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## 2011 Audi A8

An all-new Audi A8 goes on sale late in 2010 as a 2011 model. The 2011 A8 promises a leap ahead in refinement, efficiency, comfort, and style. The all-aluminum 2011 Audi A8 will boast a sumptuous interior and the latest in driving dynamics and active safety technology.

The Audi A8 has been casting a growing shadow behind BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Lexus, and this fourth generation of Audi's flagship luxury car features high-tech equipment not yet available in the bigger, more powerful, more popular Mercedes S-Class.

The A8 will offer a system Audi calls Autonomous Partial Braking, which uses a forward-facing camera to detect shapes of pedestrians, other vehicles, and rapidly approaching objects. The system combines what it sees ahead with information from other sensors, including speed, weather, driver inputs, and vehicle dynamics. All of that information makes the car react by braking each wheel optimally and automatically. Unless you have four brake pedals and four right feet, you can't brake this good.

A new infrared-based thermal imaging pedestrian detection and warning system intended to be used in dark and inclement weather conditions when vision is a problem can detect pedestrians ahead and alert the driver, using a warning tone, a jolt of the brakes, and a visual display on a seven-inch LED information screen in front of the driver.

Audi Dynamic Steering will vary the steering ratio, making the car easy to maneuver at slow speeds, and change to firm and responsive at high speeds. But it is also coupled to the electronic stability control system of the A8, and if the car should slide or drift unexpectedly on a difficult road surface, it will actually apply counter steering to the front wheels to keep the A8 in control of the driver.

High-tech headlights developed in-house by Audi are composed of 66 white LEDs that use sensors to determine if the car is going straight, up or down a hill, or whether there's oncoming traffic. This information is used to control the shape of the headlight beam to fill in the dark parts of the road. That means there is no conventional low/high beam switch, the car searches for and illuminates all dark areas without blinding oncoming traffic.

Meanwhile, a smart touchpad allowing the driver to access music, radio, navigation, or even checklists for groceries.

The 2011 A8 will come with a 4.2-liter aluminum V8 engine making 372 horsepower, which Audi promises will launch the car to 60 mph in well under six seconds. That's sufficiently quick for most drivers, though less than what's available from BMW and Mercedes V8s. However, the Audi V8 is expected to return 18 mpg in the city and a respectable 25 mpg on the highway. That's a significant 3 mpg better than the BMW and 4 mpg better than the Mercedes. Audi says the A8's all-aluminum unit-body, introduced in 1997, accounts for 1.2 mpg of that advantage. Although there will be one V8 and two V6 diesel engines available in Europe, Audi will offer only the gasoline V8 in the U.S.

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