

# Straightforward with elements of relativity

BY JOE SAGE

The Toyota 86 is as straightforward an under-\$30,000 sports coupe as you can find, but it also begs comparison. First, there's the Subaru BRZ, with slightly different sheet metal finish here and there, but both with the same Subaru boxer engine, Toyota fuel injection systems and transmissions, and Subaru factory build, but each with elements of its brand's user interface. There is, or was, also the Scion FR-S, which was always a Toyota 86 in the rest of the world and became one here when the Scion brand was put out to pasture a couple of years ago.

There are also inevitable comparisons with the Mazda MX-5 Miata and its cousin the Fiat 124 Spider, which ride the same bones as each other, but with different suspension, different powertrains and notably different sheet metal—and have many differences from the Toyota 86.

Then there are the variables within the Toyota 86 family itself, which is kept pretty simple, basically a base model and a GT (either with your choice of manual or automatic transmission), as well as generally one more model above the GT. In 2017, there was the Toyota 860 Special Edition; coming for 2019 will be a Toyota 86 TRD Special

Edition; and in 2018 we have had the Toyota 86 GT Black, the car driven here. Whereas next year's TRD version will add performance suspension and exhaust bits, larger wheels and a few other details, this year's GT Black adds only a little bit to differentiate it from the 86 GT itself: black side mirrors and black end plates for the GT's already black rear wing. All, including next year's TRD, are powered by the same 205-hp Subaru boxer engine.

The GT's feature set is great at \$28,585, with LED lights, power mirrors, dual zone climate, leather and suede-like Granlux interior, audio that puts out high quality sound with plenty more headroom, and more. The \$2130 add-on for GT is a no brainer (and we'd suggest the \$720 saved on our car's manual transmission is a win-win).

We would love to see what the Toyota 86 could do with more horses and torque. But it has the straight line power and control of a naturally aspirated engine and fully mechanical manual shift. Step on the gas, grip the wheel, and the car goes where you point it, when you want it, and once you master and optimize the output it does have, you will enjoy it plenty. Suspension is firm—great in sporty maneuvers, rough on speed bumps—and steering is best at speed. In all the Toyota 86 gives you that feeling of mastery and control from small sports cars from the classic era. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....2.0L aluminum alloy 4-cyl boxer
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
HP/TORQUE	.....205 hp / 156 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....6-speed manual
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut; 18mm stblzr bar R: double wishbone, 15mm stblzr bar
STEERING	.....elec power steering
BRAKES	.....F: 11.6" vented disc R: 11.4" vented disc
WHEELS/TIRES	.....17x7 alloy / 215/45R17 Michelin
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....166.7 / 101.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....36.1 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....4.9 in
SEATING CAPACITY	.....four
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....41.9 / 29.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....6.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(M/T) 2774 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.....premium fuel / 13.2 gal
MPG	.....(manual trans): 21/28/24 (city/hwy/comb) .....(note: MPG w/automatic): 24/32/27 (city/hwy/comb)

### BASE PRICE (GT BLACK M/T).....\$28,585

**GT ADDS:** matte black rear wing w color-keyed end plates; LED fog lights; heated mirrors; aerodynamic underbody panel; dual zone climate; keyless entry/start; alarm; 4.2" TFT multi-info display (w steering wheel controls) incl stopwatch/timer, torque curves, G-forces and more; leather w silver stitching gearshift boot and parking brake lever cover; heated 2-stage front sport seats w leather bolsters and Granlux suede-like inserts w silver stitching; knee support cushions; Granlux door inserts and instrument panel surround.

**BLACK ADDS:** black side mirrors; black rear wing end plates.  
**DESTINATION CHARGE**.....920

### TOTAL (GT BLACK M/T).....\$29,505

**PRICE WALK: MODELS & TRANSMISSIONS (2018 MY):**

BASE MODEL (MANUAL)	.....\$26,455
GT TRIM LEVEL ADDS: (manual)	.....+\$2130
(automatic)	.....+\$2180
GT BLACK PACKAGE	.....(same prices at GT)
AUTO TRANS ADDS: (base model)	.....+\$670
(GT or GT Black)	.....+\$720

TRD SPECIAL EDITION (2019 MY).....\$32,420

