



**W**hen most people think of buying a mid-size 4WD, the Prado and the Pajero are the two obvious models that come to mind. Lurking up the back of many a car yard is a long forgotten proper 4WD that is equally as capable and as well built as either, but guaranteed to cost you thousands less. What exactly is it the Holden Jackaroo.

Offered in either petrol or diesel, and with the option of SWB or LWB, the mighty little Jackaroo lasted right through until 2004 when Isuzu decided building wagons was a dying sport. With in-built truck reliability, the Jackaroo is a solid used buy if you make sure a few gremlins don't surface!

### ABOUT THE JACKAROO

Originally released in 1992, the Jackaroo was built by Isuzu in Japan specifically to compete with the Pajero and 4-Runner. Back during a time when Isuzu-GM looked after truck sales in Australia, it was

decided to market the vehicle through Holden.

With a grunty new Petrol V6 and tough 3.1 turbo diesel, the Jackaroo was offered in SWB or LWB variants to mirror the Pajero. A torsion bar IFS and four-link rear coil suspension meant on paper it would drive everywhere the competition did, and the option of seven seats suited the family market perfectly.

A series of upgrades culminated with a major facelift in 1999, which brought new petrol and diesel power, the latter of which became renowned for setting the standard with modern diesel/ auto 4WDs.

With the pending de-merger of Isuzu and GM, and the need for replacement, the Jackaroo was quietly killed off late in 2004, but Holden had plenty of stock on hand, meaning many late Jackaroos were not first registered until well into 2005.

### MECHANICALS

The Jackaroo is a tough vehicle, especially the early 3.1 diesels.



Early model LS – note the headlamp wipers



The 1995 to 1998 model (distinguished by the silver Holden badge on the bonnet)

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## SPECIFICATIONS

### ENGINES:

#### PETROL:

6VD1 - 3165cc SOHC EFI V6  
130kW@5300rpm  
260Nm@3100rpm

6VE1 - 3494cc DOHC EFI V6  
158kW@5400rpm  
310Nm@3100rpm

#### DIESEL:

4JG2 - 3059cc OHV four-cylinder turbo diesel

84kW@3600rpm  
260Nm@2000rpm

4JX1 TC - 2999cc HEUI direct-injection turbo diesel  
118kW@3900rpm  
333Nm@2200rpm

### TRANSMISSIONS:

**AUTO:** Four-speed with lock-up torque converter

**MANUAL:** Four-speed with overdrive

### SUSPENSION:

**FRONT:** Independent double wishbone, torsion bar spring and gas-filled hydraulic dampers and anti-roll bar

**REAR:** Four-link rigid live axle, coil springs, gas filled hydraulic dampers and anti-roll bar

### BRAKES:

**FRONT:** Ventilated discs, semi-floating calipers

**REAR:** Ventilated discs

### STEERING:

Power-assisted recirculating ball and nut

### DIMENSIONS:

FUEL CAPACITY - 85L

KERB WEIGHT - 1919kg

GVM - 2500kg

HEIGHT - 1840mm

WIDTH - 1745mm

LENGTH - 4660mm

GROUND CLEARANCE - 245mm

TOWING CAPACITY -

BRAKED - 1600kg

UNBRAKED - 750kg

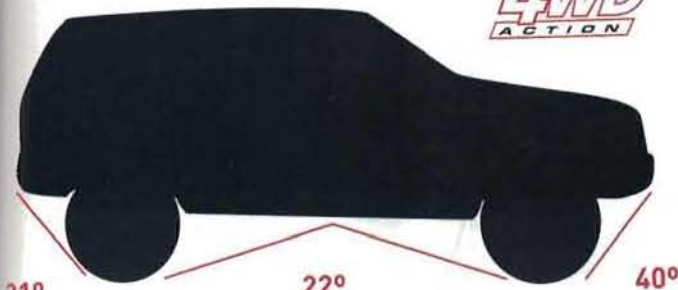
### OFF-ROAD ANGLES

APPROACH - 40°

DEPARTURE - 31°

RAMP-OVER - 22°

AUSTRALIAN  
**4WD**  
ACTION



The 3.0L turbo diesel offered after 1999 is an odd beast. Its HEUI fuel delivery is a little different and still misunderstood by most mechanics. This is one of the best diesel engines ever mated to an automatic gearbox, and is a pleasure to drive. Because of its unique maintenance requirements, it has developed a reputation for being expensive to repair, but any well serviced, low-mileage example will serve you well



The 3.2 and 3.5 V6 engines are powerful and responsive, yet one of the thirstiest of all the petrol-engined mid-size 4WDs. They do suffer badly when driven hard, and need to be maintained with good quality oil. Check they idle smoothly and that the engine doesn't miss as the ignition leads and coil packs have been known to fail



The later models feature a more updated dash with dual airbags. Early models are easily body-lifted as airbags didn't arrive until 1995



The cabin of the Jackaroo is plush and comfortable for five people. Quality is second only to the LandCruiser, and the seats are some of the best fitted to a factory 4WD. Like most mid-sizers, the rear two seats are best ditched to make more cargo space



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This engine is almost bulletproof, and will last hundreds of thousands of kilometres. Like any engine, make sure it's been serviced on time and regularly, and you'll be onto a winner.

The 3.2 V6 and later DOHC 3.5 are all grunt, and particularly suited to keen drivers. Their only downfall is their thirst, but this is par for the course with a 4WD wagon. They do suffer if they've been flogged, and such examples have a tendency to develop bottom-end knocks. This can eventually result in conrod failure, leaving you with a rather large hole in the sump. If you get to this point, the engine is a throwaway, so listen carefully for noise on a test drive. Any engine over about 200,000km will be in the danger zone. Apart from that, check the servicing once again is per the owner's manual.

The gearbox and part-time transfer are robust like their Rodeo cousin. The Jackaroo is proper part-time 4WD, with the post-1999 models featuring on-the-fly front hub engagement. It's usually not problematic, but make sure it works. The same goes for the operation of the auto transmission - with no inherent faults, all you need to check for is clean fluid and smooth shifts.

The 3.0TD offered from 1999 was a revolutionary engine for several reasons. Not only was it

the first truly desirable automatic diesel 4WD, it introduced a raft of new technologies that ultimately became its downfall. Perceived to be the least reliable of the Jackaroo's engines, the 4JX1 is a direct-injection DOHC diesel featuring high-pressure HEUI injection.

Before you ask, HEUI is 'Hydraulic Electronic Unit Injection', whereby each fuel injector utilises high-pressure engine oil to pressurise the diesel, so it can be injected directly into the cylinder. This is the same as the Ford F-250 V8 diesel, and rarely understood by most mechanics. Not only is it electronic, it requires a second engine oil pump (which is why the Jackaroo has two oil filters).

Because of this secondary high-pressure pump, the Jackaroo requires special engine oil that is very thin and very expensive to buy. Many mechanics simply didn't understand the need to use this oil, and used their regular old thick diesel oil. Because this oil is too thick to be sufficiently pressurised to run the injectors, the engine can't fire, and mechanics will be left wondering why the car they drove on the hoist won't start!

The incorrect servicing of these engines is their number-one cause of failure, resulting in warped heads and all manner of



Soft body mounts mean the Jackaroo's cabin is refined and quiet, especially on the gravel. You will notice that your bullbar seems to vibrate when driving. It's not because it's loose, it's just that the body and chassis are moving different directions because of the soft mounts!



Check the hinge on the Jackaroo rear door - it's mounted internally and can droop from the weight of the spare. Unusually, there are two rear doors on the Jackaroo split 70/30, with the smaller one on the driver's side!

## MODEL VARIANTS:

### UP TO 1994:

- S - Base model, steel wheels, diesel or petrol, fabric trim
- XS - Upper spec velour trim, 16x8in steel wheels
- LS - Fully trimmed interior, cassette stereo, 16in alloy wheels, headlamp wipers

### AFTER 1994:

- S - Base model, steel wheels, diesel or petrol
- SE - Seven seats, steel wheels, velour trim (Widetrack after 2001)
- MONTEREY - two-tone paint, leather trim, automatic transmission, CD stereo, alloy wheels (Widetrack after 2001)

### DATES:

- APRIL 1992 - July 1993 - model launched as UBS, SWB or LWB ("HOLDEN" script in grille)
- JULY 1993 - December 1995 - trim upgrade, Black Holden badge on bonnet
- DEC. 1995 - Feb. 1998 - trim upgrade, Silver Holden badge on bonnet, SWB discontinued 1998
- FEB. 1998 - Feb. 2001 - all-new interior and front styling, large Holden badge in grille
- FEB. 2001 - mid 2005 - SE and Monterey models are Widetrack, last Jackaroos built in September 2004 but sold right through 2005

injector and electronic problems. The sheer power and driveability of this engine far outweighs the higher servicing costs. If you're looking for one, make sure it's been well looked after, and ask the previous owner - if you can find them!

### **BODY AND INTERIOR**

The Jackaroo is built using heavy panels and a full chassis, making it tough. The body is mounted using soft rubber bushes, which keep vibration to a minimum, but do wear out. Crawl under and check these, and while you're under there, check for any driveline oil leaks.

The body is well rust proofed, but it's worth checking the rear hinges of the door for corrosion as they are mounted behind the panel. Also check the rear doors aren't sagged. The Jackaroo has two rear doors, with the driver's door peculiarly the smaller of the two.

Inside, the Jackaroo is a gem. The quality is up there with Toyota standard, with reliable switch gear, comfortable upholstery and plenty of room.

The seats are comfy, and the flat floor is great for long-legged passengers. Like most wagons, the rear seats are best thrown out for cargo space. A family will be most happy in a Jackaroo. Apart from the usual wear and tear items, the only thing worth checking for is wet carpet in the front foot wells, which may signal a blocked air-con tube.

### **OFF-ROAD**

The Jackaroo suspension offers plenty all-round. Big anti-roll bars help on-road handling, and don't seem to affect wheel travel off-road too badly. The front IFS isn't as good as the Prado's coil arrangement, but as good as you'll find a torsion bar set-up to be. The oddball four-link rear (two lower arm, a single upper and Panhard rod) works well, but reasonably shallow wheel wells mean articulation is limited.

Post-2001 SE and Monterey models feature upgraded diffs - these are significantly wider and more stable in the rough. The extra 40mm really does make a difference. These models are easily



The tie rod ends and CV shafts do wear over time, but are easily replaced. The later auto-locking hub models tend to chew out CVs, as do vehicles lifted more than a couple of inches. Pay special attention to these models

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**WHAT YOU'LL PAY**

MODEL	RRP NEW	USED PRICE
1992 3.1 TD MANUAL	\$45,268	\$3300-\$5700
1994 3.2 V6 MANUAL	\$36,929	\$2600-\$4800
1996 3.2 V6 AUTO	\$50,366	\$3700-\$6400
1997 3.1 TD MANUAL	\$46,276	\$4900-\$8100
1999 3.0 TDI AUTO	\$47,960	\$9000-\$13,900
2003 3.5 V6 MONTEREY	\$58,050	\$11,200-\$16,800

**INSURANCE**

A 30-year-old male living in Western Sydney could expect to pay between \$960 and \$1100 for a 2001 turbo diesel auto Jackaroo. [Please note: insurance costs vary greatly depending on your driving record and place of residence].



The low-slung transfer is protected by a sturdy crossmember, but it decreases ramp-over angle and clearance significantly. The Jackaroos are still capable in the rough, but more suited to touring duties

identified by having their rear numberplate in the lower bumper and not on the smaller rear door. If you're looking for a late-model Jack', go for one of these.

The engines are grunty, and the low range is great. As one of the last 4WDs built truck-tough, the engine braking is excellent, but the later diesel is a little touchy on the throttle.

**MODIFICATIONS**

Like most tourers, the first mod worth making is a decent 2in suspension lift followed by solid barwork. The Jackaroo isn't the sort of vehicle you'd build up to be too tough, but they have been known to be modded for rallying (with much success).

Most manufacturers make a full range of accessories for the Jackaroo, which are your best bet unless you're keen on making things yourself. The early models can be body-lifted if you're keen on maximising articulation.

Stick with touring mods and the

Jackaroo will remain reliable and simple to maintain.

**YES OR NO?**

If you have a limited budget and you're looking for a midsize wagon of this era, the Jackaroo is worth more than a second look. Compared directly to the Prado, the Jackaroo isn't quite as capable off-road, but will certainly take you further than the four-wheel independent NM-NP Pajero. It's also built better than the Pajero with better-quality material.

Rapid depreciation hurt new Jackaroo buyers badly, which is great news now. Early models will cost you no more than a couple of grand, and even the later examples are thousands less than the Toyota or Mitsubishi.

They might be getting on a little, but still one of my top-five 4WD wagons of all time. For families the Jackaroo is a winner - reliable and cheap, comfortable and capable. What more do you need?

