

MCLAREN 720S

40

The car that changed McLaren - hypercar performance, engineering maturity, and a fault map the whole market knows

~5,000-5,500

Registry-estimated build,
Coupé and Spider - the
highest-volume Super Series

720 PS

M840T 4.0-litre - not an
enlarged M838 but an
extensively redesigned engine

€190-320K

Current EU asking span,
Coupé to Spider - depreciation
has slowed noticeably

~€2-3K

Per PCC II accumulator - the
hydraulics return, improved;
still wear items

01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 720S is the car that changed McLaren. Introduced at the 2017 Geneva Motor Show as the second-generation Super Series, it looked like an evolution and was in truth nearly all-new: the Monocage II carbon structure, the extensively redesigned 4.0-litre M840T, the second generation of ProActive Chassis Control, transformed aerodynamics, a genuinely improved cabin and a redesigned electronics architecture. For many enthusiasts it is the first McLaren that successfully combined breathtaking performance with engineering maturity - and the market has gradually reached the same conclusion.

For the buyer, maturity means something specific, and it is this paper's governing idea: the faults are not absent - they are known. The accumulators of the returning hydraulic suspension remain wear items; the turbo inlet pipes are a documented preventative replacement; exhaust-manifold cracking is a documented issue on some cars; hose clamps weep, door struts tire, and the battery law of this series applies unchanged. Every one of these is mapped, priced and manageable - which makes an incomplete file on a 720S less excusable than on any McLaren before it. The platform grew up; the buying discipline does not relax, it sharpens.

Key Finding

The generational leap is real, not cosmetic. Monocage II, the M840T (not an enlarged M838 but an extensively redesigned engine: 720 PS, 770 Nm, 0-100 km/h in 2.9 seconds, 341 km/h), PCC II and a new electronics generation - visually evolutionary, technically transformed.

The fault map is public knowledge - and so is the fix history. Turbo inlets, manifolds, accumulators, hose clamps, early steering racks: all documented, all manageable, all expected in a complete file. Arguably the sweet spot between the analogue first-generation cars and the more expensive 750S, on the strict condition the file kept pace.

Depreciation has slowed noticeably. Coupés at roughly €190-260K and Spiders €240-320K in current asking terms, with values stabilised relative to earlier McLarens - the 720S is increasingly recognised as one of the defining supercars of its generation, and original, well-maintained cars carry that recognition.

02 THE MARQUE AND THE CAR

Visually evolutionary, technically a clean sheet - the 720S is where McLaren stopped iterating and started defining.

The 720S replaced the 650S in 2017 and ran to 2023, in Coupé and Spider form, at an estimated 5,000-5,500 cars - the highest-volume Super Series model, with the usual caveat that McLaren publishes no official totals. Its position in the range was transformative in both directions: it embarrassed cars a class above on performance while resolving the first generation's rough edges, and it seeded the family this series will follow next - the 765LT (Paper 41) took its architecture to Longtail extremes, and the 750S carried it forward as the current Super Series car, close enough in concept that the market now treats the 720S as its accessible twin.

The theatre survived the maturing: dihedral doors, the folding driver display, a shape that made the eye-socket headlight intakes one of the decade’s most recognisable supercar faces - and the full-width active rear wing, working as downforce surface and airbrake in one moving element, which remains one of the car’s defining technical features.

MCLAREN CHARACTER

McLaren builds to a different brief than the marques this series has covered before: lightness first, function-led aerodynamic design, hydraulic steering feel and engineering purity over visual theatre. Each model in these papers is judged against that philosophy - not against Ferrari’s romance or Lamborghini’s drama. The 720S is the philosophy’s proof of concept at scale: the car where the purity finally arrived without the first-generation tax - and where the brand’s steepest-in-segment depreciation finally began to flatten.

03 ARCHITECTURE: THE SECOND GENERATION, PROPERLY NEW

A new tub, a new engine, the hydraulics reborn - the familiar silhouette is the least new thing on the car.

Monocage II extends the carbon philosophy upward: where the MonoCell and MonoCell II of Papers 36-39 formed a tub, the 720S structure integrates the upper architecture, gaining rigidity, noticeably easier entry and exit, and the glasshouse visibility owners praise - a very McLaren set of improvements, all from one structural decision. The M840T deserves its own sentence in the marque’s history: not an enlarged M838 but an extensively redesigned 4.0-litre (3,994 cc) twin-turbo flat-plane V8, dry-sumped, delivering 720 PS and 770 Nm through the proven seven-speed SSG - one of the defining engines of modern McLaren. And the suspension returns to the marque’s signature: ProActive Chassis Control II, the hydraulically interlinked architecture of Papers 36 and 37 in its second and much-improved generation - improved, not immortal: the accumulators remain wear items, and the inspection doctrine those papers established applies here in full.

MCLAREN 720S - SPECIFICATION

Production	2017-2023; ~5,000-5,500 Coupé and Spider (registry estimate; no official figure)
Structure	Monocage II - carbon tub with integrated upper structure; dihedral doors
Engine	M840T 4.0-litre (3,994 cc) twin-turbo V8, flat-plane crank, dry sump - extensively redesigned, not enlarged
Output	720 PS / 770 Nm; 0-100 km/h 2.9 s; 341 km/h
Gearbox	7-speed SSG dual-clutch, rear-wheel drive
Suspension	ProActive Chassis Control II - hydraulically interlinked, second generation; accumulators remain wear items
Succession	765LT (2020, Paper 41); 750S (2023) as the current Super Series car

04 THE SWEET SPOT ARGUMENT

Between the analogue first generation and the dearer 750S sits the car that does almost everything - at a price the market appears largely to have settled.

The 720S's market position is unusually easy to state and unusually well supported. Below it, the first-generation cars of Papers 36-37 offer the rawer, cheaper entry with the older electronics and the heavier known-issue load. Above it, the 750S offers a refined version of the same recipe at new-car money. The 720S sits between them with genuine hypercar performance, everyday usability, comparatively mature engineering, strong parts support and a specialist ecosystem that knows the car completely - the combination many specialists now describe as the sweet spot of the modern range. Unlike the 12C's long fall, depreciation has slowed noticeably: values have stabilised relative to earlier McLarens, and the car is increasingly recognised as one of the defining supercars of its generation - an observation the recorded market supports, stated with this series' usual restraint about the future.

Within the band, the premiums follow the series' standing pattern - documentation, originality, specification - with the 720S-specific addition that the fix history is now part of the value: turbo inlets already replaced, manifolds inspected or repaired on record, accumulators invoiced, campaigns complete. On a mature platform, the market pays for the car that kept pace with the map.

05 THE SYSTEMS: THE KNOWN MAP

Nothing here is a surprise anymore - which is exactly what makes the incomplete file inexcusable.

The hydraulics, second generation. PCC II is one of McLaren's greatest engineering achievements and the single most important inspection domain, exactly as its ancestors were in Papers 36 and 37: accumulator condition, pump behaviour, ride-height consistency, nose-lift operation, warnings and leaks - improved over the 12C era, still built around wear-item accumulators at €2,000-3,000 each, still demanding McLaren-literate inspection rather than conventional intuition.

The turbo system - the 720S's own chapter. Two documented items lead the map. The turbo inlet pipes are a known preventative replacement at €1,000-2,500 - early components can fail, and the informed fleet replaces them before they do. Exhaust manifolds are the heavier item: heat cycling eventually affects the welds, cracking is documented on some cars, and repair runs €3,000-7,000 - so the PPI listens for boost inconsistency, unusual turbo noise and smoke - a cold-start ticking that fades as the metal expands is the classic early tell - and inspects the manifolds directly. Both items follow the series' IMS logic: already done, on invoice, converts the weakness into a selling point.

The rest of the map, quickly. Cooling: radiators, A/C condensers and intercoolers take the familiar stone diet - front condenser damage is very common - and small coolant weeps from hose clamps are a known inspection point - pressure-test, always.

Steering: early cars documented steering-rack issues and washer-hose-related corrosion - feel, leaks and knocking noises belong in every test drive. Doors: struts tire and latches can fault - operate everything, repeatedly. Body: read panel gaps and alignment honestly; on a carbon car the panels tell accident stories the tub conceals. Electronics: a generational improvement - folding driver display, infotainment, cameras, sensors all verified live, with most software problems long since addressed through updates on cars that stayed in the system. The battery law explains a share of the remaining electronic folklore - low voltage still triggers false warnings before anything is actually wrong - and it applies unchanged alongside the stone-nose PPF doctrine of the earlier papers, and the mechanical baseline protocol remains Paper 38's, with the hydraulic overlay of Papers 36-37.

PREVENTION HAS A PART NUMBER

The maturity dividend of the 720S is that its weaknesses come with part numbers and price tags: turbo inlets €1,000-2,500, accumulators €2,000-3,000 each, manifold work €3,000-7,000 - all known, all schedulable, none of them surprises. The preventative owner turns the entire list into invoices before the list turns into breakdowns; the deferred file turns the same list into a negotiation you should win or walk from. Most horror stories on this platform begin with deferred maintenance, not component failure - on the 720S, that series truth is literal and itemised.

06 MARKET AND MONEY

The market finished depreciating this car before it finished appreciating it - the gap is the opportunity.

Current European asking bands, mid-2026, recorded results below asking as always: 720S Coupé €190,000-260,000; Spider €240,000-320,000, carrying the open car's structural premium. Within the bands the premium follows the file - and on this model specifically, the fix history: the car with inlets done, manifolds clean on inspection, accumulators invoiced and campaigns complete trades at the top of its band and deserves to. MSO content deserves more than a mention on this model: MSO Defined and Bespoke paintwork, exposed-carbon body packs and bespoke interior commissions increasingly influence market values, and the spread between a standard car and a heavy-MSO example is now part of the market's structure rather than a curiosity. The option sheet is where that value is proven - and originality keeps its standing weight. The landmark-car recognition is an observation the market already records, not a promise this paper makes; whatever comes next will belong, as always, to the documented, unmodified, well-owned cars.

RUNNING COSTS - EUROPEAN OWNERSHIP (TYPICAL BANDS)	
Annual service	€2,000-3,500
Major service	€4,000-7,000
Hydraulic accumulators	€2,000-3,000 each; wear items by design - budgeted, not feared
Turbo inlet replacement	€1,000-2,500 - the known preventative item; done = a positive
Exhaust manifold repair	€3,000-7,000 where heat cycling has told; inspected at every PPI
Tyres	€2,500-3,500 per set
Carbon-ceramic brakes	€18,000-25,000 at replacement; measured, never assumed
Battery	€400-800; the conditioner law of the series applies unchanged

Bands from specialist and owner-community data, mid-2026; preventative maintenance runs considerably below deferred repair on this platform.

07 THE BUYING PROTOCOL

The series protocol underneath, the 720S map on top - and the fix history read as part of the price.

Level One - at the viewing. The series pass in full: battery voltage first, a genuinely cold start, warning lights through the cycle, the records without hurry. Then the 720S items: hydraulic operation and nose lift heard and timed, steering felt for knocks and inspected for leaks, turbo response and any unusual noise on the drive, exhaust listened to warm, coolant level and clamp areas sighted, every electrical function operated - the folding display included - and panel gaps read around the nose and doors.

Level Two - the specialist PPI. The standard McLaren scan with stored codes interpreted; the hydraulic pressure test with accumulator readings; a dedicated turbo inspection - inlets, manifolds, boost behaviour; cooling-system pressure test; gearbox adaptation values; Monocage and pick-up-point inspection; paint-depth measurement including PPF edges, with inspection beneath the film where access allows - damaged panels are sometimes hidden under fresh PPF; ADAS and sensor calibration verified after any accident repair - increasingly relevant on this generation; software campaign status against the factory record; and the option sheet checked against the car's configuration.

Level Three - walk away. Incomplete history on a car whose fault map is public. Unresolved hydraulic faults. Turbo noise. Cracked exhaust manifolds priced as someone else's problem. Coolant leaks. Accident repairs affecting the Monocage without authoritative documentation. Neglected software updates. Persistent warning lights. The standing rule closes the list: the buyer who cannot walk away has already overpaid.

THE MATURITY RULE

Maturity does not mean the faults are absent - it means they are known. On the 720S the entire weakness list is public, priced and preventable, which removes the last excuse an incomplete file ever had: on an unknown platform a gap in the history is a risk, on a mapped one it is a decision. The rule joins the series' ladder after systems, originality, owner and receipt: buy the car that kept pace with the map - and price every deviation from it as if you will pay for it, because you will.

08 OWNERSHIP ECONOMICS AND SCENARIOS

Predictably expensive - the two best words in supercar ownership.

Preventative versus reactive ownership remains the entire distinction, and the 720S rewards the preventative owner more visibly than any McLaren before it because the preventative list is explicit. The independent specialist ecosystem knows this car completely - a mature network for a mature platform, measurably reducing long-term ownership risk. The scenarios model a well-bought €230,000 Coupé with sound fix history, driven 5,000-7,000 km per year, maintained on schedule.

OWNERSHIP SCENARIOS - WELL-BOUGHT COUPÉ (PLANNING BANDS)

Year 1	€3,500-7,000: entry inspection, annual service, battery and conditioner, turbo inlets if not yet done - the preventative entry ticket
Years 1-3	€10,000-18,000 cumulative: services, one tyre set, accumulators budgeted across the period, consumables
Years 1-5	€18,000-34,000 cumulative: adds a major service, possible manifold attention and door struts - against a value curve that has visibly flattened

[Flagged] Assumption-based planning bands from Section 06; deferred-history cars front-load these numbers into year one.

OWNERSHIP VERDICT - THE RATINGS

Reliability	□□□□ A meaningful improvement over the first-generation Super Series; the known issues are well understood and manageable with proper maintenance
Maintenance costs	□□□□ Still real money, but predictable - and preventative spending runs considerably below deferred repair
Parts availability	□□□□ Good factory support and a mature independent specialist network
Investment potential	□□□□ Increasingly viewed as a landmark McLaren; performance, engineering significance and an improving reputation - strongest for original, well-maintained cars

METHODOLOGY AND A NOTE ON VALUES

Built from public sources: McLaren model documentation (720S 2017-2023, Monocage II, M840T specification and performance figures, PCC II), specialist registry estimates for production (~5,000-5,500; stated as estimates, no official figure), owner-community data and independent-specialist documentation for the fault map - turbo inlets, manifolds, accumulators, steering, clamps - and the cost bands of Sections 05-08, and current European asking data, mid-2026. Recorded results run below asking. Assumptions are marked [Flagged]. Nothing here is investment advice.

09 SYNTHESIS

The first McLaren the market trusts - bought, like every McLaren, on the file, and priced, unlike any before it, on the map.

The 720S is where McLaren's modern project proved itself: the performance that embarrassed the class above, the maturity that answered the first generation's critics, and a fault map so thoroughly documented that ownership has become a discipline anyone can execute - which is precisely why the market has stopped punishing the car and started collecting it. Judged on the brand's own brief it is the purest large-scale statement of the philosophy yet; judged as a purchase it is arguably the modern range's sweet spot, priced between the analogue past and the 750S present.

The buyer's task is the series' whole ladder, executed on its friendliest terrain: the systems file of Paper 36, the originality discipline of Paper 37, the owner judged through the file as Paper 38 taught, the consumables receipt of Paper 39 - and this paper's own law on top: the map is public, so buy the car that kept pace with it. Inlets done, manifolds clean, accumulators invoiced, campaigns complete, panels true. Find that car, pay its fair premium without flinching, and the 720S delivers what no earlier McLaren quite could: a landmark supercar that behaves like one.

WHO SHOULD BUY THIS CAR

Ideal buyer: the enthusiast who wants the definitive modern McLaren and will maintain it preventatively; the first-generation owner stepping up to the resolved platform; the collector-driver who understands that on this car the fix history is part of the provenance.

Less suitable: the buyer stretching to the purchase price with nothing left for the preventative list - Paper 38's entry-owner lesson applies at every price point; and the bargain hunter drawn to the cheapest listing, because on a mapped platform the discount is the deferred work, itemised.

BOTTOM LINE

The car that changed McLaren: ~5,000-5,500 built, €190-320K, Monocage II, the M840T, hydraulics reborn as PCC II - hypercar performance with engineering maturity, and a weakness list that comes with part numbers. Depreciation has slowed, recognition continues to broaden, and the whole series' law stack applies on friendly terrain. The faults are known; the file is the proof; buy the car that kept pace with the map.

ONE-SENTENCE VERDICT

The faults are mapped - buy the car that kept pace with the map.

SOURCES

McLaren model documentation (720S, Geneva 2017, 2017-2023; Monocage II; M840T 4.0-litre, 3,994 cc, 720 PS/770 Nm, 0-100 km/h 2.9 s, 341 km/h; ProActive Chassis Control II; 765LT and 750S succession); specialist registry estimates for production (~5,000-5,500; no official figure); owner-community data and independent McLaren specialist documentation for the fault map - turbo inlet pipes as preventative replacement, documented exhaust-manifold cracking, accumulator service, hose-clamp weeps, early steering-rack and washer-hose corrosion reports - and the cost bands in Sections 05-08; current European asking data, mid-2026. Estimates are stated as estimates throughout.

Author. Uwe Riemeyer, Marque Intelligence (an IMP InterMediaPartners venture, est. 1976). This paper is research-led throughout, built on the disclosed perspective established in Paper 36. It is research and commentary, not investment advice; vehicle values fluctuate, and any purchase decision is the reader's own.