

SWEET SPOT AND THEN SOME.

by Joe Sage



Dodge has created the Charger lineup so well, it can be hard to pick the one you want most. Or it can be easy, each perfectly positioned by features, capability and price.

There are seven Chargers in the lineup: SE, SXT, three R/T models and two SRT models, one of which is the 707-hp SRT Hellcat. All seat five. They range from \$27,995 to \$50,995 for the first six, then jump to \$67,645 for the 707-hp supercharged SRT Hellcat. All are 8-speed automatics—no manuals as are available in the Challenger lineup—unfortunate, perhaps, but it simplifies the decisions.

The SE and SXT are frugal but stylish V6 models, the only ones with available AWD.

Among R/T models are the R/T, the (redundantly named) R/T Road & Track, and the car we have here, the R/T Scat Pack.

We find the R/T models hit a great balance point, all with HEMI® V8s but starting at just \$32,995. The R/T Scat Pack costs \$6100 more than an R/T, but \$11,000 less than an SRT 392.

yet has the SRT's same 392 HEMI and more.

Visually, the R/T Scat Pack has satin black badges, decklid with spoiler, Scat Pack grille, and a few things it shares with SRT: a HEMI 392 badge, body-colored performance sills, integrated dual chrome exhaust tips and such. Most notable may be what one badge points out: it shares its 485-hp 392 cu.in. (6.4L) HEMI V8 with the non-Hellcat SRT (instead of the 370-hp 5.7L V8 in the other R/T models). R/T Scat Pack also has upgraded four-piston Brembo brakes, bigger rear axle, 3.09 rear end, 220-amp alternator and other performance strengtheners.

As with the smaller HEMI, this has deactivation of four cylinders for highway cruising and deceleration fuel cutoff, both of which help it achieve 25 MPG highway, an impressive figure for an almost 500-hp muscle car.

We played with the manumatic at first, but found that the automatic is masterfully executed, close to psychic in reading our needs.

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	SRT 6.4L HEMI® V8 w 4-cyl deactiv
DRIVETRAIN	RWD
HP/TORQUE	485 hp / 475 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	TorqueFlite 8-spd auto
BRAKES	Brembo 4-piston high-po package
SUSPENSION	Performance tuned
CARGO CAPACITY	16.5 cu ft
WHEELS	20 x 8.0, polished alum, satin/black
TURNING CIRCLE	37.5 ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION	4395 lb / 55/45 F/R
MPG	15/25/18 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$39,995
UCONNECT® 8.4 NAV	695
DESTINATION CHARGE	880

TOTAL **\$41,685**

This Charger achieved a familiar unintended benchmark: when it was time to go home, we always wanted to keep driving. It's a strong performer, it's comfortable, visibility is great, instruments are among the best, audio is solid and the 392 HEMI sounds wonderful—pride and value in one sexy package. ■

