

Having got hooked on S-Types, automotive engineer Brian Burgess set about kitting his out... literally



My first experience of the S-Type was in 2009 when my son owned a pre-facelift 2000 model-year 3.0-litre. It was British Racing Green with cloth seats and a manual gearbox. The last time I had driven a Jaguar was in the early 1970s during my time as a motor engineer and the memories remain with me to this day, firmly implanted in the archives of my grey matter.

Driving the S-Type (X200) was a very different experience and I can remember getting into the car for the first time – the interior seemed to wrap itself around me in a very welcoming and reassuring way. I was immediately convinced that what would happen next would make me smile and I wasn't disappointed. However, once I had got over the initial, euphoric phase, I settled into the drive with my automotive engineer's hat firmly on my head.

I began to realise that particular car had not been very well looked after and was suffering early-model bugs. While the engine remained smooth and responsive, there were engagement issues with the clutch and the ride was a little unplanted – I'm guessing the latter was down to suspension arm bushing. The heater would only blow cold air, which was, I suspect, caused by a faulty heater control valve. The car also had the very common door-locking issues in that the offside rear door would not lock at all.

Having said all that, I really liked the car and returned from my test drive with my smile still in place. My son eventually sold the car in 2010.

Three years and one Mercedes 1.8 C-Class Kompressor later, he got the S-Type bug again and opted this time for a 2006 3.0 facelift model. What he came back with was a 2003 4.2-litre S-Type R. At first, I questioned why he would make such a choice but he said: "Have a drive Dad, see what you think." At this point, I didn't know what to expect. The first thing I had to master was the 'fly-by-wire' throttle control. It was reminiscent of using a firearm for the first time – i.e. don't pull the trigger – just squeeze it gently. What happened next was something I hadn't experienced since driving an E-Type for the first time... wow!

I 'squeezed' the throttle, opened it up and my body was thrust back into the very substantial seat. A pleasing whine was emitted from the supercharger as the car leaped to 80mph in no time at all. When I returned from my drive, all I could say to my son was: "Good choice!" That was it – I was smitten and had to have an S-Type.

Two months later and after looking at some awful examples, I finally opted for a one-owner, low-mileage (39k) and well maintained and driven 2005 3.0 SE in Jaguar Racing Green. Since 2013, my son and I have enjoyed driving and maintaining our two cars while attending as many Jaguar events as possible. Any maintenance work we do, we usually video and post on our YouTube channel, primarily for owner-driver interest, although having said that, we now have in excess of 6000 subscribers.

I have recently added a 2007 STR with just 19,000 on the clock to our stable and I'm really looking forward to driving it once it's safe to venture out of the house again.

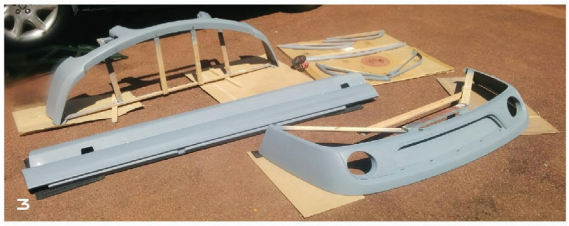
In the meantime, I have carried out some modifications and improvements to the 3.0 SE, which I thought I might share with you. The S-Type body kit was initially introduced as a dealer-fit option for the 2004 facelift model. When the XS model (which included the kit) was released towards the end of the run, it was supplied from the factory without the kit. The dealer got the kit free of charge via their parts department.

During the production life of the car, two body kit iterations were produced. The earlier one was fitted to the 2004/2005 facelift model and the later one to the 2007 end-of-run models, which had a remodelled front valance and mesh grilles. The rear valance, boot lip spoiler, side skirts

S-TYPE WITH ATTITUDE











Facing page: *Burgess Junior's original pre-facelift 3.0-litre from 2000*

This page:
1 *Moving onwards and upwards, the 2003 4.2 S-Type R that persuaded Brian to buy one*

2 *Now completely hooked, Brian adds this 2007 4.2 STR with less than 20k on the clock to his collection*

3 *The body kit sills and valances, primed and ready to fit*

4 *Scuffs and dents needed fixing before the body kit panels could be prepared for painting*

5 *The front and rear panels, complete with scuffs*



and tailpipes remained unchanged.

For those wishing to retrofit one of these kits to their 2004-2007 facelift car, there are two options: either buy the components from a Jaguar parts stockist such as Rimmer Bros in Lincoln, who still list some of the parts on their website; or pick up a previously owned 'kit', usually from an S-Type that has been or is being scrapped (expect to deal with a breaker).

Buying new from a Jaguar parts stockist comes in at well over £1300 plus VAT and that doesn't include the £250-odd extra for painting it. A used (scrapped) one can set you back between £200 and £550 depending on how damaged and/or complete it is, and how savvy the breaker is.

I acquired my damaged kit via a Facebook Jaguar group link and paid £250 for it in 2017. Used kits will usually come with the front and rear bumper covers still attached because they use screws and super-strong double-sided adhesive foam tape for assembly of the valances to the bumper covers.

My kit was incomplete, with a few minor items missing and still had the bumper covers attached to the valances. Every plastic section (apart from the spoiler) was split or gouged from grounding and/or hitting kerbs.

Repairing, painting and fitting it required a lot of time and effort, but it was well worth it in the end and the result is very pleasing to the eye. The final cost to me was £250 for the kit, £40 for plastic filler, primer and consumables, and £250 for professional finishing in Jaguar Racing Green (Metallic – Code HGZ plus clear coat).

Once fitted, the body kit will reduce the car's ground clearance by roughly 3.8cm ($1^1/_2$ inches), hence the increased risk of grounding on kerbs and speed bumps. Consideration should also be given to jacking the car, too. While you can still use the scissor jack on the 'pinch weld' seam jacking points if you're very careful, you will not be able to get a trolley jack under the side of the car. I overcame this problem by driving it onto low-profile plastic ramps, which allowed access for the trolley jack. The new, profiled side skirts and extended rear valance mean you can't fit standard Jaguar mud flaps, either, because of their shape.



A full body kit comprises: front and rear valances, including polystyrene reinforcing panels; radiator grille surround in primer; mesh radiator grille; two steel brackets to connect the lower section of the rear valance to the rear bumper cover; three front valance mesh grilles (centre mesh and two fog lamp mesh grilles); one rear valance mesh grille; left- and right-hand fluted side skirts; boot lip spoiler, which is unique to the XS; two oval tailpipe trims; two adjustable tailpipe hanging brackets; extension spacer for the towing eye; rear towing eye aperture cover; and special expansion-type plastic clips for the side skirts.

If you would like to see more photos and full fitting instructions, feel free to email me at *jagtv.stype@gmail.com* quoting 'Body Kit Extra' in the subject line. Your message will then auto respond back to you with a link to my Google Drive source folder, where you can access the shared files. All emails and files are scanned by AVG Avast Business anti-virus software, by the way!

Top to bottom: *Mission accomplished: Brian's low-mileage Jaguar Racing Green 2005 3.0 SE complete with body kit; rear end kit fitted, including exhaust pipes*