SOFTWARE & TECH

2007 Lexus Is 250 Manual

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The 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual: A Rare Gem in the Luxury Sedan World

In the ever-evolving landscape of luxury sedans, few vehicles have managed to carve out a niche as distinctive as the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual. This particular model represents a fascinating intersection of Japanese reliability, Lexus refinement, and the pure driving engagement that only a three-pedal setup can provide. For driving enthusiasts who crave the connection of a manual gearbox but refuse to compromise on daily comfort and build quality, this car has become something of a holy grail. The 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual is not merely a car; it is a statement that luxury and driver involvement need not be mutually exclusive.

When Lexus introduced the second-generation IS lineup in 2006 for the 2007 model year, it marked a significant departure from its predecessor. The design was sharper, more aggressive, and unmistakably influenced by the LFA supercar project that was then secretly underway. But what truly set the IS 250 apart, especially in the eyes of purists, was the availability of a six-speed manual transmission. While the IS 350 grabbed headlines with its 306-horsepower V6, the IS 250 offered something arguably more special in the long run: a chance to row your own gears in a Lexus.

Why the Manual Transmission Matters in a Lexus

To understand the significance of the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual, one must first appreciate the rarity of a manual transmission in the luxury segment. In 2007, BMW offered manuals on the 3 Series, Audi had them on the A4, and Infiniti offered a six-speed on the G35. However, Lexus, a brand renowned for its silence and smoothness, took a bold step by offering a manual in their compact sport sedan. This decision was not just about expanding the options list; it was a deliberate attempt to capture a demographic that valued driving engagement above all else.

The manual transmission in the IS 250 is a six-speed unit sourced from Aisin, a Japanese company known for producing robust and precise gearboxes. The shift action is not as notchy as a Mazda Miata or as rifle-bolt precise as a Honda S2000, but it has a pleasant, mechanical snick that feels substantial and confidence-inspiring. The clutch engagement is light enough for stop-and-go traffic but offers enough feedback to make heel-and-toe downshifts satisfying. It is a transmission that rewards deliberate input without punishing the driver for imperfection.

The Driving Experience: More Than Just a Gearbox

When you slide into the driver's seat of a 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual, the experience begins before you even turn the key. The steering wheel is thick and leather-wrapped, the pedals are perfectly spaced for rev-matching, and the shifter falls naturally to hand. This is a cockpit designed for the driver. The seats are exceptionally supportive, with enough bolstering to hold you in place during spirited cornering but plush enough for a cross-country road trip. Lexus paid careful attention to ergonomics, and it shows.

Push the starter button, and the 2.5-liter V6 comes to life with a muted growl. It is not an engine that screams for attention like a BMW inline-six, but it is smooth, linear, and willing to rev. The manual transmission allows you to extract the full potential of this engine, keeping it in the sweet spot of the power band as you work through the gears. The 204 horsepower and 185 lb-ft of torque may seem modest by modern standards, but the chassis is so well sorted and the gearbox so engaging that the car feels quicker than the numbers suggest.

Performance and Engine Specifications

Under the hood of the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual resides a 2.5-liter 4GR-FSE V6 engine. This is a direct-injection powerplant that produces 204 horsepower at 6,400 rpm and 185 lb-ft of torque at 4,800 rpm. While the IS 350's 3.5-liter V6 is the more powerful option, the 2.5-liter engine in the IS 250 is no slouch. It is smooth, refined, and eager to rev, with a redline of 6,600 rpm. The engine features dual Variable Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i) on both the intake and exhaust camshafts, which helps optimize power delivery across the rev range.

- Engine: 2.5-liter 4GR-FSE V6 with direct injection
- Horsepower: 204 hp at 6,400 rpm
- Torque: 185 lb-ft at 4,800 rpm
- Transmission: Six-speed manual (Aisin)
- Drivetrain: Rear-wheel drive
- 0-60 mph: Approximately 7.0 seconds
- Top speed: Electronically limited to 143 mph

One of the key advantages of the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual is its weight distribution. Lexus engineers achieved a near-perfect 52/48 front-to-rear weight balance, which gives the car neutral handling characteristics. Combined with a double-wishbone front suspension and a multi-link rear setup, the IS 250 corners with poise and precision. The steering is electrically assisted, but it offers good feel and weight, especially compared to many modern electric power steering systems that feel numb and artificial.

Interior Quality and Technology

Step inside the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual, and you are greeted by an interior that redefined expectations for the compact luxury segment. The materials are top-notch, with soft-touch surfaces, genuine aluminum trim, and available NuLuxe or leather upholstery. The seats are among the best in the class, offering a perfect balance of comfort and support. The driving position is low and sporty, yet outward visibility is excellent thanks to thin roof pillars and a large greenhouse.

The dashboard is dominated by the optional navigation system, which features a high-resolution screen and a joystick controller that was advanced for its time. While the interface takes some getting used to, it works well once you familiarize yourself with it. The audio system, whether the standard Pioneer unit or the optional Mark Levinson setup, delivers outstanding sound quality. The Mark Levinson system in particular is worth seeking out, with 14 speakers and 270 watts of power that fill the cabin with rich, detailed sound.

What Makes the Interior Special

Beyond the materials and technology, the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual interior excels in the details that matter. The gauges are clear and easy to read, with a neat electro-luminescent display that looks modern even by today's standards. The climate controls are intuitive, with large knobs that are easy to adjust without taking your eyes off the road. Storage space is adequate, with a deep center console bin, door pockets, and a glovebox that can accommodate the owner's manual and more. The rear seats are tight for adults, but the trunk offers a generous 13 cubic feet of cargo space, enough for a weekend getaway or a trip to the grocery store.

For those who prioritize a quiet cabin, the IS 250 delivers in spades. Lexus famously uses extensive sound-deadening materials, and it shows at highway speeds. Wind noise is minimal, road noise is well suppressed,

and the engine is barely audible at cruising speeds. This makes the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual an exceptional grand tourer, capable of covering long distances in comfort while still offering the engagement of a manual transmission when the road gets twisty.

Reliability and Maintenance: A Lexus Standard

One of the strongest selling points of any Lexus, including the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual, is legendary reliability. The 4GR-FSE engine is known for its durability, provided that regular maintenance is performed. Oil changes should be done every 5,000 miles using high-quality synthetic oil, and the timing chain eliminates the need for expensive belt replacements. The manual transmission itself is robust, but like all gearboxes, it benefits from regular fluid changes every 60,000 miles or so.

There are a few known issues to be aware of when considering a used 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual. Some early examples experienced carbon buildup on the intake valves due to the direct injection system, which can cause rough idle and reduced performance. This issue can be addressed with a walnut blast cleaning of the intake valves. Additionally, the dashboard material in some early models was prone to cracking, particularly in hot climates. Lexus offered a warranty extension for this issue, but it is worth checking if the car you are considering has been addressed.

- Oil Changes: Every 5,000 miles with synthetic oil
- Transmission Fluid: Replace every 60,000 miles
- Spark Plugs: Replace every 60,000 miles
- Coolant: Replace every 100,000 miles
- Brake Fluid: Replace every 30,000 miles

Overall, the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual is a remarkably reliable vehicle. It is not uncommon to see these cars surpass 200,000 miles with nothing more than routine maintenance. This longevity, combined with the rarity of the manual transmission, makes it a compelling choice for used car buyers who want a fun, dependable, and distinctive luxury sedan.

Comparing the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual to Its Rivals

In 2007, the compact luxury sedan segment was fiercely competitive. The BMW 328i with a manual, the Audi A4 2.0T with a six-speed, and the Infiniti G35 with a six-speed were all formidable contenders. So how does the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual stack up against these rivals?

BMW 328i Manual

The E90-generation BMW 328i offered a 3.0-liter inline-six with 230 horsepower and one of the best manual transmissions in the business. The BMW's engine was smoother and more powerful than the Lexus's V6, and the chassis was more communicative. However, the BMW came with higher maintenance costs and a less forgiving ride. The Lexus, by contrast, offered superior build quality, a quieter cabin, and a more comfortable ride without sacrificing too much handling ability.

Audi A4 2.0T Manual

The Audi A4 2.0T featured a turbocharged four-cylinder engine with 200 horsepower and all-wheel drive as standard. The manual gearbox in the Audi was good, but the car's nose-heavy weight distribution made it understeer more than the Lexus. The interior of the A4 was stylish, but it lacked the Lexus's attention to detail and long-term durability. The Audi also suffered from higher maintenance costs, particularly with the turbo system and quattro drivetrain.

Infiniti G35 Manual

The Infiniti G35 was perhaps the closest rival to the Lexus IS 250. It offered a 3.5-liter V6 with 306 horsepower,

significantly more than the Lexus, and a six-speed manual. The G35 was faster and more aggressive in its demeanor, but it was also less refined. The interior materials were not as high quality as the Lexus, and the ride was firmer. The G35's manual transmission had a notchy feel that some enthusiasts loved, but it was not as smooth as the Lexus's gearbox.

Collectibility and Market Value of the Manual IS 250

As of 2025, the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual has quietly become a sought-after vehicle among collectors and enthusiasts. While it was never produced in huge numbers, the manual transmission variant is genuinely rare. Lexus sold approximately 30,000 IS 250s in the United States for the 2007 model year, but estimates suggest that fewer than 10% were equipped with the manual transmission. This scarcity has started to drive up values, particularly for well-maintained, low-mileage examples in desirable colors.

What makes the 2007 Lexus IS 250 Manual particularly collectible is its position at the end of an era. By the late 2000s, manual transmissions were disappearing from the luxury sedan segment. The 2007 IS 250 represents one of the last true driver's cars from Lexus, a brand that has increasingly focused on

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