

New reference point by Joe Sage

For the past two years, it's been hard to drive a Toyota 86—or a GR Supra 3.0—without contemplating how one compared to the other at half—or twice—the price. For some shoppers, this could be an epiphany, while it could leave others stumped about a gap and, worse still for Toyota, thinking about other brands. Well, problem solved.

In spring 2020, upcoming new GR Supra models were announced both above and below the original 3.0—a straight-to-racetrack 430-hp GR Supra GT4; and a GR Supra 2.0 with a 255-hp turbo-four. They would also bump the existing GR Supra 3.0 from 335 up to 382 hp, not only for a better Supra 3.0 in its own right, but creating a more balanced

stairstep among three Supras. We've heard nothing further about the GT4, but the 86 is now suddenly closer to the Supra family's power and price and part of the comparative conversation, as well.

Given the significance of Supra's original devotion to its lifetime lineage of inline-sixes—a commitment so important to tradition, the 3.0's engine was codeveloped with BMW, who had a head start on such a powerplant—the four-cylinder Supra 2.0 has inevitably triggered discussion (as had that six). For product positioning—and what it means to the 86—it seems a clever move by Toyota.

The Supra 2.0 vs 3.0 comparison is akin to, say, Cayman and Cayman S, as an example from Supra's originally stated competitive set (and still at lower

cost). That set had also specified only the 370Z NISMO, but now Supra also tackles the regular Z. Many sports cars have a base model with a boosted model added above it, sort of an engineering exercise in “great car, what could we do to create a juiced-up version?” Supra has turned this on its head, with the 3.0 coming first, making the 2.0 more of an exercise in “great car, what could we do to create a more affordable version?”

The GR Supra 2.0's most notable distinction is its 2.0-liter engine—a four-cylinder powertrain as well-developed as the six, with quick performance and a healthy soundtrack—which also makes it lighter than the 3.0 by over 200 pounds, in turn giving it 0.2 inches additional ground clearance and height (though ingress/egress dimensions remain the same—extremely tight for a tall person).

The GR Supra 2.0 has correspondingly smaller brakes, forgoes the 3.0's new-this-year aluminum strut-tower-to-radiator braces, and bears cast alu-

minum instead of forged aluminum wheels.

Supra 2.0 is a very peppy little performer. It became routine to turn on sport mode, since it's right next to auto start-stop defeat. Handling and steering are tight and precise (once we turned off automated systems that were surprisingly opinionated about lines on the pavement). Suspension is firm. Really firm. Harsh at times, likely addressable with different tires (the car has staggered fitment and no room for a spare, so it has run-flats and a patch kit; you might prefer other tires and the risk of a roadside stranding). But in the curves or from the line, the car has great power, grip and control.

There is no “better or worse” between the 2.0 and 3.0 Supras—decisions will be made for the usual reasons. And if the Toyota 86 is in your mix, one other difference of note is that it's a 2+2, while the Supra is a two-seater—though legroom is ample in the front of both and limited in the back of the 86, as is typical for the type.

We have wondered for awhile whether Toyota might decide to rebadge the 86 as a Supra 86, as much a part of the equation as it may be, and for which it's easy to make a marketing and branding



case. As it turns out, on the same day we turned in the Supra 2.0, they announced something similar—for 2022, there will be a Toyota GR 86, with a horsepower boost (see sidebar chart).

The only thing that's missing is a roadster in the 86/Supra family. Could that be in the cards as this sporty lineup grows and grows? ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Graz, Austria
SEATING CAPACITY	.....two
ENGINE	.....2.0L twin-scroll turbo inline-4 16v DOHC, chain drive, VVT
HP/TORQUE	.....255 hp / 295 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.2:1
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd auto
SUSPENSION	.....F: dbl-joint type MacPherson strut, 23.5 mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link w 5-arm construction, 18.0 mm stblzr bar
STEERING	.....electric power steering
BRAKES	.....F/R: 13.0 vented, 1-piston floating caliper
WHEELS	.....cast alum F: 18x9.0; R: 18x10.0
TIRES	.....F: 255/40 ZR18; R: 275/40 ZR18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....172.5 / 97.2 in
HEIGHT	.....51.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....34.1 ft
HEADROOM	.....38.3 in
LEGROOM	.....42.2 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....10.2 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....4.7 in
WEIGHT	.....3181 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....premium req'd / 13.7 gal
MPG	.....25/32/28 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$42,990
SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY PKG:	8.8" touchscreen w nav, 12-sprk 500W JBL audio, touchpad rotary controller, wireless Apple/Android, dynamic radar cruise, blind spot, rear cross traffic, park sensors w emergency braking, connected services w 4-yr trial
CARPET CARGO MAT	.....80
WHEEL LOCKS	.....65
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995
TOTAL	.....\$47,615

TOYOTA 86 & GR SUPRA LINEUP

86 ¹	.....2.0T	.....205 hp	.....\$27,060
GR 86 ²	.....2.4T	.....228 hp	.....tha
GR Supra 2.0	.....2.0T	.....255 hp	.....42,990
GR Supra 3.0	.....3.0T	.....382 hp	.....50,990
GR Supra GT4 [?]3.0T	.....430 hp	.....est \$195k

¹ 2021 model; ² 2022 model
[?] previously announced; no new info

