W12

In the A8 L, Audi’s top-of-the-line model, a twelve-cylinder powerplant provides outstanding propulsion. The “W12” abbreviation alludes to the unusual configuration of the 6.3-liter FSI engine: four rows consisting of three cylinders each. Two rows in each case face each other in an offset configuration at a 15-degree angle, collectively forming a single broad bank. Both cylinder banks thus form a 72-degree V configuration.

This layout makes the W12 engine particularly compact: at just over 50 centimeters (19.69 in) long, it is shorter than a V8, and measures approximately 70 centimeters (27.56 in) in both width and height. Its crankshaft has a crankpin offset of 12 degrees so that the 12 cylinders ignite in the ideal interval of 60 degrees. This frees the W12 from undesirable inertial forces, making it an extremely smooth-running engine.

Status: 2011

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