

ME & MY CAR



My V6-engined Jeep Grand Cherokee is a truly robust vehicle and gives a surprisingly smooth ride but I still haven't taken it off-road yet, says Richard Hearn

I am a typical urban off-road junkie in that I own a 4x4 Jeep Grand Cherokee and I have not yet taken it off-road. It's my second Jeep and has a 3.7 litre V6 engine and five-speed automatic transmission. Its four-wheel drive systems include 'brake traction control' and 'throttle anticipate'.

It's a fantastic car and far removed from my first Jeep, which did end up being taken off-road but not in the way it should have been.

I was on my way to Leeds from Manchester, happily driving along the motorway when the engine began to lose power. At the time I was enjoying some seriously loud music on the stereo and didn't hear the gentle phut, phut of the engine as it began to fail.

So by the time I'd turned the volume down and could hear what was actually happening, all the warning alarms in the car were already going off.

Not being one to panic, I remained calm and tried to veer the car out of the fast lane across three lanes of traffic and onto the hard shoulder, all while chugging up a steep hill. Sadly

the car didn't quite make it and pretty much conked out there and then.

When the AA eventually arrived I had to lie through my teeth as the mechanic asked if I had perchance heard the alarms or smelled the rancid burning.

My feigned innocence didn't quite pay off as the damage turned out to be two holes in the pistons, various metal parts distributed about the engine that weren't supposed to be there and a potential £5,000 hole in my pocket - hence my decision to scrap that car and buy a new one.

My wife got to choose the next car and thankfully opted for a more up-to-date version of the Jeep. This is a truly robust vehicle and gives a surprisingly smooth ride.

However, I think my next vehicle will probably be a sports car. We once owned one and I miss it. But whatever it ends up being, I'll be keeping the stereo volume down from now on.



TIME OUT



RICHARD HEARN
managing director
All Types of Mortgages

"My next vehicle will be a sports car"