

Alfa Romeo 159 2.2 JTS 939

Date _____ Mileage _____ Price _____ Seller _____

What matters most: The timing chain stretches early if oil was changed at factory intervals (30,000 km). Ask for proof of 10,000 km oil changes. No proof means higher risk.

BEFORE THE VIEWING

Service records and oil intervals

Ask the seller for full service history before visiting. The critical detail: oil changes every 10,000-15,000 km, not the factory 30,000 km. Long intervals cause oil sludge that leads to timing chain stretch.

Recall status (VIN check)

Contact a Stellantis dealer with the VIN to check recall status. The 159 has recalls for brake vacuum pump failure (2007-2009) and Takata airbags. Pre-2008 cars are most likely affected.

Manual or Selespeed gearbox

Confirm which gearbox the car has. The Selespeed automated manual has an expensive hydraulic system that often fails (€500-2,500 to fix). The 6-speed manual has its own issues but is cheaper to repair.

AT THE CAR

Tyres and front inner edge wear

Check front tyre inner edges closely. The 159 is known for rapid inner wear caused by worn wishbone bushes and aggressive factory alignment. Common sizes are 205/55R16 or 225/50R17. Uneven wear can point to suspension issues.

Front subframe condition

Look underneath the front of the car at the subframe. Check for bubbling paint, flaking coating, or rust-through on the welds and box sections. Severe corrosion here can make the car uneconomical to fix.

Cold engine start and chain noise

Start the engine completely cold and listen near the front for metallic rattling in the first 10-30 seconds. A brief rattle that fades is worth noting. A rattle that persists can point to a stretched timing chain.

Power steering fluid and noise

Open the bonnet and check the power steering fluid reservoir. The fluid should be green (correct G1/R spec). Red or dark fluid suggests it has never been updated. Turn the steering at standstill and listen for groaning from the pump.

DURING THE DRIVE

Gearbox whine in 5th and 6th gear

At motorway speed, listen carefully for a whining noise that rises with road speed, especially in 5th and 6th gear. This points to worn output shaft bearings in the M32 gearbox, a common and progressive issue.

Pull-away hesitation at low revs

Do several starts from standstill. Mild hesitation around 1,500-2,000 rpm is a known trait of the 2.2 JTS engine. Severe juddering or near-stalling can point to additional problems beyond the standard flat spot.

Suspension rattle over bumps

Drive over uneven surfaces and speed bumps. Listen for knocking or rattling from the front, which can point to worn upper wishbone bushes. The 159's front suspension wears faster than average, especially the upper arms.

NOTES

THIS CAR AT A GLANCE

Italian mid-size saloon, built 2005-2011. Stylish but demanding. Timing chain, gearbox bearings, and subframe corrosion need careful checking.

KNOWN WEAK POINTS

Timing chain stretch

Premature wear from oil sludge buildup
€800-2,000

M32 gearbox bearings

Output shaft bearings whine, then fail
€600-2,000

Front subframe corrosion

Poor factory coating, rusts through
€200-1,500

Selespeed hydraulics

Pump, accumulator, or TCU failure
€500-2,500

Front wishbone bushes

Wear fast, cause inner tyre scrubbing
€300-800

