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Stick drive car

Richard Pardon The manual transmission is on the endangered species list. Every year fewer and fewer cars are offered with a clutch and a shifter. Why? Americans just don't want to be bothered with the chore of working a clutch with their left foot and shifting with their right. And sports car manufacturers are the worst offenders when it comes to quitting on the stick shift. Because the newest computer-controlled automatics can shift more quickly than any human can, engineers see the manual transmission as outdated. We disagree. Shifting a manual transmission is not only more engaging and fun than flicking some dainty little paddles, it also requires more skill and makes the driver a better one. Some carmakers still see the beauty of the manual transmission. Here are 20 of the greatest driver's machines that still do. Advertisement - Continue Reading Below 1 2019 Mazda MX-5 Miata Base Price: \$26,625Since the summer of 1989, the reasonably priced Mazda MX-5 Miata has been thrilling sports-car fans with its featherweight rear-drive chassis (just over 2,000 pounds) and drop-top fun-in-the-sun persona. The Miata's organically responsive handling mixed with a large dollop of 1960s British roadster drew buyers by the tens of thousands to Mazda stores. But it's no stretch to say it was Mazda's brilliant five-speed manual transmission that seriously added to the thrill ride. The stubby little shifter was so effortless, it moved with just a modest flick of the wrist. The second-generation Miata of 1999 got one more gear in tenth anniversary models—a six-speed—that remained optional (the five-speed was standard) well into the third generation was equally great to use. The Miata was all new for 2016, and a few years later the Mazda not only retains the easy-shifting and precise six-speed manual transmission in the Roadster model but also the even better driving retractable fastback (RF) model. Either way, 2019 MX-5s get an uprated engine that now makes 181 hp and revs to 7,500 rpm. And regardless of whether your Miata has a hard roof or a soft one, it's one of the best manual transmissions available on any car at any price. 2 2019 Subaru BRZ (and Toyota 86) Base Price: \$26,680Reasonably priced sports cars are scarce these days. The Subaru BRZ and its twin, the Toyota 86, both start at about \$26,000 and offer a truly engaging drive experience. They are also lightweight (around 2,800 pounds), rear-wheel drive, pack 205 hp four-cylinder engines that make that power up at 7,000 rpm, and come standard with a six-speed manual (a traditional automatic is optional). Of course, engineers were tempted to design a heavier and more expensive twin-clutch, paddle-shift transmission instead of a manual. But we're sure glad they didn't, and Subaru recently added a new high-performance, track-focused iS model to the range with a re-tuned suspension by STI (Subaru's performance arm), frame stiffeners, lighter-weight wheels, and high-performance Brembo brakes. Oh, and yes, there's a big wing on the back, too. All this good stuff goes a long way to make the BRZ an even more enjoyable manual-transmission machine. 3 2019 Ford Mustang GT Base Price: \$36,450Manual transmissions are rare. It's rarer still these days to find an automaker that will spend the time and money to upgrade their manual transmission. That's exactly what Ford did for 2018. Ford freshened the Mustang for '18 and one major improvement comes from the upgraded manual in the V-8-powered GT. Engineers installed a new twin-disc clutch, dual mass flywheel, and more closely spaced gears. There are new synchronizers, too. And it's all aimed at making the GT a smoother, more rewarding experience. They've done an excellent job, but for those that want the ultimate Mustang GT without stepping all the way up to a Shelby, consider the Performance Package Level 2. The best news? If you want one, it only comes one way—with a manual transmission. 4 2019 Chevrolet Corvette Z06 Base Price: \$80,490The Corvette, redesigned in 2014, underwent its most dramatic redesign in decades. But as radical as the new look was compared to previous Vettes, they made sure to keep essentials unchanged—a powerful V-8 and a manual. The new seven-speed manual transmission (an eight-speed automatic is optional) is one of the best hooked to any V8. And that's true even for the top Z06 model. The Z06 makes a rather astonishing 650 hp from its supercharged V-8 and when shifted by an expert tester can hit 60 mph in just 3.3 seconds. One might expect a car with such heavyweight performance to have a transmission that takes muscle to shift, but that's not the case. Pull one of the shift paddles that flank the steering wheel (yes, shift paddles on a manual) to activate the slick rev-matching feature, which makes you sound like a heel-and-toe hero on downshifts. It's a pleasure to use. And that's true of the whole car too. This is one of the best-driving sports cars in the world—at any price. 5 2019 Porsche 911 GT3 Base Price: \$143,600Porsche is one of the few high-performance automakers that still offers manual transmissions. But for the first time in years, Porsche has expanded the manual 911 variants to include the high-performance GT3. That's big news for Porsche fans because the GT3 is one of the most potent and perhaps the purest models it sells. The GT3 packs a 4.0-liter flat six-cylinder in its tail that makes an even 500 hp way up at 8,350 rpm. The GT3 doesn't have the same seven-speed manual as the rest of the 911 line. Instead it uses a stronger six-speed unit borrowed from the hyper-limited 911 R model with a shorter gear lever. For many manual transmission enthusiasts, this is the car they'd most like to park in the garage. It also might be one of the last manual 911s, if the new 2020 models are any indication. The new Carrera and Carrera S launched with an eight-speed dual-clutch as the only transmission. 6 2019 Fiat 500 Abarth Base Price: \$19,995The cutesy Fiat 500 that landed in the U.S. back in 2011 looked fun but wasn't exactly the rewarding drive enthusiasts were hoping for. A year later that was fixed with the 500 Abarth—the high-performance model. Compared to the plain-vanilla 500, the Abarth delivers 60 more hp and 72 more lb-ft of torque. The high-powered Fiat is relatively tame when you want it to be, but flatfoot the throttle and it sounds like a squadron of light aircraft are chasing you down—Fiat doesn't bother to fit, you know, a muffler. Need another incentive to go with the manual? For inexplicable Italian reasons, the manual cars make 160 hp but the automatics only get 154. 7 2019 Honda Civic Type R Base Price: \$34,990The sport compact-car scene might have peaked more than a decade ago but this is the year that Honda has finally decided to bring over one of its legendary Type R Civics. The Type R is the top performance car in Honda's lineup. In fact, we'd guess only the Acura NSX supercar is quicker. But what's neat about the Type R is that Honda channels the output of the 306-hp turbocharged four-cylinder engine through a manual transmission and on to the front wheels. That's right, every Type R is a manual. Downside? The Type R isn't pretty. It looks...a little too much like a decade-old tuner car. But try to get past the appearance because the Type R is a very smart and sophisticated performance machine. 8 2019 Ford Mustang Shelby GT350 Base Price: \$60,235The Ford Mustang many not be completely retro anymore but that doesn't mean performance fans will be left without a Shelby version. The GT350 is a more athletic, more racetrack-capable machine than the beastly old GT500 ever was. The supercharger and large displacement V-8 are gone, replaced by a tech-heavy flat-plane 526-hp 5.2-liter V-8 that's nicknamed "Voodoo" and wants to rev hard. Nearly every body panel ahead of the windshield is all new to cover the car's wider track. Unlike Mustangs of the past—every design detail on the car is there to increase performance, not just appearances. Best of all, the only transmission Ford puts behind the new motor in the GT350 is a Tremec six-speed manual with carbon-bronze triple-cone synchronizers. And that's just fine with us. 9 2019 VW Golf R Base Price: \$41,290The GTI remains one of the world's best inexpensive speed machines, but VW offers a performance notch above the GTI called the Golf R. And for \$41K it comes with a potent turbocharged 2.0 four-cylinder tuned to 292 hp. The Golf R shares many of its components with the Audi S3. The difference here is that only the Golf R is offered with a manual transmission. This transmission will save you some dough over the DSG automatic. For 2018, there were also new touch screens and digital gauge clusters, too. Now if we can just get the Golf R in the new SportWagen body style like they have in Europe—with a manual. 10 2019 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon Base Price: \$36,665So why would we include a Jeep amongst all this high-performance metal? Well first because the Wrangler is all new for 2018. And second because a manual transmission adds an extra dimension of fun to 4X4s. Creeping up and over boulders with a manual transmission is challenging and requires just the right shift timing, throttle, and clutch work. An automatic lets the vehicle slowly crawl over the worst trail obstacles. All the driver has to do is steer and gently apply the throttle. The new Jeep Wrangler Rubicon is one of the most capable 4WD vehicles ever produced, and one of only a handful of 4X4s today that offer a manual. The all-new D478 gearbox six-speed has a deeper 5.13:1 first gear than the previous generation Wrangler for easier creeping on slow-speed trails. It's a bumper this gearbox isn't available with the fun and frisky 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine, but it does operate smoothly and really brings out the most personality from the Wrangler's new 285-hp 3.6-liter V-6. Long live the manual transmission Wrangler. 11 2019 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 Base Price: \$119,995Okay the price of this Vette is staggering. But so too are the horsepower and torque specs. As if the 650-hp Z06 model wasn't enough, the Corvette team has upgraded the 6.2-liter V-8 with a larger supercharger to deliver 755 hp and 715 lb-ft of torque. Chevy says the ZR1 is the most powerful Vette ever and can reach 60 mph in less than three seconds and top out at 212 mph. The new aero package, Chevy says, will produce an insane 950 pounds of downforce. They might need it, too, since the Corvette team is gunning to cut a full 20 seconds off the Nurburgring lap time of the old, previous-generation ZR1. 12 2019 BMW M3/M4 Base Price: \$67,495 (M3)Have BMWs become too soft, too techy, and less driver-focused? Perhaps. But one way to strip away some of the artificiality is to select a manual transmission. And luckily, a great six-speed is offered on one of BMW's most capable machines, the potent 425-hp BMW M4 coupe or M3 sedan. Of all BMW's rivals in this class, few offer a row-your-own transmission, and BMW's is a good one. Get the shifts right and you can hit 60 mph in just over four seconds. In two of the drivetrain modes (Efficient and Sport), this smart gearbox will rev-match downshifts for you, too, which is handy. But select Sport Plus, and it's the driver's responsibility to do all that work. 13 2019 Cadillac ATS-V Coupe Base Price: \$68,790Not long ago, putting Cadillac in the same league as BMW or Mercedes-Benz would have been a stretch to be sure. No more. In fact, in terms of that hard-to-quantify connectedness every driver wants with his or her machine, this Cadillac might actually surpass its rivals. The ATS-V is one of the most brilliant chassis in the class, which includes the BMW M3 and M4, cars long seen as benchmarks. And since Caddy knows enthusiasts are buying this car, there's a six-speed manual connected to the 464-hp twin-turbo V-6. This is no low-tech gearbox. Pick the manual model and it comes with the ability to rev-match downshifts as well as GM's "no lift shift," which reduces shifting time if you happen to find yourself in a drag race. Do it all right and you will hit 60 mph in 4.2 seconds—and have a great time flicking the short throws of that Tremec six-speed. 14 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Base Price: \$61,745Okay yes, the new Challenger SRT Demon packs 808 hp in standard form or 840 hp on race fuel. But the only way to get one of those—or the fractionally less insane 797-hp Redeye—is with an automatic. You know what? We'll take the regular Hellcat instead. After all, this car still has 717 hp and 656 lb-ft of torque thanks to its supercharged 6.2-liter V-8—those are just ridiculous numbers. As an added bonus, Dodge dropped the price by \$5,000 for 2019. You still have to pay a \$1,700 gas guzzler tax, though.Dodge could have wiped out and made sure every Hellcat was paired with an automatic, too. But Dodge didn't deprive manual-trans fans. You can tap into every one of those ponies with a robust six-speed manual and leave burnout stripes stretching several blocks long. It can hit 60 mph in under four seconds despite weighing almost 4,500 pounds. Make ours a wide body with those extra-large wheels and tires. 15 2019 Lotus Evora Sport 410 Base Price: \$110,000British sports car specialist Lotus is a chassis perfectionist. The machines it makes are precision tools that are incredibly adept at building speed on twisty, undulating ribbons of asphalt. And the latest Lotus, the Evora, can build serious grip on these roads while also providing a soft, supple ride. So, it makes sense that the company would keep the manual transmission a big part of the formula. The latest model, the limited-production Sport 410 GP Edition, is not only lighter by about 200 pounds but also drops the suspension slightly and retunes the springs and dampers for even better handling. The 400-hp 3.5-liter supercharged V-6 is unchanged but the six-speed manual, Lotus says, has a low-inertia flywheel for quicker shifts. And it is quick. The 2,910-pound Lotus can hit 60 mph in just 3.9 seconds. Only 150 of these will be available for the world each year, so this will likely be one of the rarest manual machines on our list. And if you need more incentive to opt for the manual versus the automatic, the manual car's top speed is 190 mph. The automatic: 174 mph. 16 2019 Ford Fiesta ST Base Price: \$22,315We'd show you what the Fiesta ST exterior looks like, but this is literally the only photo Ford has of the 2019 ST; just the shifter. Which should tell you something. What that is, we're not sure, but we can tell you that it's big fun to row the ST's leather-and-aluminum-trimmed shifter through the gears as the little 1.6-liter EcoBoost four strains toward its 197-hp peak. The Fiesta ST is one of those cheap, thrilling machines that, when it's gone, will make us sad that Ford gave up on cars. 17 2019 Jaguar F-Type Base Price: \$69,875Jaguar's F-Type broke through the sports-car clutter when it launched in 2013. It was wildly handsome and the first truly engaging Jag sports car in decades. And Jag made sure that there were at least a few manual transmissions in the mix. Today, the lineup ranges from the new 296-hp four-cylinder up to the fire-breathing 575-hp supercharged V-8 SVR. But only the 340-hp and 380-hp supercharged V-6 models can be paired with manuals. Hey, these cars can hit 60 mph in 5.5 and 5.3 seconds respectively—so that's probably sufficient for most backroad adventures. 18 2019 Toyota Tacoma TRD Sport Base Price: \$36,590With the death of the manual-transmission Ram 2500 diesel for 2019, the stick-shift pickup options are pretty limited—you're looking at either a stripper four-cylinder GMC Canyon or Chevy Colorado, or the Nissan Frontier, which is so old that it might have a crank start, too. The Tacoma, though, is a relatively new truck and it proffers a six-speed manual not as a totem to penury but as a cool option—you can't get it on the basic four cylinders, but you can on the V-6 TRD 4x4 models. While there are zillions of vehicles with Toyota's 3.5-liter V-6, this is the only one (other than the Lotus Evora) that gets a manual. 19 2019 Porsche Cayman GTS Base Price: \$80,850The GTS versions of Porsche's sports cars are the some of the sweetest. They all offer a bit more power, handling, and style without turning the car into a hard-edged track weapon. The Cayman's turbocharged 2.5-liter flat four-cylinder normally makes 350 hp. But here that figure is bumped by 12 hp. It also comes with Porsche's best options like Active Suspension Management, a torque-vectoring rear diff, drive modes, and a sport exhaust. The Cayman GTS also comes standard with a slick six-speed manual. We particularly like the suede-like fabric used on the seats and steering wheel. The package really comes together to make this one fun-to-drive sports car on a good twisty road that won't beat you up on the morning commute. 20 2019 Mini John Cooper Works Clubman ALL4 Base Price: \$39,250The Mini Cooper Hardtop occupies a very unique space in the automotive world. It's small, relatively inexpensive, and fun to drive. And yet it's also hip and upscale at the same time. Just about every car in Mini's lineup can be optioned with a manual transmission. The most rewarding of all Minis is the John Cooper Works (JCW) models. Mini bumps up the power to 228 hp (up 39 hp over the S model) and can be optioned with a unique sport suspension to ratchet down the handling even more tightly. Unlike many manual versus automatic comparisons, the manual ALL4 is equally quick (0–60 in 6 seconds, either way.) And it weighs 36 fewer pounds. Think about how much car companies would charge you to drop 36 pounds (carbon-fiber floor mats, \$900; gossamer upholstery, \$4,000) and you realize the manual Mini is a bargain, too. This content is created and maintained by a third party, and imported onto this page to help users provide their email addresses. You may be able to find more information about this and similar content at piano.io

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