

ASTON MARTIN DB9

PRE-PURCHASE PROTOCOL · V12 · ZF · VH STRUCTURE · VOLANTE · GT

Compiled from public sources, the Aston Martin DB9 family, its Model File and specialist review · Personal use only · v2.1

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This checklist is written for enthusiasts who want a base of knowledge: enough context to follow what a PPI specialist tells them, to read an inspection report a dealer hands over, and to understand what is being discussed in videos and forums. It does not replace the diagnosis or judgement of a qualified specialist or workshop, and it is not a tool for saving the cost of one. If you are not deeply familiar with these cars technically and are unsure about a vehicle's condition, our standing recommendation is simple: commission and pay a qualified PPI specialist of your choice, whether an official dealership, a marque specialist, or an experienced supercar specialist who knows the brand. The checklist gives you context; the specialist gives you the verdict.

A · BUYER CHECK · PROVENANCE & PAPERWORK

- ☐ Variant truth first: build year, facelift status, Coupé/Volante, manual or Touchtronic, GT — by chassis data.
- ☐ VIN campaign check across the ten-campaign ledger — pedal arm (04V538/13V228/14V010), park lock (05V513/17V796), battery cable (17V795), suspension bolt (10V449), 14V425/14V753/15V846 where the year applies.
- ☐ Oil-change history complete — the V12's VERY LOW RISK rating is conditional on it.
- ☐ Gearbox oil history per ZF recommendation, not the "lifetime" brochure.
- ☐ Cooling-circuit invoices: thermostat, hoses, pump — what was renewed, when.
- ☐ Battery age and maintainer regime documented.
- ☐ Accident file with structural documentation — bonded aluminium demands it.
- ☐ Early cars: Linn audio status — original, failed, or converted to Alpine.
- ☐ Manual cars: clutch and gearbox invoices — the collector variant is priced from its file.

B · BUYER CHECK · AT THE CAR

- ☐ Battery health first: voltage checked before any electrical fault is counted as a fault.
- ☐ Cold start filmed: even idle, no misfire — counters read afterwards.
- ☐ Cooling watched in traffic-style running: stable temperature, no creeping gauge, no coolant smell.
- ☐ Leak map from below: cam covers, oil cooler, front cover, steering, differential — dry is the quality marker.
- ☐ Touchtronic: soft shifts, kickdown, no flare — cold and warm.
- ☐ Manual: clutch bite, synchros, second gear specifically.
- ☐ Tyre wear read as geometry evidence: uneven shoulders are a suspension finding.
- ☐ Corrosion walk: door bottom edges, arches, boot edge, steel/aluminium junctions, rear subframe.
- ☐ Electrics round: TPMS, seats, windows, nav screen, audio, sensors.
- ☐ Interior ageing: dash leather shrinkage, headliner, bolsters, switches.
- ☐ Carbon ceramics where fitted: chips, cracks, edge condition sighted.
- ☐ Volante: roof cycled, seals, drains, rear-window heater, carpet moisture.

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C · SPECIALIST PPI SCOPE (MINIMUM)

- ☐ Compression test; borescope on any doubt — then the oil history read against it.
- ☐ Misfire counters and lambda values read; coil-pack condition assessed.
- ☐ Cooling system pressure-tested; thermostat and hose age judged.
- ☐ ZF adaptation values read; oil condition assessed against the service history.
- ☐ VH structure: bond lines, subframes, repair traces — geometry printout on any doubt.
- ☐ Suspension play itemized corner by corner; alignment measured, not assumed.
- ☐ Galvanic corrosion at mixed-material points assessed and photographed.
- ☐ Battery load-tested; charging system and quiescent drain measured.
- ☐ Campaign closure verified in the dealer system across the ledger.
- ☐ Carbon ceramics: remaining thickness measured — a number, not an impression.
- ☐ Volante: hydraulics, drains and roof control function-tested.
- ☐ Typical full specialist PPI cost, rounded orientation (2026):
≈€500–1,000 / ≈£450–900 / ≈\$550–1,100. Indications — obtain current local quotes.

"The DB9's certainties are the V12 and the ZF box — buy the cooling, the ignition, the geometry and the file. Late car, full history, GT if you can."

Deep dive: Supercar Models Paper 64 · Model File 64 · Owner's Intelligence series.

D · PRICE & INVESTIGATION ITEMS

V12 and ZF are the certainties: the price sits in cooling, ignition, suspension, battery/electrics, corrosion at the junctions — and the file.

- ☐ Coil-pack service due: mid four figures — priced before purchase.
- ☐ Cooling backlog: circuit renewal quoted as a package, not patched.
- ☐ Suspension revision due: mid four figures — itemized from the play list.
- ☐ Carbon-ceramic wear: replacement high four to five figures — measured and priced.
- ☐ Galvanic corrosion findings: bodywork quotes from aluminium-competent shops only.
- ☐ Missing ZF oil history: a service now, and the "lifetime" story discounted.
- ☐ Linn failures on early cars: conversion priced, originality noted for collectors.
- ☐ Open campaigns: closed before money moves — or priced as risk.
- ☐ Negotiate from the documented file: the cheap DB9 with backlog is the expensive one.

E · RED FLAGS · WALK-AWAY OR ESCALATION

- Structural repair on the bonded aluminium without specialist documentation.
- Misfires waved off as "it just needs a drive".
- Creeping temperature explained as "they all run warm".
- No oil-change evidence behind a "perfect" V12.
- Electrical fault cascade on an old battery — sold as individual defects.
- Uneven tyre wear dismissed while the geometry goes unmeasured.
- Campaign status unverifiable where the build year is affected.
- A seller who refuses the cold start or the lift.
- A car whose findings cannot be named, quantified and priced.

F · FIRST WEEK OF OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Baseline stored: compression, misfire counters, adaptation values, leak map, geometry printout.
- ☐ Battery on a maintainer; service reset to the calendar doctrine — oil, coolant, brake fluid, ZF oil.
- ☐ Purchase file, campaign record and PPI report archived.