

Aston Martin DB2

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The DB2 was a sports car sold by Aston Martin from 1950 through 1953. It was a major advancement over the 2-Litre Sports model it replaced, with a dual overhead cam straight-6 in place of the previously-used pushrod straight-4. The engine was larger, too, at 2.6 L, and the car was designed as a closed coupe. A later drophead coupe model was also introduced, accounting for ¼ of the model's total sales. The DB2 was extremely successful in racing, setting Brown's company up for future success.

Development

The prototype for the DB2 appeared as one of three Aston Martins at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1949. The car was based on Claude Hill's tube-frame chassis, created for the 2-Litre Sports "DB1", with a closed coupe body design by Frank Freeley.

The Straight-6 engine came from the Lagonda company, which Aston Martin owner, David Brown, purchased for this reason. This engine was originally designed by W. O. Bentley, namesake of the Bentley car company, and engineer Willie Wilson.

The production DB2 debuted at the New York Auto Show in April of 1950. Although demand was high, the second, third, and fourth DB2 models to be produced were taken to compete at Le Mans in 1950. Two placed first and second in class that year and all three continued to race through 1951. Their success brought fame to David Brown's resurgent company, and convinced the company to begin a series of purpose-built racing models, starting with the DB3.

Production

411 DB2s were produced from their 1950 introduction through 1953. The first 49 cars used a square three-part grille in front with large rectangular side vents. This was soon updated with the more familiar integrated and rounded Aston Martin grille with horizontal slats. The three racing models were similarly upgraded to show the company's new face.

The car was a fixed coupe with a tiny top-hinged boot in back used to store the spare wheel. Luggage space was behind the front seats, accessed from inside the car as on the later Corvette. A large single-piece bonnet was hinged at the front.

Later in 1950, a Drophead Coupe variant was introduced. At least 102 were built.

In January, 1951, an optional engine with larger carburetors was available as Aston Martin's first Vantage upgrade. This was a power-only upgrade, with 125 hp (93 kW) available.