require standard maintenance such as oil changes every 10,000 miles, brake pad replacement every 30,000–40,000 miles, and tire rotations every 6,000 miles. The A4's lower engine displacement often leads to slightly cheaper consumables.

Warranty & Service

Audi offers a 4 year/50,000 mile warranty with a 12 year/100,000 mile powertrain warranty for both models. Certified pre owned programs can extend coverage and reduce out of pocket costs.

Insurance & Depreciation

Insurance premiums are typically higher for the S4 due to its higher performance and value. Depreciation curves are similar across the lineup, with the A4 holding its value slightly better because of its broader appeal.

Pricing & Packages

Base MSRP

The A4 Cabriolet starts around $38,500, while the S4 Cabriolet starts around $55,000. These figures exclude destination fees, taxes, and optional packages.

Optional Packages

- Premium Package: Softer leather seats, heated steering wheel, and upgraded audio.
- Sport Package: Sport suspension, larger wheels, and dynamic brake calipers.
- Advanced Package (S4 only): Adaptive LED headlights, active side mirrors, and a head up display.

Choosing the right package can significantly influence the driving experience and overall cost.

Pros & Cons

Audi A4 Cabriolet

- Pros: Affordable, efficient, comfortable, versatile.
- Cons: Limited performance, fewer premium features as standard.

Audi S4 Cabriolet

- Pros: Powerful engine, sport suspension, advanced tech.
- Cons: Higher price, lower fuel economy, more complex maintenance.

Buying Guide

1. Define Your Priorities: Performance vs. affordability, technology needs, and driving habits.
2. Test Drive: Experience both models behind the wheel. Pay attention to steering feel, braking, and cabin comfort.
3. Check the Roof Mechanism: Ensure the convertible top operates smoothly and the seal is tight to avoid leaks.
4. Inspect the Interior: Verify material quality, seat comfort, and electronics functionality.
5. Consider Financing & Incentives: Look for manufacturer rebates or dealer specials that may reduce the final cost.

Comparing with Competitors

When placed against rivals such as the BMW 2 Series Convertible, Mercedes Benz C Class Cabriolet, and the Porsche 718 Boxster, the Audi A4 and S4 Cabriolet offer a balanced mix of luxury, technology, and performance. The A4 is more comparable to the BMW 2 Series in terms of price and efficiency, while the S4 rivals the performance of the 718 Boxster, albeit with a higher price tag.

Conclusion

The Audi A4 Cabriolet and Audi S4 Cabriolet each bring a distinct set of strengths to the convertible segment. If your priority is an economical, comfortable, and stylish open air experience, the A4 Cabriolet is a compelling choice. For those who crave a high output engine, sport tuned handling, and advanced driver assist features, the S4 Cabriolet delivers a thrilling yet practical package.

Ultimately, the decision hinges on your driving style, budget, and the balance you seek between performance and everyday usability. With the quick reference guide above, you can weigh each factor confidently and select the cabriolet that best aligns with your lifestyle.

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