

# TOYOTA CELICA GT-S

*A five-figure bargain*



**TOYOTA** IT MAY BE difficult for many of us to think of a \$10,000 car as a bargain. But when you factor in cost, economy, reliability and the sheer fun of driving, the Toyota Celica GT-S is just that. Celica GT-S? Well, if you're thinking of the GT-S option from 1982, forget it. This year Toyota has reintroduced it with more than just fat tires, neat seats and a pseudo-Psupra look.

The GT-S is part of a reshuffled Celica line that has been divested of the \$15,400 Supra, which goes onward and upward as a distinct model. There are still two Celica body styles, the notchback Sport Coupe and the hatchback Liftback. The former comes as an ST or GT, with appropriate outfitting to match the basic image of the first or the sporting bent of the second. Liftbacks are equipped only as GTs. Then there are the GT-S models in either Liftback or Sport Coupe form, but with a significant difference we'll get to in a few paragraphs.

We chose the GT-S Sport Coupe—\$9969 base price—to test because we'd never taken a close look at the notchback coupe. While the two body styles are the same from the nose to the B-pillar, from there rearward they have completely different sheet metal. Although we've been fans of hatchback automobiles for years, we also admit there are times when we—particularly the photographers on the staff—would rather have an enclosed trunk, so that cargo can be stowed completely out of sight. The GT-S trunk provides 15.0 cu ft so enclosed, but it doesn't stop there. You can also fold down the rear seatbacks to carry long objects in the trunk and back seat, or simply add another 8.6 cu ft of luggage space. You undo latches at the top of the twin fold-down seatbacks from the passenger compartment. But you can also lock those latches with a rod inside the trunk compartment. With an extra half-turn on the trunk lock key you can also dis-

able the remote release next to the driver's seat, so the trunk can be made secure even when the car's interior is left unlocked. And when driving with the rear seats down, the noise level barely increases.

With respect to the notchback's overall design—layout, packaging, styling—about the only thing we don't like are the big wedge taillights. If they had been done by an American they would be an ethnic joke. On the plus side for the GT-S models are the fender flares, which not only differentiate the model from other Celicas, but also give the car a nicely aggressive look.

Now down to the GT-S details, and one of the big reasons we consider the car a bargain. Open the door and you'd almost think you were in a Supra. Aside from the Supra being a hatchback and the GT-S a notchback, the only differences of note are that the GT-S lacks the Supra's automatic climate control, has its window-lift switches (electric window lifts are optional) on the door panels instead of the armrests, and has a different steering wheel. Other than that, the GT-S interior is all Supra, from the tilt steering wheel and comprehensive instrumentation—tachometer, speedometer, oil pressure, coolant temperature, voltmeter, fuel level—right down to the seats and their upholstery material. And the Supra and GT-S seats are an important feature, the driver's being adjustable for fore-aft movement, rake, side wings, cushion height and having a sphygmomanometer bulb for inflating three lumbar supports. A nice little touch in the GT-S is that the electric window-lift buttons have different shapes for the left and right windows so that the driver can tell one from the other by feel.

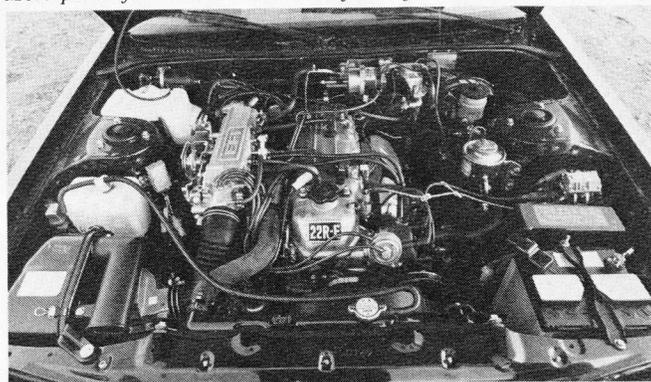
How else is the GT-S similar to the \$5000-more-expensive Supra? Last year's GT-S added the Supra's 225/60HR-14 tires but stayed with the Celica's live rear axle. This year Toyota



PHOTOS BY JEFFREY R. ZWART



More power for most 1983 Celicas: fuel injection, 2.4 liters, 105 bhp.

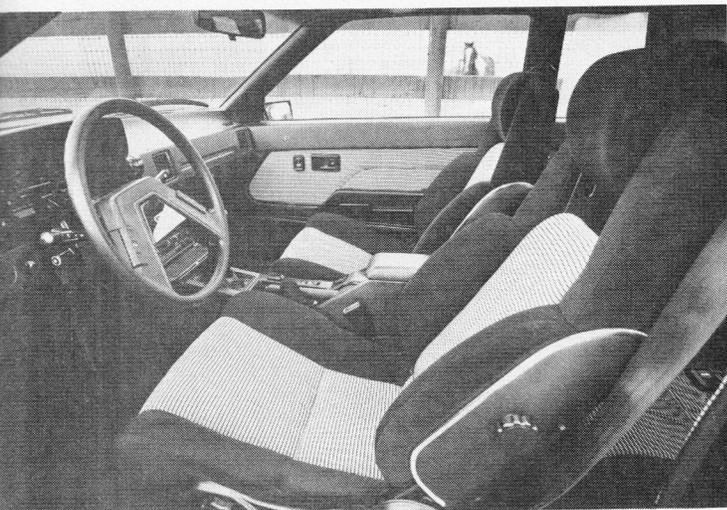


went the extra distance (and cost), fitting the semi-trailing-arm independent rear suspension from the Supra—one of the factors that inspired us to comment on the Supra in our February 1982 road test, “. . . and the Supra has to rate as the most exciting Toyota we’ve driven since the short-lived (1967–1968) limited-production 2000GT.” Another standard chassis item for the GT-S is the power assisted steering that is an option in the normal Celica.

And there’s more, though the next addition is one that almost all Celicas share in 1983. On all but the base model, Toyota has replaced the carburetor with electronic fuel injection on the 2.4-liter 4-cylinder, upping the power by 9 bhp to 105 at 4800 and torque by 8 lb-ft to 137 at 2800. The injection system is Bosch L-Jetronic, licensed and built in Japan principally by Nippon Denso. (Normally at this point we’d comment on the improved driveability of an engine just converted to fuel injection, because that is one major benefit of such a system, but the carbureted Celica we tested last year had excellent driveability.) Toyota people add that they went to fuel injection because it makes meeting emissions regulations and fuel-economy goals easier. They also believe port fuel injection is a good sales tool these days, a point with which Detroit is finally agreeing. As an added benefit, the microprocessor-controlled systems have self-diagnostic capability and, in Toyota’s case, the number of times the engine warning light blinks at the mechanic tells him which part of the system is on the blink . . . so to speak.

Now we get to the justification for calling the \$10,000 Celica GT-S a bargain. In straight-line performance the 1983 model undercuts its predecessor to 60 mph by 0.4 seconds, bringing the time down to 11.8 sec and closer to the times of competition such as the Datsun 200SX (11.5 sec) and VW Scirocco (11.7) →

AT A GLANCE	Toyota Celica GT-S	Mitsubishi Starion Turbo	Renault Fuego Turbo
List price	\$9969	\$12,079	\$11,095
Curb weight, lb	2775	2910	2535
Engine	inline-4	inline-4	inline-4
Transmission	5-sp M	5-sp M	5-sp M
0–60 mph, sec	11.8	9.2	10.7
Standing ¼ mi, sec	18.3	17.0	17.9
Speed at end of ¼ mi, mph	74.5	79.5	76.5
Stopping distance from 60 mph, ft	159	146	154
Interior noise at 50 mph, dBA	67	72	69
Lateral acceleration, g	0.804	0.800	0.774
Slalom speed, mph	59.8	58.3	62.8
Fuel economy, mpg	23.0	est 18.0	27.5
Issue		11-82	7-82



Supra-type seats offer a multitude of adjustments for comfort and support.



Unusual for a notchback: rear seatbacks fold separately for trunk access.



Available optionally: one of the best stereo systems around.

sec). The real power in this class, however, is still the Dodge Charger 2.2, whose 1982 0-60 time of 10.1 sec is likely to be bettered substantially now that it has 8 bhp more power than before. (By contrast, the 1983 Supra, which picks up 5 extra bhp to 150 and a 4.10:1 rear axle versus 3.73:1 in 1982, gets to 60 mph in 8.9 sec.) Mid-range torque of the GT-S is also improved, minimizing the need to rev the engine tightly for decent performance. In terms of fuel economy it's difficult to compare new and old, because we tested the 1982 Celica on a long comparison trip. Nonetheless, the 1983 GT-S managed 23.0 mpg, which we consider impressive in light of our typically spirited driving patterns. And the 5-speed manual gearbox that comes with the GT-S (sorry, no automatic) is made for enthusiasts, with well spaced ratios and a crisp shift feel. Unfortunately, the one thing fuel injection can't solve in the 4-cylinder is its buzzy nature above 4000 rpm, when the power also begins to fall off, and the generally unattractive sound of this engine.

Sound levels were in the same range as those of the compari-

son test Celica. Readings at 30, 50 and 70 mph, for example, were 65, 67 and 73 dBA, compared to the earlier car's 64, 69 and 74 dBA, respectively.

In our panic stop testing, the GT-S exhibited traits similar to those of its older sibling. Though the brakes were perfectly happy being modulated to avoid rear lock, this rear sensitivity gave the front brakes rather less to do, and distances suffered just a bit. From 60 mph, the GT-S required an average 159 ft; from 80, the average grew to a longish 298 ft. Not bad brakes by any means, but our tester came away thinking how much better they could be with a little better fore/aft balance.

Then there's the GT-S ride and handling. On the skidpad the standard 1982 Celica managed 0.723 and the live-axle GT-S did 0.787. The Supra with wide tires (not the L-Type Supra) does 0.785. Our 1983 GT-S, with the Supra rear suspension, was still better at a very impressive 0.804g (the same figure registered in our March 1982 road test by the Dodge Charger 2.2). Skidpads aren't the whole story, of course. In the slalom test the standard 1982 car got through in 58.2 mph and the Supra in a very impressive 61.8 mph; the new GT-S clocked 59.8 mph. The Engineering Editor, who did the testing, felt that the Supra, with its heavier 6-cylinder engine and longer wheelbase, would be expected to be better in the slalom, in which more understeer *can* be a benefit. The GT-S, with its lighter 4-cylinder powerplant, could likewise be expected to do well on the skidpad, where it was close to neutral. But even in the slalom runs the GT-S was impressive, with excellent feedback from the steering and a rear end that let you know its intentions in advance.

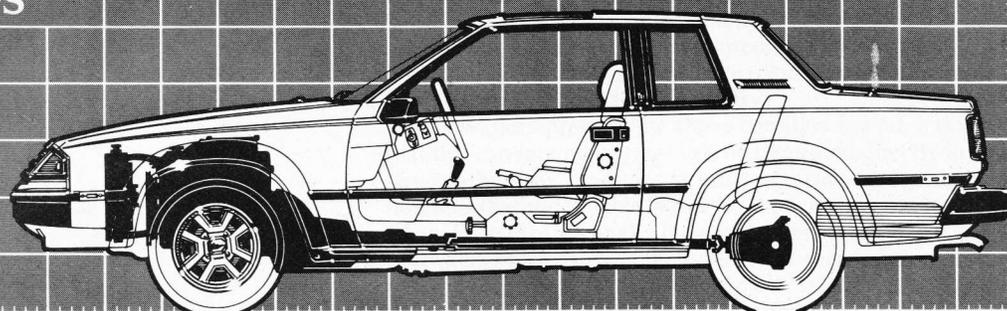
Those figures don't say everything about the ride and handling of the GT-S. What the Celica does in the long run is provide a very high level of handling that will both instill confidence in the driver and yet do its share in protecting the driver who doesn't know enough to stay within his limits. The GT-S is a well balanced handler, and although the Dodge Charger 2.2 will outdo it on a skidpad and in a slalom run, we would rather have the total Celica GT-S package—handling, steering, brakes, seats—if we had to make a choice. At the same time, the GT-S provides a very comfortable, reasonable (if slightly stiffer than before) ride for a car in its class.

By the way, we don't want this test to demean the Supra. Though similar to the GT-S in so many ways, it also has a rather different aura; it feels like the more muscular but more refined automobile it is, and the GT-S engine doesn't approach the big twincam six's refinement.

Now we get to the capper on why the GT-S model is a \$10,000 bargain. Whatever else it may do well, the Celica also has that undeniable quality, reliability and durability of a Toyota . . . well finished and built in such a way that it should stay solid and tight.



# ROAD TEST TOYOTA CELICA GT-S



SCALE: 10 in. (254 mm) DIVISIONS

## PRICE

List price..... \$9969  
 Price as tested..... \$12,099  
 Price as tested includes std equip (GT-S pkg of wheels, tires, seats, adj steering col, elect. adj mirrors), air cond (\$630), elect. sunroof (\$460), AM/FM stereo/cassete w/equalizer (\$440), elect. window lifts & central locking (\$395), cruise cont (\$135), black paint (\$70)

## IMPORTER

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc, 2055 W. 190th St, Torrance, Calif. 90509

## GENERAL

Curb weight, lb/kg .....2775..... 1260  
 Test weight .....2950..... 1339  
 Weight dist (with driver), f/r, % ..... 55/45  
 Wheelbase, in./mm .....98.4..... 2500  
 Track, front/rear ..... 56.5/56.5..... 1435/1435  
 Length .....176.2..... 4475  
 Width .....67.7..... 1720  
 Height .....52.0..... 1320  
 Ground clearance ..... 6.1..... 155  
 Overhang, f/r ..... 36.0/41.8..... 914/1062  
 Trunk space, cu ft/liters ..... 15.0+8.6..... 425+244  
 Fuel capacity, U.S. gal./liters ..... 16.1..... 61

## ACCOMMODATION

Seating capacity, persons ..... 4  
 Head room, f/r, in./mm ..... 37.0/33.0..... 940/838  
 Seat width, f/r ..... 2 x 19.5/48.5..... 2 x 495/1232  
 Seatback adjustment, deg ..... 70

## ENGINE

Type ..... sohc inline-4  
 Bore x stroke, in./mm ..... 3.62 x 3.50 ..... 91.9 x 88.9  
 Displacement, cu in./cc ..... 144 ..... 2367  
 Compression ratio ..... 9.0:1  
 Bhp @ rpm, SAE net/kW ..... 105/78 @ 4800  
 Equivalent mph/km/h ..... 123/198  
 Torque @ rpm, lb-ft/Nm ..... 137/186 @ 2800  
 Equivalent mph/km/h ..... 72/116  
 Fuel injection ..... Bosch L-Jetronic  
 Fuel requirement ..... unleaded, 91-oct  
 Exhaust-emission control equipment: 3-way catalytic converter, air injection, exhaust-gas recirculation, oxygen sensor

## DRIVETRAIN

Transmission ..... 5-sp manual  
 Gear ratios: 5th (0.79) ..... 2.70:1  
 4th (1.00) ..... 3.42:1  
 3rd (1.28) ..... 4.38:1  
 2nd (1.89) ..... 6.46:1  
 1st (3.29) ..... 11.25:1  
 Final drive ratio ..... 3.42:1

## RELIABILITY

Owners of earlier-model Toyota Celicas reported 4 problem areas and 1 disabling reliability area compared to overall Owner Survey averages of 12/6. So we expect the overall reliability of the Celica GT-S to be excellent.

## MAINTENANCE

Service intervals, mi:  
 Oil/filter change ..... 10,000/10,000  
 Chassis lube ..... 30,000  
 Tuneup, mo/mi ..... 24/30,000  
 Warranty ..... vehicle 12/12,500; powertrain 24/24,000

## CHASSIS & BODY

Layout ..... front engine/rear drive  
 Body/frame ..... unit steel  
 Brake system ..... 10.1-in. (257-mm) vented discs front, 9.0 x 1.2-in. (229 x 30-mm) drums rear; vacuum asst  
 Swept area, sq in./sq cm ..... 300 ..... 1936  
 Wheels ..... cast alloy, 14 x 7JJ  
 Tires ..... Yokohama Radial 352, 225/60HR-14  
 Steering type ..... rack & pinion, power assisted  
 Overall ratio ..... 18.1:1  
 Turns, lock-to-lock ..... 3.2  
 Turning circle, ft/m ..... 32.8 ..... 10.0  
 Front suspension: MacPherson struts, lower lateral arms, compliance struts, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar  
 Rear suspension: semi-trailing arms, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar

## INSTRUMENTATION

Instruments: 85-mph speedo, 8000-rpm tach, 999,999.9 odo, 999.9 trip odo, oil press., coolant temp, voltmeter, fuel level, clock  
 Warning lights: oil press., brake sys, check engine, low fuel, door ajar, seatbelts, hazard, high beam, directionals

## CALCULATED DATA

Lb/bhp (test weight) ..... 28.1  
 Mph/1000 rpm (5th gear) ..... 25.6  
 Engine revs/mi (60 mph) ..... 2340  
 Piston travel, ft/mi ..... 1365  
 R&T steering index ..... 1.05  
 Brake swept area, sq in./ton ..... 203

# ROAD TEST RESULTS

## ACCELERATION

Time to distance, sec:  
 0-100 ft ..... 3.6  
 0-500 ft ..... 9.7  
 0-1320 ft (1/4 mi) ..... 18.3  
 Speed at end of 1/4 mi, mph ..... 74.5  
 Time to speed, sec:  
 0-30 mph ..... 3.4  
 0-60 mph ..... 11.8  
 0-80 mph ..... 21.6

## SPEEDS IN GEARS

5th gear (4100 rpm) ..... 105  
 4th (5200) ..... 105  
 3rd (5500) ..... 90  
 2nd (5500) ..... 62  
 1st (5500) ..... 36

## FUEL ECONOMY

Normal driving, mpg ..... 23.0  
 Cruising range, mi (1-gal. res) ..... 347

## HANDLING

Lateral accel, 100-ft radius, g ..... 0.804  
 Speed thru 700-ft slalom, mph ..... 59.8

## BRAKES

Minimum stopping distances, ft:  
 From 60 mph ..... 159  
 From 80 mph ..... 298  
 Control in panic stop ..... very good  
 Pedal effort for 0.5g stop, lb ..... 25  
 Fade: percent increase in pedal effort to maintain 0.5g deceleration in 6 stops from 60 mph ..... nil  
 Parking: hold 30% grade? ..... yes  
 Overall brake rating ..... very good

## INTERIOR NOISE

Idle in neutral, dBA ..... 49  
 Maximum, 1st gear ..... 84  
 Constant 30 mph ..... 65  
 50 mph ..... 67  
 70 mph ..... 73

## SPEEDOMETER ERROR

30 mph indicated is actually ..... 31.0  
 60 mph ..... 60.5  
 80 mph ..... 80.5

## ACCELERATION

