

**CARS**

**JAGUAR**



**MICHAEL BRADLEY**



CHARS

# JAGUAR

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Benchmark  
New York

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All websites were available and accurate when this book was sent to press.

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bradley, Michael, 1962-  
Jaguar / Michael Bradley.  
p. cm. — (Cars)  
Includes bibliographical references and index.  
ISBN 978-0-7614-4524-1 (e-book)  
1. Jaguar automobile—History—Juvenile literature. I. Title.  
TL215.J3B73 2010  
629.222'2—dc22  
2008036084

Editor: Megan Comerford  
Publisher: Michelle Bisson  
Art Director: Anahid Hamparian  
Series Designer: Daniel Roode

Photo research by Connie Gardner

Cover photo by Ron Kimball/www.kimballstock.com

The photographs in this book are used by permission and through the courtesy of:  
*Alamy*: National Motor Museum, back cover, 18; Roger Bambay, 1, whereett.com, 7; Phil Talbot, 14, 28;  
*Ron Kimball/www.kimballstock.com*: 4, 13, 20, 21, 29; *The Everett Collection*: 15; *Corbis*: Hulton Deutsch  
Collection; 6; Bruce Benedict/Transtock, 8; Marilyn Goddard, 16; Schlegelmich, 23; Car Culture, 27; *Jaguar  
Daimler Heritage Trust*, 10; *The Image Works*: National Motor Museum, 12; Topham, 19; Land Lost Content/  
HIP, 24; Jim West, 26; *Getty Images*: Frank Micelotla/Stringer, 25.

Printed in Malaysia  
1 3 5 6 4 2



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The 1938 Jaguar SS-100, produced by SS Cars, was one of the first cars to bear the name *Jaguar*. It wouldn't take long until the company renamed itself Jaguar Cars Limited, producing some of the most popular luxury cars in the world.



# CHAPTER ONE

## BUILT FOR COMFORT

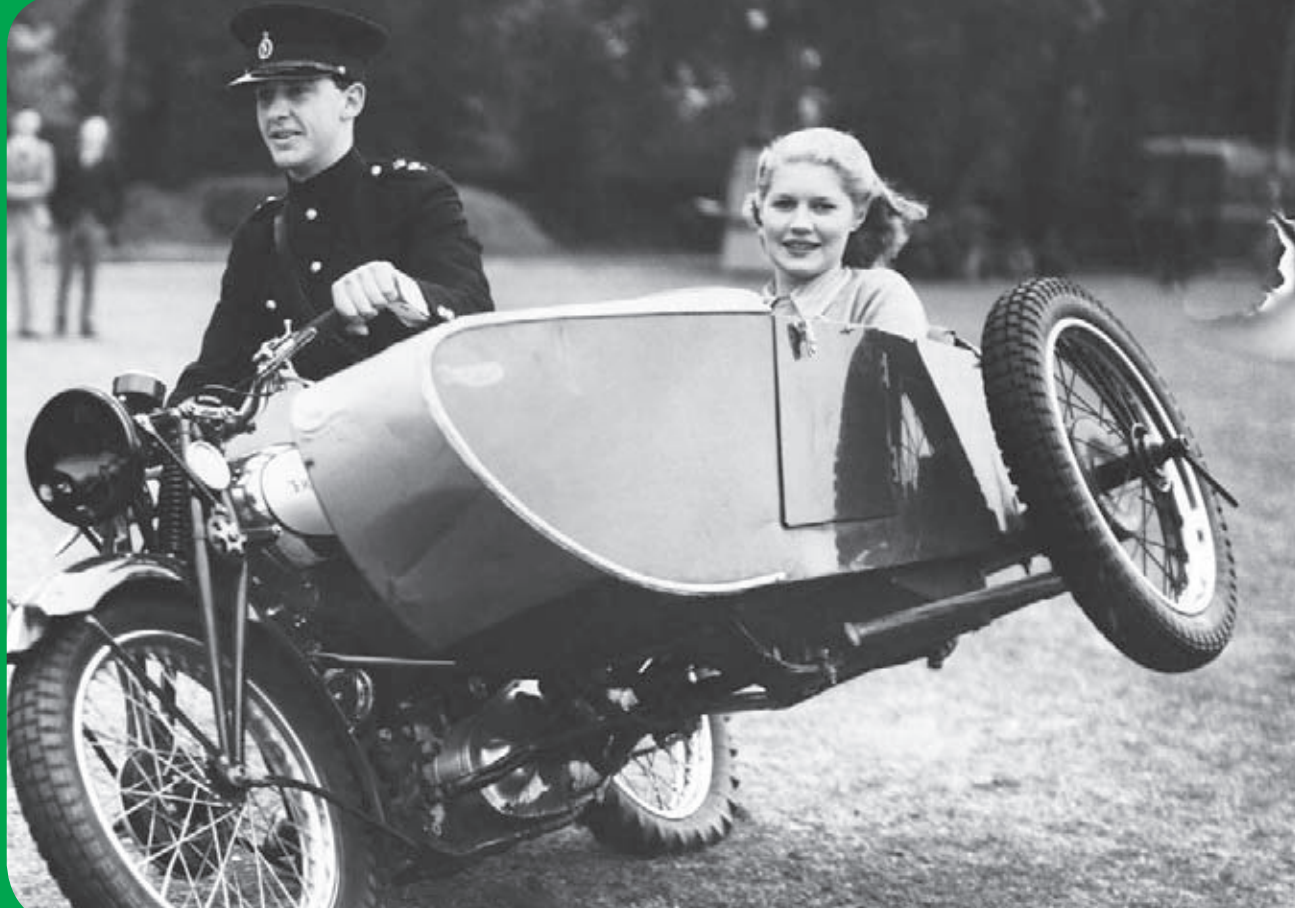


**I**t began with a woman. William Lyons's girlfriend, to be exact. If she hadn't been so cold and uncomfortable riding in the small, simple **sidecar** attached to Lyons's motorcycle, the Jaguar would have never become the symbol of automotive style, **luxury**, and power it is today. In fact, the Jaguar would not even exist.

The old sidecars rode low to the ground and bounced along the unpaved roads in 1920s English towns. A young lady, looking forward to a wonderful night at the theater or a restaurant, often arrived with **tousled** hair and frozen fingers, thanks to the rough and windy ride. So, Lyons and his friend, Bill Walmsley, decided to do something about it. The rest is history.

Even when Lyons and Walmsley made sidecars, their goal was to make every creation comfortable and a step above everything else out there. It wasn't long before they graduated from making motorcycle **accessories** to designing automobile bodies. They didn't want to make just a car, but a luxury vehicle. Lyons and Walmsley began with sporty automobile bodies and went on to produce high-performance cars that looked like nothing else available at the time and that were faster than the competition.

Jasmine Bligh, who introduced television programs for the British Broadcasting Company, rides in the sidecar during a motorcycle stunt demonstration in 1938.





A Jaguar XKE and a Jaguar Mark II, both 1964 models, look surprisingly different. The E-type was a sports car, aimed at car enthusiasts, while the Mark series was more popular with families.

The earliest cars made by Lyons and Walmsley were **sleek** and powerful, just like the fierce jaguar, the animal for which the car was named in the 1940s. As the years went on and the Jaguar became known around the world, drivers understood the difference between the luxury sedans and sports cars made by the British company and those built by others. Yes, Jaguars cost a little more, but they delivered impressive performance and comfort.

During the 1960s, when British music and culture was all the rage in America, England earned a place in the foreign-car market with the Jaguar. Lyons and Walmsley had created a car that symbolized British class—and even British cool. If the Beatles were hot, then so was the Jaguar. Drivers were attracted to the Jaguar's low, athletic body and they loved the soft leather and polished wood that was inside.

The British Invasion made the Jaguar popular, and the carmaker took it from there. The release of new models attracted more and more drivers who **craved** the performance and comfort. Even the car's

The sleek, leaping jaguar is widely recognized as the symbol for Jaguar cars. The hood ornament on this 2001 S-type is almost as beautiful as the car itself!



famous leaping cat **hood ornament** set the Jaguar apart from other cars. Buyers wanted a car that was a dream to drive and looked just as good, and that's what they got with the Jaguar.

Every time a driver turned the key and fired up the Jaguar's powerful engine, the driver had Lyons to thank. Make that Lyons's girlfriend. If she hadn't demanded more comfort, the Jaguar would never have been born.

For a car that started as a sidecar, the Jaguar is nothing less than **extraordinary**.



**This 1924 Swallow Sidecar, produced by friends William Lyons and Bill Walmsley, was more comfortable than most other sidecars on the market. The windshield protected the passenger from dust and, of course, wind.**

## CHAPTER TWO

# FROM SIDECARS TO MOTORCARS



**I**t took just one look to get people interested. Really interested. After showing their new sidecar at the 1922 Motorcycle Show in England, Lyons and Walmsley were flooded with orders. Their **version** of the traditional add-on was more comfortable and better looking. It was also less expensive than most other models. Their Swallow Sidecar—named for a sleek, quick bird—was an instant hit.

But the two men realized their future lay beyond motorcycles and sidecars. Like Americans, the English were doing more driving. Lyons decided to move from two wheels to four and created a body for the Austin, a small two-seater car. The Austin Swallow was well received and, within a couple years, other automakers were asking Lyons to build frames for their cars, too.



The Austin Seven was one of the first cars created by Lyons and Walmsley when they decided to move beyond sidecars. The two-tone paint job and slightly rounded frame were characteristic of Austin cars, which imitated more expensive vehicles.

Lyons, who now called his business the Swallow Sidecar and Coachbuilding Company, soon found that merely designing bodies for automobiles wasn't enough for him. He wanted to do more. It was time to become a complete car manufacturer. In 1931 Lyons brought the SS1 to the London Motor Show. It was a **modest** automobile powered by a six-**cylinder** engine. The difference, however, was in the design. It was low to the ground and had a long front end, circular headlights, and stylish wire wheels. The leather-and-wood

interior provided comfort for the driver and passenger. Best of all, it wasn't too expensive, despite its **unique** look. Lyons also built the SS2, which had a smaller, four-cylinder engine.

The Jaguar had been born.

By the 1930s, the sidecar business was a distant memory for Lyons and his company—renamed SS Cars, Limited—which was **devoted** to reasonably priced sports cars. But Lyons wasn't satisfied. The cars looked good, but they lacked power. Lyons hired a pair of top-shelf engineers, William Heynes and Harry Weslake, to fix that problem. Their goal was simple: to feed the need for speed.

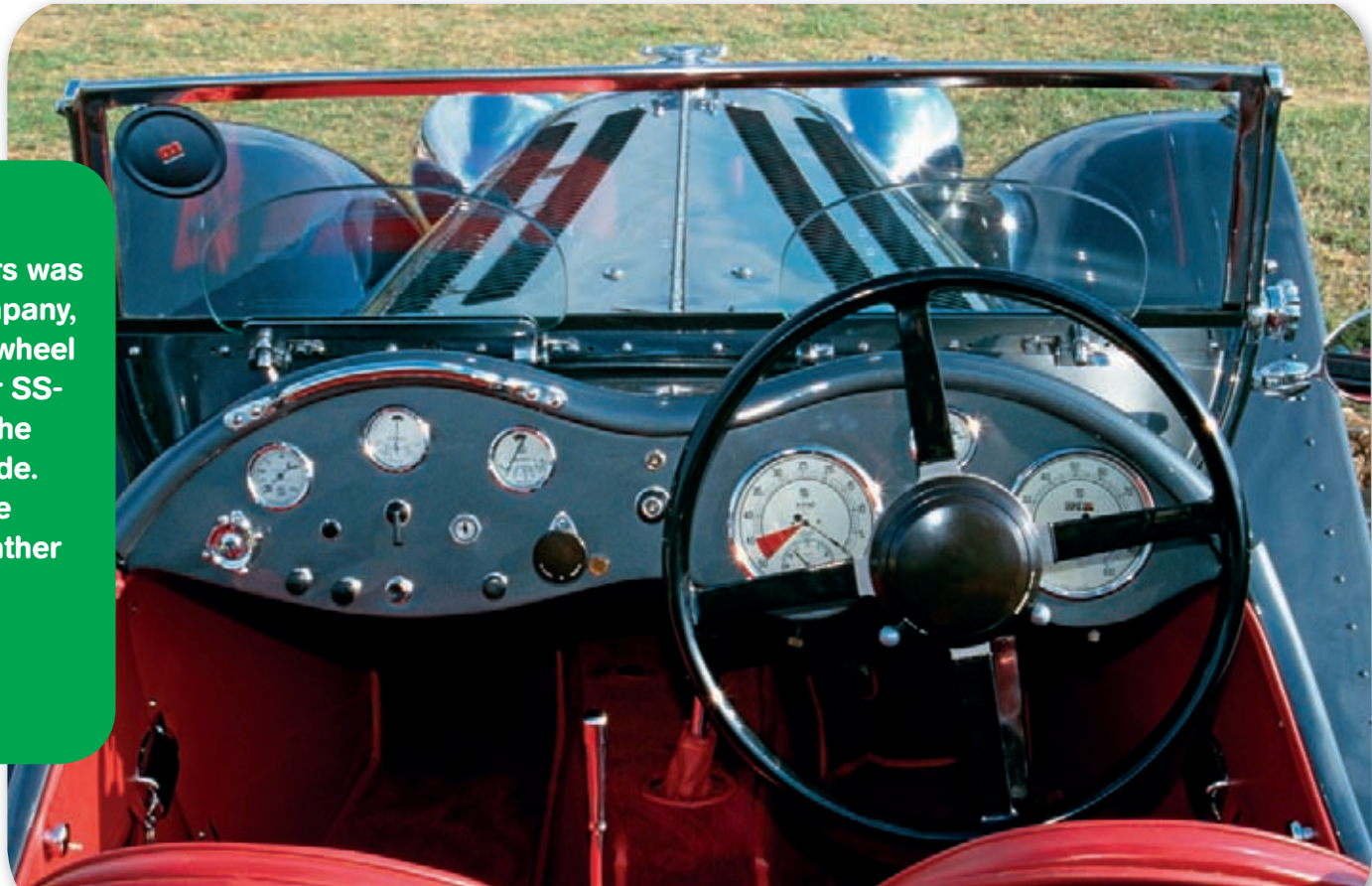


By 1938 Lyons and Walmsley were focusing on cars. The Jaguar SS-100 was a huge success. People couldn't help but notice the large, circular headlights and wide, curved frame.

The job was completed in 1935. Although SS Cars had created updated versions of the SS1, including sedans, limousines, and convertibles, the jewel of the company's early days was the Jaguar SS-100. Not only was it the first car to bear the famous name—and the leaping cat on the hood—it hit speeds of 100 miles per hour (161 kilometers per hour) and could **accelerate** from 0 to 60 mph (0 to 96.5 km/h) in a little more than 10 seconds.

Lyons had finally put it all together. The car had a look that set it apart from the rest. Its luxury features were popular with British

Since SS Cars was a British company, the steering wheel in the Jaguar SS-100 was on the right-hand side. Check out the flashy red leather interior!





Sir William Lyons stands next to a classic Jaguar E-type. Lyons, the founder of Jaguar, was knighted in 1956.

drivers who wanted to arrive in style. And now it had a powerful engine under the hood, capable of **propelling** it down the street faster than just about anything else around.

The SS-100 tore up the racing scene throughout Europe and is still one of the most famous cars in automotive history. Lyons had finally reached his goal: The Jaguar combined power and luxury in a great-looking package. As the 1940s dawned, English automotive luxury was defined by the Jaguar SS-100.

The big cat was just starting to **prowl**.



This 1953 Jaguar XK 120 convertible was a top-selling model for Jaguar Cars Limited. With a curvy body and a V-6 engine, it was both stylish and powerful.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

# BRITAIN AND BEYOND

**T**he first order of business after World War II was to change the name of the car. The SS were the police and military units in **Nazi Germany** that, under dictator Adolf Hitler's direction, committed crimes against humanity associated with the Holocaust. Lyons did not want to be associated with the Nazi SS, so he turned to the company's recognizable hood ornament for **inspiration**. In 1946, after helping the English war effort, SS Cars became Jaguar Cars Limited.

The name change didn't affect the company's success—or the high quality of the cars. As the 1950s began, Jaguar



Starting in the 1950s, Jaguar produced some less expensive, four-door vehicles. This 1964 Jaguar Mark II came with leather interior and had larger windows than the Mark I.

had two cars that were impressive and popular. The first was the XK 120, which had **debuted** at the 1948 Earls Court Motor Show in London. Its top speed of 120 mph (193 km/h) made it the fastest car in the world at that time. The XK 120 had the power and the Jaguar style. Designers even added a convertible top in 1953. Wherever it went, the XK 120 made new friends with car buyers and racing fans.

Jaguar also introduced its Mark series of sedans, which was aimed toward buyers who didn't need race-car power. The Mark V debuted in 1948 and was followed by the Mark VII (Bentley produced a car called the Mark VI) and Mark VIII.

The 1950s were big for the company, which was developing a **reputation** as the top luxury carmaker. Things were going so well for Jaguar Cars Limited that it decided to bring its products to the United States. In 1954, it crossed the Atlantic and began selling models through Jaguar Cars North America. The U.S. auto market was growing, and it was more than happy to include the luxury and speed of the “Jag.”

Though high style was the Jaguar trademark, there was a risk that focusing only on expensive cars could hurt the company, especially if the **economy** struggled. So, in 1955, the company introduced the MK,



Six Jaguar XKEs, or E-types, line up at a racetrack. Though the company made changes to the body over the years, such as narrowing the front end, the car was always sleek and stylish.

designed to appeal to families. It wasn't a station wagon, but it was a Jaguar with a **middle-class** sensibility. Both the MK I and the MK II were successful, but they weren't the company's most important products. Jaguar's top sellers were still the luxury cars, and the company was devoted to developing new models that were on the cutting edge of technology and luxury.

For years, the Jaguar had been prowling in high style on racetracks throughout Europe. Its XKC and XKD models were almost unbeatable at LeMans—a Jaguar won in 1955, 1956, and 1957—but there were rumors that an even faster, more impressive Jaguar was out there. In March 1961 it pounced. The Jaguar XKE, a race car tamed for the city streets, was introduced at the Geneva Motor Show. It looked fabulous and could go 150 mph (241 km/h). Drivers felt like they were behind the wheel of a car that belonged on a racetrack.

This gold 1961 Jaguar XKE has a menacing look. The long, prowling front end and angled headlights make it one of the most recognizable cars.





A V-6 engine in the 1964 Jaguar XKE gave drivers plenty of power!

The Jaguar XKE's long front end, luxurious interior, and powerful engine made it a must for any sports car driver—and it cost half as much as the Aston Martin DB4, its main competitor.

It was also a must for international spies, at least that's what movie producers decided when selecting a car for Austin Powers, a funny 1960s British movie spy that **spoofs** James Bond. The Jag was not only **posh**, but fast enough to escape enemies. Austin Powers drove an XKE painted with the **Union Jack** in his first two movies: *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* (1997) and *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999).

To this day, the XKE remains one of the most famous cars of all time, and not just because it was in *Austin Powers* movies. Car fans admire the XKE because it had looks and power that made it stand out from the other luxury sports cars produced during the 1960s. After all, it was a Jaguar.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

# THE INVASION CONTINUES

**D**espite the success in the 1960s, the 1970s were tough for Jaguar. The company had made too many models and was having trouble selling all of them. In 1972, Lyons retired as chairman of the company, fifty years after introducing the Swallow Sidecar. Although Jaguar continued to make models, including the XJ12 sedan, the fastest four-seater car in the world, and the super-quick XJ-S, there was a fear the company might be closed down in the near future.





During the 1970s, some people feared that the sun was setting on Jaguar Cars Limited. The company had produced too many models, including this 1972 Jaguar E-12.



**This 1980 poster advertises the Jaguar XJ-S. The company used its reputation for producing superior cars to entice buyers.**

But, in 1980, a new CEO took over. John Egan was forty years old and committed to keeping Jaguar successful. And he did. The Jaguar XJ-S was introduced in 1975, but a high efficiency (HE) model that hit the market in 1982 was the car that stirred up excitement among drivers—thanks to Egan. The XJ-S HE could fly down the road at

155 mph (249 km/h). This was followed by the success of the XJ6 in the United States—proof that the Jag was back.

Change was still in the air and, in 1989, U.S. auto giant Ford Motor Company bought Jaguar, which became one of many foreign companies owned by Ford. Although some complained that the design of Jaguars throughout the 1990s resembled that of other Ford cars, the Jag was truly still unique. It could—and did—blast down the highway.



**A custom-painted 2001 Jaguar XK8 was featured in the movie *Austin Powers in Goldmember*. Here, co-stars Mike Meyers and Beyoncé Knowles drive the car in New York City's Times Square for an appearance on the MTV show *TRL*.**

As part of Ford's fleet, Jaguar introduced the XK8 sedan and the **supercharged** XKR sports car. Austin Powers drove a 2001 Jaguar XK8 in the movie *Austin Powers in Goldmember* (2002). Like his XKE, the special-edition Jaguar XK8 was painted with the British flag and had plenty of gadgets for fighting off the bad guys.

The company reported sales of its XK8 went up 73 percent, thanks in part to the automobile's appearance in the third *Austin Powers* film. In other words, a popular car had become a **sensation**. The XK8, however, was just following in the footsteps of the models that came before it.

The Jaguar XJ was on display at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan, in January 2007. The silver color shows off the smooth curves of the car, which has the classic leaping-cat hood ornament.





**In 2008 Jaguar showed off its ultramodern C-XF concept car. This Jag is supercharged, with a 420-horsepower V-8 engine.**

Despite the sales of the XK8, Ford was having trouble making a profit on its Jaguar division. In 2007, it announced its plan to sell the Jaguar line. Although many companies were interested in buying Jaguar, Tata Motors, the largest automaker in India, eventually bought it. Some worried that Jaguars would change after coming under control of yet another owner, but that was not the case. Jaguars still show the same commitment to style, power, luxury, and high-quality cars that William Lyons had back in 1922.

# Vital Statistics

## 1936 Jaguar SS-100

### SPECIAL FACT:

This model was the first to officially carry the name *Jaguar*



**Power:** 125 hp

**Engine Size:** 214 ci/3.5L

**Engine Type:** Standard OHV V-6

**Weight:** 2,600 lbs (1,179 kg)

**Top Speed:** 93 mph (150 km/h)

**0-60 mph (0-96.5 km/h):** 12.85 sec

**SPECIAL FACT:**  
Only 200 cars were  
released, only in Europe

## ***2008 Jaguar XKR-S***



**Power:** 420 hp  
**Engine Size:** 256 ci/4.2L  
**Battery Power:** 300 volts  
**Engine Type:** V-8  
**Weight:** 3,671 lbs (1,665 kg)  
**Top Speed:** 174 mph (280 km/h)  
**0-60 mph (0-96.5 km/h):** 4.9 sec

# **GLOSSARY**

<b>accelerate</b>	<b>To go faster.</b>
<b>accessories</b>	<b>Objects or features added to increase comfort or beauty.</b>
<b>crave</b>	<b>To really want something.</b>
<b>cylinder</b>	<b>the long, rounded chamber in which a piston moves in the engine of a car, providing power. The more cylinders in a motor, the more power it generates.</b>
<b>debuted</b>	<b>Appeared in public for the first time.</b>
<b>devoted</b>	<b>Loyal.</b>
<b>economy</b>	<b>The way a country manages its money.</b>
<b>extraordinary</b>	<b>Very special, outstanding.</b>
<b>hood ornament</b>	<b>A figure or design on the front of a car's hood. It is often the car company's logo.</b>
<b>inspiration</b>	<b>Something that gives someone an idea.</b>
<b>luxury</b>	<b>Something that provides comfort and pleasure, but is not necessary.</b>
<b>middle-class</b>	<b>Of or relating to the group of people in a country who are neither rich nor poor.</b>
<b>modest</b>	<b>Not attention-grabbing; ordinary, plain, and simple.</b>
<b>Nazi Germany</b>	<b>The country, led by Adolf Hitler, responsible for starting World War II and carrying out the Holocaust, in which about 11 million people were killed because Hitler disapproved of their religion, race, or sexuality. The regime was defeated at the end of the war.</b>
<b>posh</b>	<b>Elegant and fashionable.</b>
<b>propelling</b>	<b>Pushing or driving something forward.</b>

<b>prowl</b>	To move along in a sneaky manner, as if in search of prey.
<b>reputation</b>	How something or someone is seen by the public.
<b>sensation</b>	The cause of excitement.
<b>sidecar</b>	A small car attached to a motorcycle that allows a passenger to ride along with the driver.
<b>sleek</b>	Smooth, shiny, and having a sharp, almost glowing appearance.
<b>spoofs</b>	Imitates something in a funny way.
<b>supercharged</b>	When an engine is supplied with extra charge, or power.
<b>tousled</b>	Messy, usually in reference to hair or clothes.
<b>Union Jack</b>	The nickname of Great Britain's red, white, and blue flag.
<b>unique</b>	One of a kind.
<b>version</b>	One form of a product or idea.

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Elegant, posh, and never out of style, the Jaguar is a symbol of status in America. Let's take a ride through the history of the *Jaguar* with *Sports Illustrated for Kids* author Michael Bradley!



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