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2008 Dodge Avenger R/T

The Good :) Bold exterior looks. Large cabin. Smooth transmission and suspension. Nav and Storage of pictures and music is great.

The Bad :(Seats are not supportive enough for spirited driving. Road feel is low. No engine or exhaust note. Hard plastic interior feels bad. Low gas mileage in regular city driving.

Engine	6Cyl 3.5 Liter
Output	235 hp / 232 lb-ft
Top Speed	130 mph
0-60 mph	6.9 sec (est.)
Weight	3,355 lbs

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Price As Tested \$28,230

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Dodge sold more than 1.4 million vehicles worldwide in 2005. With a U.S. market share of 7 percent, Dodge is the fifth-largest nameplate in the United States and the eighth-largest nameplate in the automotive industry. With current economic times, it will be even harder for American name brands to sell vehicles. Price alone will not drive decision making when buyers are looking for vehicles that last rather than a low lease payment. Will the Avenger be able to take buyers away from the Japanese brands?

The all-new 2008 Dodge Avenger will compete in the largest, most competitive segment of the U.S. passenger car market: the 1.9-million-unit-a-year standard mid-size segment, which accounts for approximately 11.4 percent of the total car and truck industry and approximately 31 percent of the passenger car market. Avenger is designed to appeal to Generation Xers who are 30-45-years-old. Sixty percent are male, and 40 percent are college-educated. They want good looks at a low price point. With Avenger even all-wheel-drive is available. The variety available makes the Dodge Avenger a strong contender in this segment.

Four models are offered in the United States: Dodge Avenger SE, Dodge Avenger SXT and Dodge Avenger R/T, and a first for Dodge in the mid-size segment, Dodge Avenger R/T AWD. Production of the 2008 Dodge Avenger began in the fourth quarter of 2006 at the refurbished Sterling Heights Michigan assembly plant, alongside the Chrysler Sebring and Chrysler Sebring Convertible. Three engine choices are also available. Avenger's 173 horsepower 2.4-liter four-cylinder World Engine is built in the state-of-the art Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance (GEMA) plant in Dundee, Michigan. A 2.7-liter V-6 engine and the 3.5-liter V-6 engine are built at the Kenosha Wisconsin engine plant.

"The all-new 2008 Dodge Avenger continues the Dodge brand's product offensive and will bring even more buyers into the Dodge brand showroom," said George Murphy, Senior Vice President – Global Marketing, Chrysler Group. "Just as the Dodge Charger, Magnum, Caliber and Nitro have sparked new interest in the Dodge brand in their respective segments, the Dodge Avenger brings that assertive attitude and bold styling to the competitive mid-size

sedan segment. There's just nothing else like it on the road."

The Dodge Avenger has handsome and beefy exterior looks from the front bumper to the rear wing. The Avenger looks quite modern and muscular with a large grille, tall headlights and a rugged low bumper. The front hood offers angular strokes that carry nicely to the rear of the vehicle. Broad shoulders lead you to the rear doors which feature a muscular fender-line with small windows. Black plastic panels on the rear windows give the vehicle a sporty feel and large shiny wheels give the Avenger a rap star look. A rear wings adds the matchbox style and dual chrome exhaust tips show attention to detail.

The interior is styled nicely offering a clean and spacious feeling. A lot of checkered plastic material is used on the door panels and the dash. Upper panels use a hard leather grain plastic material. We did not like the use of either of these as our first choices in car interior's but we think its better than using flat plastic trim as used in previous American brands. Our upgraded model had optional two tone leather trimmed seats which made the interior appear much improved over the base model.

We liked the numerous storage areas around the vehicle, which include spaces for cans and bottles in the upper dash panel under a flap which is also air cooled by the way as well as a heated or cooled cup holder in the central console. Even rear seated passengers have door bottle holders as well as small trays here and there.

The instrument cluster is clean and efficient showing 3 large deeply set clusters housing the white instrument dials. At night they glow a nice cool color which is not very bright but pleasing to the eye. Control stalks surrounding the wheel control the automatic headlights as well as the windshield wipers. We found these to be a bit hard to reach and heavy in their operation. The steering wheel is leather wrapped and quite thick, which is essential for any car be it \$10,000 or \$100,000. Behind the wheel are buttons for changing the stereo volume, station, and presets, as well as mode. We wished these buttons were more visible on the front of the steering wheel.

The central console houses the large navigation screen and information system called MyGIG. It is everything in one unit, navigation, audio, entertainment, and communication system. It is a touch screen system making everything very easy to use. The system houses a CD changer as well as a hard drive to store all the music you could ask for. It even stores pictures to show your friends. We found the Sirius traffic information to be very useful as we travelled, showing you accidents and warning you if they are on your route. The navigation system was equally impressive allowing you to input places by phone number, name, surrounding area. This makes for easy lookups wherever you are. You can plug in music by a auxiliary jack or by a USB port. You can hook up your bluetooth phone to the unit easily using and then all calls are routed to the built in microphone and the vehicle's speakers. All this makes for a great drive in a vehicle that feels modern.

The climate control system is a fully automatic system where you can set a temperature and forget it. This especially comes in handy used in conjunction with the remote start feature. The system was powerful and quick to cool the vehicle, and relatively quiet as well, a rarity in most vehicles. You now can have a cool car to come back to in the summer sun. The Dodge Avenger also has heated seats. Also standard is a chilled storage bin in the upper instrument panel which can hold four soda cans. Both cup holders up front also are chilled or heated, another useful and great feature.

The front and rear arm rests are some of the lowest quality parts in the vehicle. The front arm rest in the center of the cabin is covered by a cheap leather material and its feeling is equally cheap and flimsy. The rear cabin's armrest is useless as it holds cup holders exactly where your elbow would go, thus making it hurt your arms if you use it as an armrest. Lacking is a button on the rear cargo area to open the hatch, we found ourselves constantly looking for the key fob or having to go to the driver's side door to pop the switch. Door hinges are also not made to hold the door open and we often had the door swing back to hit us while getting in and out. We were not too fond of the grey color scheme inside. Where else but in a car do you find grey colors? Most people hate grey cloudy days, and to spend all the time inside a grey car just reminds you of a nasty grey day. Car makers should forget grey, keep black, tan,



and make bright and vibrant color schemes.

The front passenger folds forward flat to give you a long cargo space and this serves as a nice table or leg rest for a passenger sitting in back. The trunk also holds a optional tray system that keeps items from spreading all over the cargo area. Available is a DVD rear seat entertainment system will keep your family quiet on long road trips. LED lighting for the interior are a neat feature and can be focused like a flash light on your reading material. All these features are really very useful and not found in most other cars in this class.

Three engine options power 2008 Dodge Avengers sold in the United States: the new standard 2.4-liter four-cylinder World Engine, an available flex-fuel 2.7- liter V-6 engine and an available 3.5-liter V-6 engine coupled with a new six- speed automatic transaxle with Auto Stick. Dodge Avenger R/T and R/T AWD sedans sold in the United States feature a standard 3.5-liter V-6 engine that produces 235 horsepower and 232 lb.-ft. of torque coupled with a new six-speed automatic transaxle that comes standard with Auto Stick. The combination of the upgraded 3.5-liter V6 engine and six-speed automatic transaxle delivers excellent performance as well as smooth, quiet operation.

Fuel economy was something unexpected. We wanted to get at least 27 mpg however we averaged just 17 mpg. The vehicle does get about 26 on the highway but that quickly drops when you get into city driving. It seems Dodge and the Government is claiming numbers that aren't true at all.

The 2008 Dodge Avenger R/T's six-speed automatic transaxle provides quicker standing-start acceleration than a four- or five-speed transaxle because of its numerically higher first gear ratio. A more robust differential with increased torque capacity enhances launch performance by requiring less torque management, electronically limiting the torque that is available during the initial stages of standing-start acceleration. Smaller steps between ratios also make for a smoother, quieter ride, as the engine speed doesn't change as often with each shift. In addition, more ratio choices, more appropriate ratios for quicker acceleration and a lower overall top gear ratio provide a quiet ride and improved fuel economy at highway speeds.

Behind the wheel the Avenger has precise steering and a very smooth transmission. The engine is quick and smooth and before you know it, you are cruising along at 60 mph in almost every situation. The vehicle likes to shift into 6th gear quickly thus keeping rpm levels low, usually below 2000. But this did not save gas for us as we usually were getting only 17 miles per gallon. Something most SUV's get. The transmission is also manually shiftable which makes driving with more of a sporty characteristic easier. However the relatively flat seats do not keep you in place for sporty windy roads. You do not have confidence in the Avenger, unless of course you like squealing tires and body lean that will bounce passengers around who are not wearing seat belts. However the large 108.9 inch wheelbase and 61.8 inch track does give a wide and large footprint for a steady feeling behind the wheel.

Electronic Stability control and traction control are both offered in the Avenger. Side curtain air bags and front seat mounted side air bags add to the standard frontal air bags. Avenger's safety cage is constructed with dual-phase, high- strength and ultra-high-strength steel components designed to protect occupants in all driving situations.

Our test car started off with a base price of \$23,270. Optional items were the leather trimmed bucket seats for \$525. A premium convenience Group costs \$1,235 and adds the headliner, LED lighting, 4 assist handles, sun visors with illuminated mirrors, temperature and compass gauge, air filtering, heated seats, front and rear LED map lamps, trip computer, rear cargo organizer, remote starting system, universal garage door opener, and a heated or cooled cup holder. So this package is a must have because without it the car has nothing much inside. A power sunroof costs \$775. The MyGIG navigation system costs \$1,200. Aluminum chrome clad wheels in 18 inch diameter cost \$550. A destination charge of \$675 brings our total to \$28,230. A 3 year warranty is included with a lifetime powertrain warranty.

Overall the Avenger is a great solid car which drives quite well. The price range based on the sticker price is quite high and perhaps with incentives it will come back down to the teens. Having a good sized sedan with modern features is what Dodge needs to offer. However most



people will not buy a vehicle that looks so aggressive now that we are in a more hopeful world.



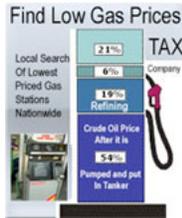
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PRICING	INVOICE	RETAIL
Base Pricing	\$22,328	\$24,220
Destination	\$625	\$625
AAM Premium Convenience Group	\$1,136	\$1,235
MyGIG Multimedia System w/Navigation	\$1,104	\$1,200
Power Express Open and Close Sunroof	\$860	\$935
Leather Trimmed Bucket Seats	\$713	\$775
18" x 7.0" Chrome Clad Aluminum Wheels	\$506	\$550
6 Boston Acoustics Speakers	\$455	\$495






COMPARISONS	2008 Dodge Avenger R/T 4dr Sedan (3.5L 6cyl 6A)	2008 Pontiac G8 4dr Sedan (3.6L 6cyl 5A)	2008 Mazda MAZDA6 s Grand Touring 4dr Sedan (3.0L 6cyl 6A)	2008 Volkswagen Passat Komfort 4dr Sedan (2.0L 4cyl Turbo 6A)	2008 Hyundai Sonata Limited V6 4dr Sedan (3.3L 6cyl 5A)
MSRP	\$24,220	\$26,910	\$27,150	\$27,900	\$24,170
Invoice	\$22,328	\$25,565	\$25,076	\$26,064	\$22,608
Destination Charge	\$690	\$685	\$670	\$690	\$675
Basic	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	4 yr. / 50000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.
Drivetrain	Unlimited yr. / Unlimited mi.	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.	10 yr. / 100000 mi.
Roadside	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	4 yr. / 50000 mi.	5 yr. / Unlimited mi.



Rust	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	6 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / Unlimited mi.	12 yr. / Unlimited mi.	7 yr. / Unlimited mi.
Base Engine Type & Cylinders	V6	V6	V6	inline 4	V6
Base Engine Displacement	3.5 liters	3.6 liters	3.0 liters	2.0 liters	3.3 liters
Valvetrain	24 Valves single overhead cam (SOHC)	24 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	24 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	16 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	24 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)
Horsepower	235 hp @ 6400 rpm	256 hp @ 6300 rpm	212 hp @ 6000 rpm	200 hp @ 5100 rpm	234 hp @ 6000 rpm
Torque	232 ft-lbs. @ 4000 rpm	248 ft-lbs. @ 2100 rpm	197 ft-lbs. @ 5000 rpm	207 ft-lbs. @ 1800 rpm	226 ft-lbs. @ 3500 rpm
6 Speed Shiftable Automatic	Standard	Not Available	Standard	Standard	Not Available
Driven Wheels	front wheel drive	rear wheel drive	front wheel drive	front wheel drive	front wheel drive
Rear Seat Folding	split folding	Not Available	split folding	split folding	split folding
Front Air Conditioning Zones	single	single	single	single	single
Air Filtration	interior air filtration - Optional	Being Researched	interior air filtration	interior air filtration	interior air filtration
Auto-Dimming Rearview Mirror	electrochromatic	Not Available	electrochromatic	Not Available	electrochromatic
Reading Lights	front and rear reading lights - Optional	Not Available	front and rear reading lights	front and rear reading lights	front reading lights
Vanity Mirrors	dual illuminated vanity mirrors	dual illuminated vanity mirrors	dual illuminated vanity mirrors	dual illuminated vanity mirrors	dual illuminated vanity mirrors
Premium Shift Knob Trim	leather	leather - Optional	leather	leather	leather
Premium Steering Wheel Trim	leather-wrapped	leather - Optional	leather-wrapped	leather-wrapped	leather-wrapped
Traction Control	Optional	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard

Stability Control	Optional	Standard	Not Available	Standard	Standard
Xenon Headlights	Not Available	Not Available	Standard	Not Available	Not Available
CD In-Dash	6 CD/DVD	single CD player	6 CD player	6 CD player	6 CD player
Navigation System	hard drive based display w/voice activation and directions - Optional	Not Available	DVD based display w/voice directions - Optional	Not Available	Not Available
Satellite Communications System	Not Available	OnStar	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Turning Circle	36.5 ft.	37.4 ft.	38.7 ft.	35.8 ft.	35.8 ft.
Max. Cargo Capacity	Being Researched	18 cu. ft.	Being Researched	Not Published	Being Researched
Max. Towing Capacity	2000 lbs.	2000 lbs.	Being Researched	Being Researched	2000 lbs.
City	16 mpg.	17 mpg.	18 mpg.	19 mpg.	19 mpg.
Highway	26 mpg.	25 mpg.	25 mpg.	28 mpg.	28 mpg.
Length	190.9 in.	196.1 in.	186.8 in.	188.2 in.	188.9 in.
Width	72.8 in.	74.8 in.	70.1 in.	71.7 in.	72.1 in.
Height	58.9 in.	57.7 in.	56.7 in.	58 in.	58 in.
Weight	3568 lbs.	3885 lbs.	3378 lbs.	3246 lbs.	3458 lbs.
Wheel Base	108.9 in.	114.8 in.	105.3 in.	106.7 in.	107.4 in.
Front Headroom	40 in.	38.7 in.	38 in.	Being Researched	40.1 in.
Rear Headroom	38.3 in.	38 in.	37.1 in.	Being Researched	38.2 in.
Front Shoulder Room	56.4 in.	59.1 in.	55.9 in.	55.7 in.	57.4 in.
Rear Shoulder Room	56.3 in.	59.1 in.	55.2 in.	54.6 in.	56.9 in.
Front Hip Room	53.2 in.	56.7 in.	54.7 in.	Not Published	55.5 in.
Rear Hip Room	53.2 in.	58 in.	54.1 in.	Not Published	55.3 in.
Front Leg Room	42.4 in.	42.2 in.	42.3 in.	41.4 in.	43.7 in.
Rear Leg Room	36.2 in.	39.4 in.	36.5 in.	37.7 in.	37.4 in.
Maximum Luggage Capacity	13.4 cu. ft.	17.5 cu. ft.	15.2 cu. ft.	14.2 cu. ft.	16.3 cu. ft.



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