

Consumer Guide 1988 – Dodge Aries

Dodge Aries



Dodge Aries 2-door

WHAT'S NEW FOR '88

Dodge's version of the front-drive K-car has been trimmed to one price series, the number of individual options has been reduced to 11 (from 25), and base prices have been cut by nearly \$1300 compared to last year. Most options will be grouped in packages this year. The identical Plymouth Reliant lineup has been streamlined in the same fashion as Chrysler gives the K-car compacts the "America" treatment that proved successful on the Dodge Omni and Plymouth Horizon. A single price series and

limited option availability helped Chrysler lower production costs and retail prices on the Omni/Horizon. Body styles continue to be 2- and 4-door sedans and a 5-door wagon, all available only in LE trim. A 5-speed manual transmission continues to be standard and a 3-speed automatic optional, this year with a lockup torque converter that is supposed to improve fuel economy. A 93-horsepower 2.2-liter 4-cylinder engine with single-point fuel injection is standard and a 96-horsepower 2.5-liter four, also with single-point injection, is optional. The 2.5 is available only with automatic. The K-cars debuted for the 1981 model year and became Chrysler's volume family cars. However, this could be their last year since Chrysler is known to be planning a successor.

FOR

Value • Passenger room • Economy

AGAINST

Handling • Engine noise (2.2)

SUMMARY

The K-cars are functional compacts that don't offer much in the way of frills or thrills, but provide basic transportation at a very reasonable base price of \$6995 for the sedans. We find the standard 2.2-liter four adequate for the K-cars, but the optional 2.5 provides stronger acceleration without using much more gas. In addition, the 2.5 is smoother and quieter than the 2.2 by virtue of its twin balancing shafts mounted in the crankcase. Since the 2.5 is available only with automatic transmission, you have to order either the Popular or Premium Discount Package, which raises the price considerably, but we prefer the automatic to the 5-speed manual, which has somewhat clumsy and awkward shift action. Front bucket seats and a full center console also are standard, and we prefer that arrangement to the optional 3-place front bench seat (a no-cost option) even though it reduces passenger capacity to five. The bench seat has a fixed seatback that's so reclined it forces an uncomfortable driving position and drastically reduces rear seat leg room. The bucket seats have adjustable seatbacks that eliminate those problems. Overall, the K-cars are still very good value among compact family cars, and much less expensive than most Japanese and domestic rivals.

SPECIFICATIONS	2-door notchback	4-door notchback	5-door wagon
Wheelbase, in.	100.3	100.3	100.3
Overall length, in.	178.9	178.9	179.0
Overall width, in.	67.9	67.9	67.9
Overall height, in.	52.5	52.9	53.3
Front track, in.	57.6	57.6	57.6
Rear track, in.	57.2	57.2	57.2
Curb weight, lbs.	2317	2323	2448
Cargo vol., cu. ft.	15.0	15.0	67.7
Fuel capacity, gal.	14.0	14.0	14.0
Seating capacity	6	6	6
Front headroom, in.	38.2	38.6	38.5
Front shoulder room, in.	55.0	55.4	55.4
Front legroom, max., in.	42.2	42.2	42.2
Rear headroom, in.	37.0	37.8	38.5
Rear shoulder room, in.	58.8	55.9	55.9
Rear legroom, min., in.	35.1	35.4	34.8

Drivetrain layout: transverse front engine/front-wheel drive. **Steering:** rack and pinion, 4.0 turns lock-to-lock. **Turn diameter, ft.:** 34.8. **Front brakes:** 9.3-in. discs. **Rear brakes:** 7.9-in. drums. **Construction:** unit.

POWERTRAINS	ohc I-4	ohc I-4
Displacement, l/cu. in.	2.2/135	2.5/153
Fuel delivery	TBI	TBI
Net bhp @ rpm	93 @ 4800	96 @ 4400
Net torque @ rpm	122 @ 3200	133 @ 2800
Availability	S	O
EPA city/highway mpg		
5-speed OD manual	25/33	
3-speed automatic	25/30	23/27

PRICES (preliminary)

DODGE ARIES AMERICA	Retail Price	Dealer Invoice	Low Price
2-door notchback	6995	6371	6800
4-door notchback	6995	6371	6800
5-door wagon	7695	7001	7500
Destination charge	429	429	429

STANDARD EQUIPMENT:

2.2-liter TBI 4-cylinder engine, 4-speed manual transmission, power steering (wagon only), power brakes, reclining front bucket seats (bench seat may be substituted at no charge, but requires Popular Equipment Discount Pkg.), cloth and vinyl trim, intermittent wipers, optical horn, left remote mirror, right visor mirror with map/reading light, AM ET radio, 185/70R13 SBR tires (notchbacks; wagon has 185/70R14).

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT:

2.5-liter 4-cylinder engine (Popular or Premium Pkg. req.)	288	245	265
Popular Equipment Discount Pkg.			
2- or 4-door with bucket seats	994	845	914
2- or 4-door with bench seat	894	760	822
Wagon with bucket seats	788	670	725
Wagon with bench seat	688	585	633
3-speed automatic transmission, power steering, full console, tinted glass, dual remote mirrors, AM & FM ST ET, trunk dress-up 14" tires, upgraded sound insulation, tonneau cover (wagon).			
Premium Equipment Discount Pkg.			
2-door with bucket seats	1456	1238	1340
2-door with bench seat	1356	1153	1248
4-door with bucket seats	1507	1281	1386
4-door with bench seat	1407	1196	1294
Wagon with bucket seats	1301	1106	1197
Wagon with bench seat	1201	1021	1105
Cruise control, power door locks, tilt steering column, upgraded steering wheel, misc. lights. Requires Popular Equipment Pkg.			
Wagon Convenience Pkg.	250	213	230
Rear wiper/washer, luggage rack.			
Air conditioning (tinted glass req.)	807	686	742
Tinted glass	124	105	114
Rear defogger	153	130	141
California emissions pkg.	102	87	94
AM & FM ST ET cassette	262	223	241
Power steering (std. wagon)	248	211	228
Road Touring Suspension, wagon	61	52	56
Conventional spare tire, notchbacks (13")	75	64	69
Wagon (14")	86	73	79
Pearl coat paint	41	35	38