

### A most unusual Chevy edition

With an even more oddball options list.

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### Seinfeld sells a plethora of Porsches

Find out what he unloaded, and how much they went for.

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### Attack of the Spiders

The Fiat 124 will get an Arbat version.

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**Manual v. automatic**

Will the standard transmission go the way of the dinosaur?

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## TEST DRIVE

# Darting Glances

## 2016 Dodge Dart Blacktop

DAN LYONS | text and photos  
*Special to the Times Union*

Changes for the 2016 Dodge Dart have mainly to do with what the eye can see. Two appearance packages have expanded availability this year. The Rallye Appearance Group (\$595) – is now offered on the base, SE trim level as well as the mid-level SXT. Included here are special, 17” rims, touring suspension, rear stabilizer bar, leather wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, black crosshair grille and surround, Rallye badging, dual exhaust with bright tips, fog lamps and floor mats. The Blacktop Package (\$395) bundles 18” gloss black aluminum rims with 225/40R18XL all

**2016 Dodge Dart Rallye Blacktop**  
MSRP: \$19,395 – As tested: \$24,905

season tires, gloss black outside rearview mirrors, black fog lamp spear and bezels. My test car was an SXT with both of the above packages, and an as-tested price of \$24,905. So spec’d, the bigger, Blacktop rims trump the Rallye’s Granite Crystal wheels. I like the blackout trim look, especially the rims, which have a kind of black- sneaker-cool vibe about them.

Standard on the SXT (as well as on GT and Limited trims) is the 2.4L four cylinder engine. It’s rated at 184 horsepower (@ 6,250 rpm) and 171 lb. ft. of torque (@ 4,100 rpm). The standard transmission is a six speed manual, or you can opt for a six speed automatic. As



**2016 DODGE DART BLACKTOP** The Dodge Dart boasts distinctive styling, a spacious interior with abundant features and strong safety ratings in a compact sedan.

fitted on my test car, the Powertech automatic adds \$1,250 to the sticker price. The 2.4 Tigershark is the pick of Dart’s three, available engines. With a 0-60 time in the low 8-second range, it’s got enough go for all normal driving requirements. With its 160 h.p. the 2.0L feels underpowered by comparison. The 1.4L turbo is only a few ticks behind the 2.4L from 0-60, and with 36 more lb. ft. of torque than the 2.0L, feels more lively. But, it also feels like it’s working hard and is fairly vocal at wide open throttle. More so than the 2.4L, which is noticeable to the ears

when prodded, but not particularly loud by the standards of this class. The manual transmission is a nice pick if you want a more sporting feel, and it will squeeze a wee bit more out of a tank of petrol. The automatic is fairly smooth from gear to gear. It’s not a dual clutch design, so while ‘manumatic’ shifts with the floor shifter are possible, they aren’t lightning fast. But, they’re quick enough to be fun, and manual mode allows you to hold a given gear to maximize

All Darts ride on an Alfa-Romeo based chassis which, in most models, is tuned softer than its European counterpart.

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