



Lexus LS600h Perfection?

Car review | The pursuit of Perfection is the Lexus motto. The LS is the top model from Lexus and the new 600h is the top version of the LS. Lexus has put all its technology and knowledge into this car. There can only be one conclusion: this must be the perfect car...

From the very first encounter, the LS600h convinces you that as an exclusive car nothing was too much trouble and only the best will do. Even the door handles feel great. The materials used, the immaculate finish and the refined styling make it clear that this is Lexus' finest offering.



Palace

The interior is a sumptuous palace of leather and wood. The roomy seats can be positioned electronically in a myriad of ways. The large steering wheel and the visibility over the large bonnet enhance that sensation of driving a powerful, quick stately car.

The finish is more than complete. After looking long and hard, there are a couple of very minor things that are missing. There's no touching the indicator paddle once to get it flash three times. The navigation system doesn't adapt the volume of the radio when announcing directions, which can get lost in the music. Apart from that, they are a couple of safety features that are missing since they are patented by other manufacturers.

With its radar, the LS600h automatically maintains its distance; a camera ensures that the car remains within the road lineation, the lights turn on in the dark, the navigation system knows every road in the whole of Europe. It's almost as if a driver is superfluous, but fortunately someone's got to enjoy all this beauty.



Silent enjoyment

As is the case in a car like this, the LS600h moves silently. This is not entirely unusually as the h in

LS600h actually stands for hybrid. In other words: under the bonnet there is not only a petrol engine (5.0 litre, V8, 394 hp) but also an electric engine (200 hp).

This Lexus is combining the best of two worlds. The petrol engine lends itself well to at high, constant speed over long distances. The electric engine is most suitable for short periods at low speeds. However you don't need to plug the LS600h into the mains. Energy which is usually lost on braking or coasting is converted into power for the electric engine.

Depending on the situation the computer chooses the best source of power, or even a combination of both. The switchover between the two occurs unnoticed, however if desired this can be viewed as a diagram on one of the displays.

The performance of this dual motorized Lexus can best be described in one word - phenomenal. Particularly when both engines are functioning at the same time, the sprint power is enormous. One of the considerable advantages of an electric engine is that it doesn't need to achieve revs to deliver power, but always has full power on hand.

The Lexus LS600h is in fact a luxury touring car, and the greatest advantage of the electric motor is its silence. In spite of its extraordinarily high degree of comfort, the LS600h is also able to give the feeling of speed. Consequently this extremely comfortable touring car delivers all the necessary driving pleasure. From rest, the car can reach 100 km/hr in 6.3 seconds, and just as easily the car accelerates from 180 to 250 km/hr. The V8 emits a mighty roar, which deafens all silence. Under normal circumstances, serenity prevails on the inside of the car.



Politically correct

With its hybrid drive, the performance of the LS600h is similar to that of the competitor's twelve cylinder engine, with consumption being similar to that of a six cylinder. With some care it is possible to keep the fuel consumption at 8.7 litres per 100 km. After a combination ride, when the car's full power is regularly draw upon, the average consumption worked out to be a still admirable 10.9 litres per 100 km of unleaded petrol.

A diesel engine is just as economical, but doesn't offer the same performance or refinement. Petrol engines which perform just as well are considerably thirstier. A hybrid is therefore not only better for the environment, but quite simply also ensures more comfort.



Performance

Both engines drive, as it could only be the case with this ultimate Lexus, all four wheels. As a result, road handling is outstanding. Even at extreme speeds of 200 km/hr and more, the LS600h remains remarkably stable and comfortable. Thanks to the sophisticated safety systems, grip is also outstanding on slippery roads.

It is however noticeable that the necessary feeling to the steering is missing, but this is simply a question of choice where Lexus went for comfort. Whomever is not driven but prefers to get behind the wheel themselves, should choose the GS450h.

In the rear

However much enjoyment the driver may be having, the LS600h is of course actually intended for dignitaries who are being chauffeured around the place. The space in the rear is ample. The right front seat can be moved electronically forwards right up against the dashboard, whereby Mr or Mrs VIP can relax in the back with their legs stretched out.

If this still isn't enough, then there is also a version with a long wheel base (+12 cm), entertainment

system, dual zone climate control and a massage function in the rear. With so much luxury there is little room for any more wishes, the comfort is perfect.



Conclusion

Is the Lexus LS600h perfect? Technically speaking, the car is equipped with the finest that Lexus has to offer. The LS600h combines all of Lexus' knowledge on comfort, safety and luxury. The hybrid provides an excellent performance for a relatively low fuel consumption.

Whether this all makes the perfect car is of course a question of taste. Whoever is devoted to tradition and noble origins, will never feel at home in a Lexus. Whoever prefers progressive technology combined with sublime comfort, will find no better car than the Lexus LS600h. ■



Specifications

Lexus LS600h LS600h Executive

Size and weight



Length x width x height	503 x 188 x 148 cm
Wheelbase	297 cm
Kerb weight	2.270 kg
Trailer	unknown
Trailer - braked	unknown
Fuel capacity	84 l
Luggage space	330 l
Tyre size	245/45R19

Engine and performance



Capacity	4969 cc
Cylinders / valves	8/4
Max power	394 PS @ 6400 rpm
Max torque	520 Nm @ 4000 rpm
Drive	four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	6.3 secs
Top speed	250 km/h
Average mileage	9.3 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	11.3 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	8 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	219 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 84,000
Price base model	Â£ 57,102