

REVIEWED: Radar Detectors from \$200 to \$250



Detectors these days are commodities and for most buyers, price is paramount. Models with suggested retail prices below \$150 comprise the bulk of the market, making this higher-end price segment rather exclusive. It's occupied by only five models, although our reviews actually represent nine units as some of these have siblings identical in appearance and performance, differing only in features and price.

Shelling out some extra bucks does have some tangible benefits. More money buys more features, enhancing the utility and convenience of the detector. Better yet, it pays an even greater dividend: improved sensitivity (longer detection range) and better selectivity, the ability to reject non-police signals that cause false alarms. These models are simply better at their jobs and most offer you a better chance to even up the odds with the enforcers. Still too expensive, you say? Look at it from this perspective: aside from the ticket and court costs, years of insurance premiums can easily set you back a couple of grand.

The following models were tested:


- BEL Vector 940
- Cobra ESD 9860
- Escort Passport 7500S
- Rocky Mountain Radar RMR-D250
- Whistler 1783
- Whistler 1793

Understanding the Ratings




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 