RadarTest.com

REVIEWED: *Radar Detectors from $150 to $200*

Granted, radar detectors all have the same mission in life—detecting radar and laser—but performance is heavily dictated by price. So while a $49 "K-Mart Special" may indeed alert you to a lurking radar trap, having tested detectors for twenty years we're well aware that most will do so only under ideal conditions. Throw in some hills or curves or run up against one of the latest radar guns and the level of protection simply evaporates.

With few exceptions the best-performing models are retail-priced on the far side of $150. (Typical street prices are about 15 to 20 percent less.) Call it the **near-high performance segment**. These models are upscale, usually offering text displays, voice alerts, user-programmable features, more elaborate software to limit false alarms and a host of other niceties.

Presented are our field-test reviews of six models from $150 to $200. But keep in mind that every manufacturer builds multiple models on two or three basic platforms; they differ only in features So the units tested actually represent no fewer than 17 separate models.

The following models were tested:

- **BEL Express 930**
- **Cobra ESD 9560**
- **PNI Traveller II**
- **Rocky Mountain Radar DLS 312**
- **Whistler 1763**
- **Whistler 1765**

Understanding the Ratings

★	**Poor**
★★	**Sub-par**
★★★	**Fair**
★★★★	**Superior**
★★★★★	**Excellent**

Interpreting the Performance Rating Categories

- **X/K Radar Sensitivity.** Today X- and K-band radar detection is a no-brainer. These frequencies have been used since the Sixties and Seventies, respectively and the manufacturers have had decades to get a handle on them.

  Our recommendation: look for at least ★★★

- **Ka Radar Sensitivity.** Decent Ka sensitivity requires more expensive components and superior engineering. Most manufacturers refuse to spend the money to achieve it. The first clue that your detector is weak on Ka band: red and blue flashing lights in your mirror.

  Our recommendation: look for at least ★★★ (more is definitely better)

- **Gatso Sensitivity**. This low-powered, K-band photo radar (speed camera) is the most widely used worldwide. Only a few dozen are used in the States, most of them in California. But if you're one of the few for which the Gatso is a local hazard, only a detector with exceptional K-band sensitivity will be an effective countermeasure.

  Our recommendation: look for at least ★★★★

- **Laser Sensitivity.** Laser detection is so iffy that most laser ambushes will be over long before you get a warning. But more sensitivity isn't a bad thing to have.

  Our recommendation: look for at least ★★★ (more is definitely better)

- **False Alarms.** The number one consumer complaint about detectors: too many false alarms. If you buy a detector that constantly falses we guarantee that you'll ignore it when it eventually warns of a real radar trap. After which it'll end up in the closet or glovebox.

  Our recommendation: look for at least ★★★★