

ASTON MARTIN

DB9

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One architecture refined for twelve years, 2004-2016 - the first Gaydon Aston, the Virage between the lines, and the GT that closed the account

~16,500

DB9s built 2004-2016 across coupé, Volante and every phase - roughly twice the DB7's volume; value is segmented, never generic

450-540 bhp

Twelve years of the 5.9 NA V12 - from the 2004 original through the AM11 era to the 540 bhp DB9 GT of 2015-16

~1,000

Virage coupés and Volantes, 2011-2012 - eighteen months between DB9 and DBS, then absorbed by the 2013 revision

€30-220K+

The 2026 market span, deferred-maintenance early car to exceptional DB9 GT - the family trades as five markets, not one

01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DB9 did not stay in production for twelve years because Aston Martin failed to replace it; it stayed because the concept was exceptionally durable - elegant rather than aggressive, a naturally aspirated V12 set front-mid with a rear transaxle, bonded aluminium construction, genuine continental touring ability, and enough development headroom to be renewed repeatedly under one shape. First car out of Gaydon and first of the VH platform, drawn by Ian Callum and Henrik Fisker, the DB9 ran from January 2004 to July 2016: roughly 16,500 cars through three distinct phases - the 450 bhp original, the 470 bhp updates of 2009-2012, and the heavily revised 510-517 PS AM11 cars of 2013-2016 - plus the ~1,000-car Virage of 2011-2012 in the narrow space below the DBS, and the 540 bhp DB9 GT of 2015-16 as the end of the line. The thesis of this paper: the DB9 was not one car maintained for twelve years - it was one architecture progressively refined until it became the car it should always have been.

For the buyer, that history is the market. Beneath a shape that barely seemed to change sit several materially different ownership propositions, and the family trades accordingly: early cars at used-GT prices carrying restoration-grade to-do lists, developed middle cars as the value centre, the Virage as an undervalued rarity, and the GT already trading as a collector car. The buyer's distinction runs through every section: buy the early car on condition, the late car on development, the Virage on scarcity and balance, and the DB9 GT on end-of-line significance.

Key Finding

The model year is part of the condition. Twelve years of development created three phases plus two specials under one silhouette - and the DB9's greatest strength and greatest danger are the same: it looks so timeless that buyers forget how much it changed underneath.

The V12 is the strongest major component; the money lives around it - the labour-intensive timing-cover reseal, ignition ageing that can take the catalysts with it, a cooling system now priced by age, and the deferred-maintenance trap of a car that is inexpensive to buy and expensive to restore to its original position.

The market is five markets: UK auction medians of ~£24-32K blend everything and price nothing - while the DB9 GT benchmarks near US\$119K, Virages have traded at ~US\$46-71.5K against rarity that should say more, and rare manuals are beginning to separate. Segmentation, not the badge, sets the number.

02 THE ARCHITECTURE THAT BUILT GAYDON

First VH car, first Gaydon car - the structural foundation of the modern range.

The DB9 industrialised what the Vanquish pioneered: bonded aluminium, here as the VH platform - lighter and substantially stiffer than the DB7's steel, built in a new factory rather than a historic workshop, and flexible enough to underpin nearly every Aston Martin until 2016. The layout is the car's engineering signature: the V12 set back behind the front axle, a six-speed transaxle at the rear - Graziano manual or ZF Touchtronic - and near-perfect weight distribution driving through hydraulic steering that remains one of the family's great attractions.

Aluminium and composite panels hang on the bonded structure, which is generally strong but unforgiving of improvised repair: accident history on a VH car is a question of method - approved bonding procedures, jig measurement, photographed and invoiced - not merely of fact. The collector context completes the chapter: this is the first Gaydon Aston and the platform that built the company's modern era, and the market has barely begun pricing that historical position.

03 TWELVE YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Three phases, one interloper, one farewell - the family map that sets every price.

Phase I (2004-2008) - the original: ~450 bhp and 570 Nm, manual or automatic, coupé and Volante - the purest Fisker/Callum shape and the least developed car: suspension, brakes, electronics, calibration and build maturity all improved later. Phase II (2009-2012) - the quiet development years: ~470 bhp, revised damping and chassis calibration, better brakes, improved transmission programming and interior - original styling with many early weaknesses reduced, and often the family's best value. Virage (2011-2012) - eighteen months, ~1,000 cars: 497 PS, Touchtronic II only, adaptive damping, carbon-ceramic brakes commonly standard - a more composed, sporting DB9 without the DBS's aggression, commercially misunderstood then and interesting now. Phase III (2013-2016) - the heavy revision that absorbed the Virage's position: the AM11-generation V12 at ~517 PS and 620 Nm, revised body and front structure, ceramics, adaptive damping and a substantially upgraded interior - automatic only in normal production. DB9 GT (2015-16) - the finale: 540 bhp, sharpened calibration, model-specific trim, coupé and Volante - not radically different from a late DB9, but the most powerful, the last, and the natural collector choice, with the Bond Edition as its restricted sidebar.

DB9 & VIRAGE FAMILY - SPECIFICATION	
Phase I DB9 (2004-2008)	5.9 NA V12 · ~450 bhp, 570 Nm · 6-speed Graziano manual or ZF automatic · rear transaxle, hydraulic steering, steel brakes · the purest shape, the least developed car
Phase II DB9 (2009-2012)	~470 bhp · revised suspension, brakes, calibration and interior · the strong compromise: original styling, early weaknesses reduced
Virage (2011-2012)	~497 PS, 570 Nm · Touchtronic II only · adaptive damping, carbon-ceramics commonly standard · ~1,000 cars between DB9 and DBS
Phase III DB9 (2013-2016)	AM11 V12, ~517 PS, 620 Nm · revised structure and body, ceramics, adaptive damping, upgraded electronics · automatic only in normal production
DB9 GT (2015-16)	540 bhp, 620 Nm · Touchtronic II · sharpened response, GT trim · ~4.5-4.7 s to 100 km/h · short-run, not factory-numbered - end of the line
Production	~16,500 DB9s 2004-2016 (no full public per-variant breakdown) · ~1,000 Virage · first Gaydon car, first VH platform · Carbon and Bond Editions as documented specials

(Totals are presented as approximations by design - Aston publishes no convenient per-body, per-year breakdown, and GT production is short-run rather than factory-numbered; claims of exact counts deserve suspicion, not citation.)

04 THE V12 OWNERSHIP FILE

The engine is the strongest component - the expense lives in access, heat and deferral.

Timing-cover oil leakage - the five-star item. The front timing-cover gasket deteriorates and seeps oil down the engine's face, and the repair is labour-intensive because access demands substantial disassembly - commonly €3,000-4,500. Inspect the engine's front, belts and pulleys, and the undertray; distrust 'it's only the sump' without diagnosis; a mild mist is negotiable, an active leak contaminating belts is priced. Coils and plugs. Heat ages the ignition, especially on earlier cars: rough idle, hesitation, misfire codes - and a single failed coil argues for the full set, because access overlaps and the rest are the same age. Persistent misfires damage catalysts, which converts a four-figure service into a five-figure exhaust. Require plug and coil history, misfire counts and catalyst-efficiency codes, cold and hot. Oil behaviour - a puff after storage is age; persistent blue smoke, unexplained consumption or intake contamination is diagnosis. Mounts - worn mounts write vibration, driveline movement and harsher engagement into an otherwise healthy car. Cooling - the V12's heat now runs through age-priced hardware: radiator, condensers, pump, thermostat, hoses, fans - with the front exchangers collecting debris behind the grille. Temperature must hold under sustained load and through stationary fan cycling, not merely at idle. The engine verdict in one line: the V12 is usually the strongest major component - the expense lies in access, heat and deferred maintenance around it.

05 THE DRIVELINE AND CHASSIS FILE

Manuals, Touchtronic and two recalls - then bushes, ceramics and the steering that must not be vague.

The manual is rare and increasingly desirable - and not automatically the better car: clutch bite and slip, dual-mass flywheel noise, cold synchros and second gear, linkage, transaxle leaks - a tired manual outspends a serviced automatic immediately. The ZF Touchtronic is fundamentally robust: demand immediate drive and reverse engagement, smooth shifts cold and warm, no flare or shudder - and reject 'sealed for life' on a two-decade-old GT: a documented fluid and filter change is a positive. Two campaigns need VIN-level confirmation: the Touchtronic II park-pawl software recall (DB9, Virage and related models), and the early automatic-component recall affecting certain 2006 cars. Torque tube and differential - whine, vibration, clunks on load reversal: the separated driveline means noise has several possible homes, and diagnosis beats guessing. Suspension bushes and dampers - the DB9 is heavy, and tired components dull it disproportionately: a refreshed car feels far more modern than its age, a worn one soft, vague and unsettled. Adaptive damping on Virage and later cars needs mode changes, messages and ride height verified. Steering - hydraulic, and one of the car's attractions: leaks, pump noise, tie rods - vagueness is a defect, never 'Aston character'. Brakes - steel systems on stored cars need recommissioning; carbon-ceramics on Virage and late cars need edge, surface and impact inspection with specialist measurement, because replacement is potentially €15,000-25,000+ and low mileage proves nothing.

06 BODY, VOLANTE AND ELECTRONICS

Swan doors, rear lights, the roof's second ownership layer - and a car that hates weak batteries.

Exterior: swan-wing door struts weaken and strain hinges - check alignment, window drop and seals; rear lights condense and their originals are expensive; headlamps cloud and levelling fails; aluminium panels bubble near edges and around fasteners, and the sculpted bonnet is costly to refinish correctly - paint depth and panel alignment tell the repair story. The Volante adds a second ownership layer, not a worse car: full roof cycles observed, hydraulic pumps and cylinders, fabric, seals, rear glass, drains - and dampness hunted beneath carpets, rear trim and boot lining, where water finds modules. Slow or asymmetric roof movement is an investigation, not a quirk. Electronics: the DB9 is particularly sensitive to weak batteries - low voltage produces random warnings, gearbox faults, window, alarm, seat and locking gremlins that vanish under correct charge. Battery age, conditioner history and alternator output come first in any electrical diagnosis; a conditioner is not optional on an infrequently used car. The Volvo-era infotainment is dated but peripheral - function is money, replacement is expensive relative to car value. Recall housekeeping completes the file: seat-heater wiring, door-lock software (market-specific) and early battery-cable routing campaigns - verify all market- and VIN-specific campaigns through Aston Martin or the national recall database rather than assuming.

THE STORAGE LEDGER

The GT rules apply with a low-voltage accent: battery conditioner as standard equipment, fluids and brake fluid by calendar, tyres by date, regular runs to full temperature under load, the air conditioning used, the Volante roof cycled. Stored DB9s announce themselves through brakes, hydraulics and phantom electrics - and a full recommissioning runs €10,000-30,000+.

The deferred-maintenance trap is the family's defining hazard: the DB9 is inexpensive to buy relative to its original position, not inexpensive to restore to that position - the purchase price of a cheap early car can be less than the cost of correcting it.

07 MARKET AND MONEY

Five markets under one shape - segmented by phase, gearbox, body and file.

Aggregate numbers mislead here: UK auction medians around £24,000-32,000 blend early and late, coupé and Volante, history and neglect - they are not the value of a strong example. Read the family as five markets. Early cars are near the bottom of their depreciation curve, with the best manuals and colours beginning to separate. Phase II cars are often the family's best value - original styling, meaningful development. The Virage's public record (2026 sales roughly US\$46,000-71,500, low-mileage asks near US\$95,000) shows rarity not yet converted into premium - the sleeper case.

Late AM11 cars carry the strongest normal-production engineering, supported by official listings around £59,000-62,000 for 2015 cars. And the DB9 GT already trades separately - benchmarked near US\$119,000, materially above ordinary DB9s, thin and rising. The value drivers are the series' constants: phase, gearbox, body style, specification, structure and file - and the trajectory will not lift every car equally: expect increasing separation between GT and exceptional late cars, rare manuals, Virage coupés and strong documented examples on one side, and permanently cheap deferred-maintenance cars on the other.

DB9 & VIRAGE - INDICATIVE GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS, MID-2026

Early DB9 coupé (2004-2008)	Deferred maintenance €30-45K · good documented car €45-65K · excellent manual or unusual specification €65-90K+
Early DB9 Volante	Driver quality €35-50K · strong car €50-75K · excellent low-mileage example €75-95K+ - roof and water history decisive
Phase II DB9 (2009-2012)	Normal good car €50-75K · excellent specification and history €75-100K · rare manual potentially above - often the family's best value
Virage (2011-2012)	Ordinary documented car €55-75K · low-mileage strong coupé €75-100K · exceptional specification €100-125K+ - the public record still trails the rarity
Late DB9 (2013-2016)	Normal coupé €65-90K · strong low-mileage car €90-120K · Carbon Edition or exceptional specification €115-145K+
DB9 GT (2015-16)	Normal strong car €100-135K · excellent coupé €135-165K · exceptional, rare-colour or Bond Edition €165-220K+ - already a separate market (~US\$119K benchmark)

(Broad frameworks, not transaction values - aggregate medians blend five markets into one meaningless number; phase, gearbox, structure and file move cars between bands more than mileage does.)

MAINTENANCE - EUROPEAN PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Annual service	€1,500-3,000 · major service €3,000-6,000 - marque specialist with AMDS diagnostics
Ignition and catalysts	Coils and plugs €2,000-4,500 - deferred misfires convert into catalyst money
Timing-cover reseal	€3,000-5,000 - the access-driven signature repair
Cooling	System refresh €2,500-6,000 · pump and thermostat €1,500-3,000
Driveline	Manual clutch and flywheel €4,000-7,000 · automatic service €800-1,500 · automatic repair €4,000-10,000+ · torque tube/differential €3,000-8,000+
Chassis	Suspension refresh €4,000-9,000 · steel brake overhaul €2,000-4,500 · carbon-ceramic replacement potentially €15,000-25,000+
Body and comfort	Volante roof repair €2,000-8,000+ · air conditioning €1,500-4,000 · tyres €1,500-2,500
Full recommissioning	€10,000-30,000+ by storage history - the cheap car's true price

(Planning categories, not quotations. Five-year reserve: lightly used, sorted car €12,000-20,000 · regular use with one system refresh €20,000-35,000 · neglected early car needing oil, ignition, suspension and brakes €30,000-50,000+ - the deferred-maintenance trap in numbers.)

08 THE BUYING PROTOCOL

Cold start to AMDS scan - three levels, with the recalls verified by VIN throughout.

Level One - at the car, genuinely cold. Cold start, idle and misfire behaviour; oil evidence at the engine's front and undertray; transmission engagement cold and hot; differential and driveline noise; suspension knocks and damping modes; steering precision; brakes; every electrical function with battery voltage read first; door struts and windows; air conditioning; the Volante roof through full cycles; paint, panels and tyre dates. Then the file: annual history, coil and plug invoices, timing-cover work, gearbox servicing, cooling and suspension records, recall confirmations, battery and storage history. Level Two - the specialist PPI. Full AMDS scan with misfire counters, fuel trims and catalyst-efficiency history; compression and leak-down where justified; timing-cover inspection; cooling pressure test; transmission adaptations and fault history; torque-tube and differential inspection; suspension and alignment; brake measurement including ceramics where fitted; bonded-structure and accident inspection with paint-depth survey; Volante water-ingress test; VIN campaign verification. A specialist with factory-trained technicians and proper Aston diagnostics outranks any generic exotic workshop.

WALK AWAY - THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

Persistent misfires or catalyst damage without a repair plan · major oil leakage dismissed as normal · overheating history · harsh or slipping automatic · unresolved park-pawl recall · heavy torque-tube vibration · structural repair without bonded-aluminium documentation · water ingress on a Volante with failing roof hydraulics · multiple electrical faults blamed vaguely on 'just the battery' · ceramics of uncertain condition · seller resistance to an Aston-specialist PPI. On ~16,500 cars, the next DB9 is never far away - the discipline is waiting for it.

09 OWNERSHIP ECONOMICS AND SCENARIOS

Beauty at used-car prices - custody at Aston prices, and the arithmetic between them.

The scenarios model a well-bought Phase II coupé at around €65,000 with complete history, recent ignition and cooling work, a serviced automatic and refreshed suspension, driven 4,000-8,000 km per year with annual specialist service. The economics reward exactly that car: the purchase premium for a sorted example is almost always smaller than the correction bill on a cheap one, and the family's five-year reserves prove it - €12,000-20,000 for the sorted car against €30,000-50,000+ for the neglected early example whose price looked so reasonable. The late AM11 cars run the same books with newer hardware; the GT adds collector custody on late-build quality; the Virage adds ceramics to the watch-list; the Volante adds the roof. Across all of them the rule of this family holds: the DB9 is inexpensive to buy relative to its original position, not inexpensive to restore to that position - so buy the restoration already done, and keep it done.

OWNERSHIP SCENARIOS - WELL-BOUGHT PHASE II COUPE (PLANNING BANDS)

Year 1	€3,500-8,000: specialist entry inspection with AMDS scan, annual service, tyres by date, battery conditioning and storage discipline established
Years 1-3	€8,000-18,000 cumulative: annual services, one larger service, one age item - coils, cooling attention, door struts, minor electrics
Years 1-5	€12,000-20,000 lightly used, sorted car · €20,000-35,000 regular use with one system refresh · €30,000-50,000+ where deferred maintenance surfaces

(Assumption-based planning bands excluding storage and insurance premiums; carbon-ceramic replacement, structural repair and full recommissioning sit outside every band by definition.)

OWNERSHIP VERDICT - THE RATINGS

Reliability	□□□□	The V12 is robust and the platform proven - the risks are age items, deferral and stillness: ignition, cooling, timing cover, bushes, batteries
Maintenance costs	□□□□	Four-figure years with honest five-figure corrections - the trap is buying cheap and restoring expensively; ceramics rewrite any budget they enter
Parts availability	□□□□	Strong specialist network, AMDS diagnostics widespread, shared V12 ancestry - trim, lights and Volante components expensive relative to car values
Investment potential	□□□□	Segmented, not general: GT, rare manuals, Virage coupés and exceptional late cars lead; ~16,500 ordinary automatics will follow slowly if at all

MARQUE BUYING SCORE - ASTON MARTIN DB9 & VIRAGE

Category	Collector example (GT/Virage)	Driver example (Phase II/III)	Cheap early car
Reliability	7.5 / 10	7 / 10	5 / 10
Driving experience	8.5 / 10	8 / 10	7.5 / 10
Ownership cost	6 / 10	6.5 / 10	4 / 10
Parts availability	6 / 10	6 / 10	6 / 10
Long-term collectability	9 / 10	7 / 10	5.5 / 10
Investment potential	8.5 / 10	6.5 / 10	5 / 10

Scored on the fixed series rubric: an 8 in Reliability means the same across every marque and paper. The third column prices the deferred-maintenance trap - the family's defining hazard, hiding behind its lowest asking prices.

METHODOLOGY AND A NOTE ON VALUES

Built from public sources: Aston Martin factory and historical documentation (production January 2004 - July 2016, ~16,500 cars, first Gaydon and first VH model; phase outputs of ~450, ~470, ~497 (Virage), ~517 (AM11) and 540 bhp (GT) with 570-620 Nm; Graziano manual and ZF Touchtronic transmissions; the 2013 revision absorbing the Virage's position; ~1,000 Virages 2011-2012; GT acceleration of ~4.5-4.7 s per official used-car records), recall documentation (Touchtronic II park-pawl software; 2006 automatic components; seat-heater wiring; market-specific door-lock software; early battery-cable routing - all VIN-verified in practice), specialist literature on the timing-cover, ignition/catalyst, cooling, torque-tube, bush, ceramic and low-voltage files, and public market data mid-2026: UK auction medians ~£24-32K as a blended aggregate; Virage public sales ~US\$46,000-71,500 with asks near US\$95K; DB9 GT benchmark ~US\$119K; official listings of 2015 cars around £59-62K. Timeless CPO eligibility varies by market and increasingly favours newer cars - confirmed per dealer, not assumed. Assumptions are stated as assumptions, in brackets, where they occur. Nothing here is investment advice.

10 SYNTHESIS

The DB9 closes where it began: one architecture, refined for twelve years, now trading as five markets under a single timeless shape. Buy the early car on condition - preferably a manual with the corrections already invoiced. Buy the Phase II car as the family's value centre. Buy the late AM11 car as the mature ownership proposition - the strongest normal-production engine, the best brakes and electronics. Watch the Virage as the sleeper whose rarity the market still underprices. And buy the DB9 GT as the collector's close of account - end-of-line, 540 bhp, already separate. Across all five: the Development Rule governs - a DB9's model year is part of its condition - and the buyer's line follows: buy the early car on condition, the late car on completeness, the Virage on scarcity and the GT on provenance.

WHO SHOULD BUY THIS CAR

The driver who wants twelve cylinders, hydraulic steering and genuine continental ability at the most accessible V12 pricing in this library - bought sorted, kept sorted.

The collector positioning early: DB9 GT, rare manuals, Virage coupés and exceptional late cars are separating from the pack while the aggregate numbers still look ordinary.

Not: the bargain hunter reading a cheap early car as a cheap Aston - the purchase price can be less than the correction bill; or anyone who prices this family from a blended auction median.

BOTTOM LINE

One architecture, twelve years, ~16,500 cars plus ~1,000 Virages: 450 to 540 bhp of naturally aspirated V12, manual and Touchtronic, coupé and Volante, closed by the GT in 2016. €30-90K+ for early cars, €50-125K+ through the middle, €100-220K+ for the GT - and custody that punishes deferral above all: timing cover, ignition, cooling, bushes, batteries. The first Gaydon Aston looks timeless; it never stopped changing underneath - buy the phase, the gearbox and the file, and let the shape be the reward rather than the reason.

ONE-SENTENCE VERDICT

A DB9's model year is part of its condition - buy the early car on condition, the late car on completeness, the Virage on scarcity and the GT on provenance, and never price any of them from the blended average.

SOURCES

Aston Martin factory and historical documentation: DB9 production January 2004 - July 2016, approximately 16,500 cars - the first model built at Gaydon and the first VH-platform Aston; Ian Callum/Henrik Fisker design with later Marek Reichman revisions; phase outputs of approximately 450 bhp/570 Nm (2004-2008), 470 bhp (2009-2012), 497 PS Virage (2011-2012, ~1,000 cars, Touchtronic II, adaptive damping, carbon-ceramics), 517 PS/620 Nm AM11 (2013-2016) and 540 bhp DB9 GT (2015-16, ~4.5-4.7 s to 100 km/h per official used-car records); Graziano six-speed manual and ZF six-speed Touchtronic; the 2013 revision absorbing the Virage's market position; Carbon Editions and the restricted Bond Edition. Recall record: Touchtronic II park-pawl software (DB9, Virage and related models); 2006 automatic transmission components; seat-heater wiring; door-lock software (market-specific); early battery-cable routing - all verified by VIN through Aston Martin or national databases. Specialist literature: timing-cover leakage (~€3,000-4,500 repairs), ignition and catalyst interactions, cooling ageing, torque-tube and differential diagnosis, bush and damper wear, carbon-ceramic assessment, swan-door struts, rear-light condensation, Volante roof and water management, and low-voltage sensitivity. Public market data, mid-2026: UK auction medians ~£24,000-32,000 (blended); Virage sales ~US\$46,000-71,500 with asks to ~US\$95K; DB9 GT benchmark ~US\$119,000; official listings of 2015 DB9s at ~£59,000-62,000. Aston Martin Timeless CPO terms (12-month unlimited-mileage warranty where eligible) confirmed per market. Companion documents: Buyer's Checklist No. 64 and Model File 64. Values are indicative frameworks, not valuations; nothing here is investment advice.