

93-X

Turn your back on compromises





The test drive was over. Unfortunately. But I'd been one of the chosen few. Chosen to take this new sports car for a few laps on the Saab test track. Mind you, I wouldn't have minded taking it for a spin off the beaten track too. Because this was nothing less than a peek into the future, lunging forward on four huge wheels.

I stepped out of the car and handed back the remote control. So that's what tomorrow's car key will look like. The engineers at Saab gave me a whole load of information. It was all probably very riveting stuff, but to be honest I wasn't paying much attention. I did notice, however, that they were all looking at me. "We've seen it before," one of them said. That's when I realised I had a big smile pasted all over my face.



Everybody wants a sports car. In the right car, driving is intoxicating. And generations of motor journalists have tried – and failed – to find the words to describe just how much fun it can be.

Fun and practicality, however, aren't usually such a great mix. Let's face it: we need some measure of practicality in our lives. You might just want to pick up and go, with anyone, heading anyplace. Without abandoning your sports car and irrespective of what's waiting around the corner.

That is why the 9-3X exists. To replace compromises with freedom of choice. Freedom to take the high road. Or the low road. Or across, picking your way over obstacles. Just like the 9-3X does.









When opportunity knocks
you've got a third door to open.

I really had luck on my side. About an hour past the border between Greece and Bulgaria, I'd taken a wrong turning, and the narrow road simply ended up in a courtyard. I eventually understood that I was in a vineyard, and after half an hour it was clear to me that the small cellars here held a real treasure

Virtually out of cash, I could only scrape together enough for three crates. Roughly what I had space for alongside my bag, cameras, rope, harness and climbing boots.

If I'd had more money on me, I'd have had to fold down the rear seat. Sports cars are no longer what they used to be.

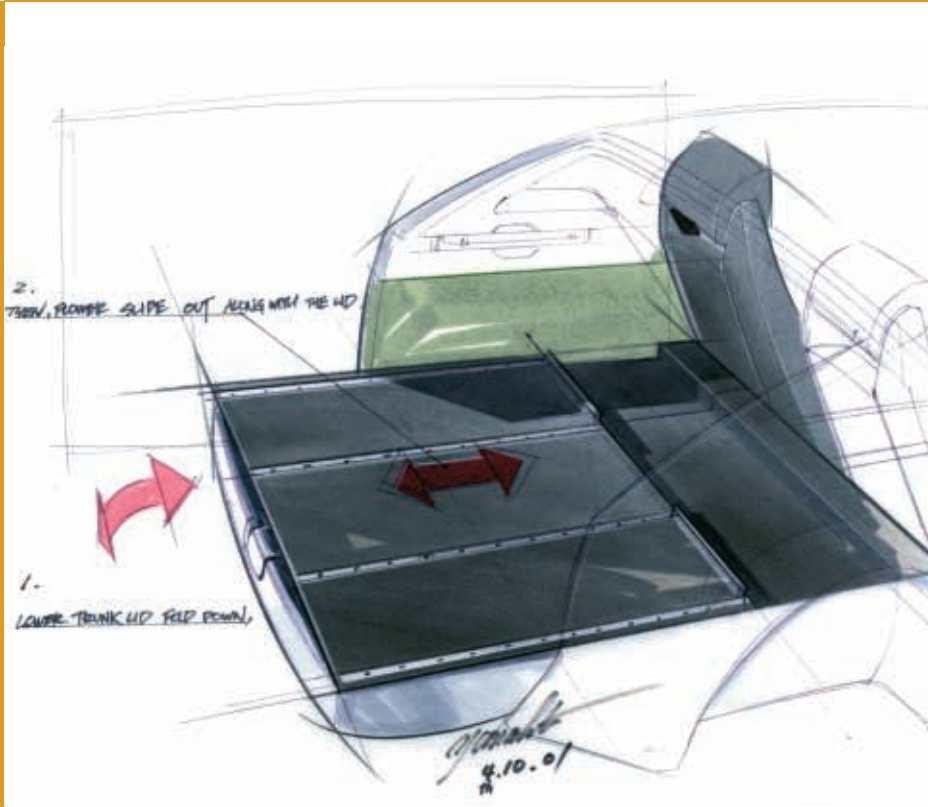
Split, fold, slide, strap. Then step on it.

A sports car with generous load space is not as much of a contradiction as might first appear.

The Saab 9-3X has been designed for more sports activities than merely driving. There's plenty of space for your equipment. And it is comforting to know there's no need to pack soaking-wet climbing gear inside the passenger compartment.

There are load-anchoring rails embedded in the floor and in the backrest panels. Being able to secure loads is doubly important in a car with an inviting temperament.

The tailgate of the Saab 9-3X is horizontally split. The upper glass panel lifts upwards above the roof, while the lower metal section drops down to create a loading ramp. Very convenient, since the luggage compartment floor slides out automatically. So there's no need to lean forward into the car. There are better ways to work out.







A ground-hugging sports car

280 bhp, 400 Nm. AWD. Four-link rear suspension.

Four ingredients in the 9-3X performance potion. If you're already familiar with Saab, you'll know what these figures might mean in one of our cars. Now add twenty-inch wheels and a few hundred man-years of research, all focused on driving excitement.

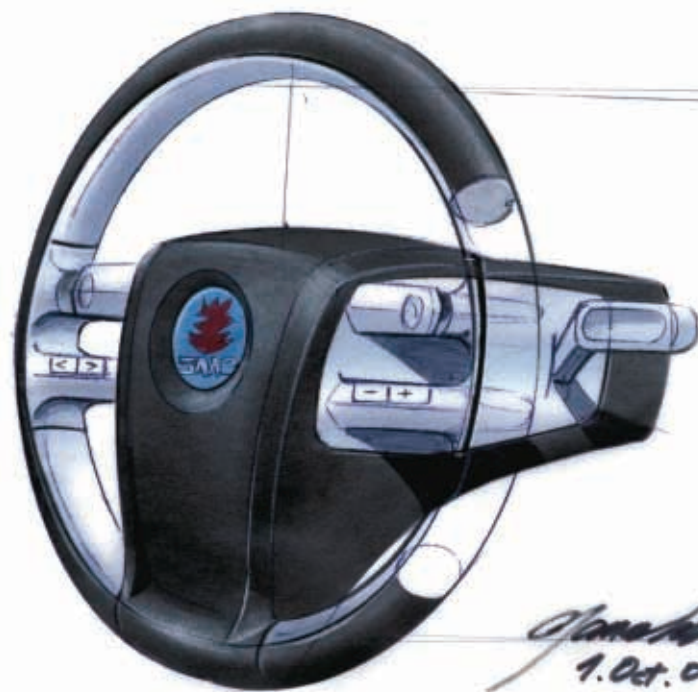
Isn't it strange that some people see cars as nothing more than transport from A to B?

Four wheels that will help you in – and out of – the rough.

The 9-3X has drive to all four wheels. Mostly and mainly, but not always. A variable clutch connects the front and rear wheels. Just how firmly they are connected depends on the current conditions and the driving style. And it's all controlled by computers. Naturally.

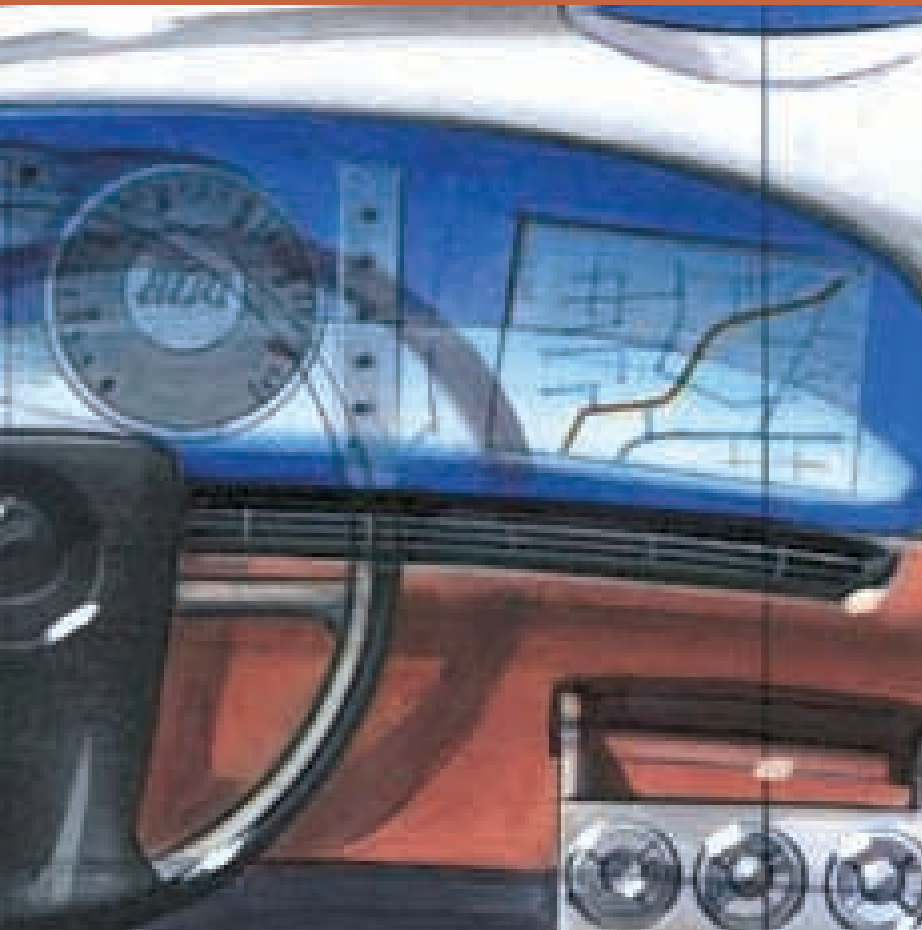
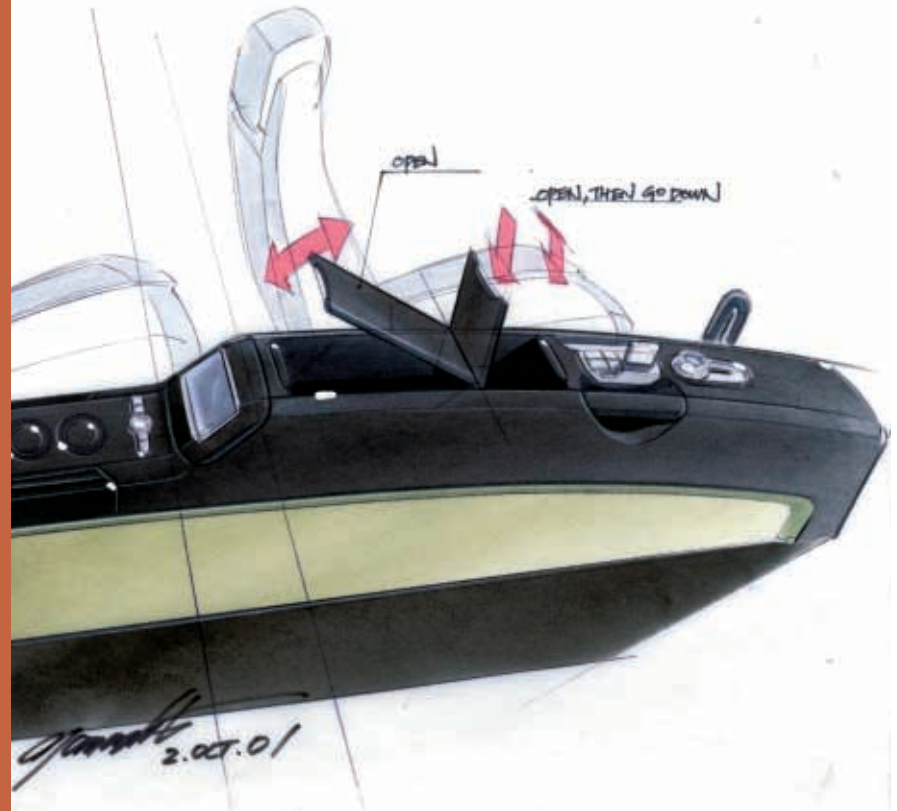
The engine is a new turbocharged V6, transmission comes courtesy of a 5-speed, semi-automatic unit and grip is maintained by just about every three-letter word in the automotive dictionary: ABS, EBD, TCS, CBC, MBA, ESP and so on. All integrated into a beautifully balanced chassis.

So when you park the 9-3X on dry tarmac, it's a smooth and friendly front-wheel drive car – sports car, family runabout, whatever your needs for the moment. And when you challenge the laws of physics on unknown surfaces, you'll owe much of your success to the razor-sharp response of dependable four-wheel drive.



Curiosity kills conventions

Imagine that meeting, quite a few years back. A development team gathers to discuss in-car electronics. A young engineer clears his throat and offers: "I think a car should have an internal broadband network!" Abrupt silence. His colleagues, older and presumably wiser, all turn and stare at the blushing young man. "Why?" they ask, and he answers: "Haven't figured it all out yet, I just know it has to be there."



At the speed of light

Time has indeed proven that young man right. Nowadays in-car networking is a truly established car technology, and in the 9-3X we've taken it a few steps further. The network consists of an optical fibre, faster than any wire, while GPRS and UMTS will give us mobile Internet worthy the name.

You won't need a service centre to handle in-car diagnostics, and you can even download extra horsepower and torque when needed. With your engine management system on the Net, you can tune your car instantly and still stay within your warranty.

Your PDA can appear on the dashboard screen, and so can the footage from your DV camera. Both are automatically recharged in their docking bases. And there's more to come.

So, obviously we've planned far ahead for more than we can currently envisage. That is to say, currently envisage for today's needs. But then, this is Saab.



Technical specifications and performance

Body

Two-door cross-over coupe with floor-mounted rear tailgate, steel body.

Engine

Lightweight "Ecopower 2" 2.8-liter V6 turbo engine with 60-degree configuration, double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder, direct ignition and variable valve timing. Saab Trionic engine management. Front, transversely mounted
Maximum power is 280 bhp/206 kW at 5,500 rpm.
Max torque is 400 Nm (available from 1,700 to 5,500 rpm).

Transmission/driveline

Adaptive, five-speed, semi-automatic transmission with steering-wheel-mounted manual gear shifts.
ESP-controlled Haldex AWD system

Suspension

Front: Struts, lower A-arm, separate gas-filled shock absorbers, coil springs, anti-roll bar.
Rear: Independent, four-link, gas-filled shock absorbers, coil springs, anti-roll bar.

Steering

Rack-and-pinion, power-assisted. 2.5 turns (lock to lock).

Brakes

Front: 350 mm, ventilated/drilled steel discs, 4-piston Brembo calipers.
Rear: 330 mm, ventilated/drilled steel discs, 4-piston Brembo calipers.

Wheels

20×8.5 inch, five-spoke alloy.

Tires

Front and Rear: 245/40 Michelin Sport Pilot

Curb weight (projected)

1,550 kilos.

External dimensions

Length: 4,380 mm. *Height:* 1,498 mm. *Width:* 1,826 mm
Wheelbase: 2700 mm
Track width (f): 1,580 mm, *(r):* 1,566 mm
Ground clearance: 0,000 mm

Load space

Volume: 320 liters (rear seat up), 950 liters (rear seat folded). *Length:* 690 mm (rear seat up)
1,550 mm (+ rear seat folded)
2,335 mm (+ front and rear seat folded)
1,395 mm (+ tailgate down/rear seat up)
2,255 mm (+ tailgate down/rear seat down)
3,040 mm (+ tailgate down/rear and front seat folded)

Performance (projected)

Top speed: 250 km/h (limited)
0–100 km/h: 6.2 secs (figures are projected)







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