

The Magazine of the Road Enthusiast
excellence

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Webmaster**1967-69 912 Soft-Window Targas**

Decent car, you stole it: \$8,000-12,000

Nice car, decent money: \$16,000-20,000

Insanely nice, high price: \$30,000-35,000+

Watch out for: Rust, unspeakable and/or irreversible
modifications, non-original engine

912s were built in large quantities and most buyers prefer the flat-six power of a 911. But a four-cylinder 912 in great original condition or thoroughly rebuilt by an expert with top-quality parts is a great Porsche to own. The sleepers in the 912 range are the Soft-Window Targas, built mostly for model years 1967 and 1968. Don't buy one with needs; look at sharp cars that run well with documented top-flight mechanical rebuilds. With less weight and better balance than a 911, the 912 is fun to drive and, if properly rebuilt and well cared for, easy to keep on the road. Nice ones start at \$15,000 with lots of upside potential. Find a 1969 912 Soft-Window Targa, the only year the long-wheelbase 912 was built, and you'll have an exceptionally unusual car with solid appreciation potential.

1967-69 911 Soft-Window Targas

Decent car, you stole it: \$15,000-22,000

Nice car, decent money: \$32,000-38,000

Insanely nice, high price: \$42,000-50,000+

Watch out for: Rust, unspeakable and/or irreversible
modifications, non-original engine

This is the second group of Soft-Window Targas on our list, but these make the list for a different reason. 912s are numerous, and values are modest across the range unless the car is in spectacular condition. 911s of this vintage are more rare, and values for the coupes are rising strongly. However, since so many hard-core 911 fans are intensely coupe-centric, the Soft-Window 911 Targas have been quietly passed by.

That makes these excellent candidates for future appreciation. In 1967, every Targa was a soft-windowed car. By 1968, most had solid rear windows. By 1969, virtually all wore solid rear windows, as 911 Targas would until the demise of the original concept in the early 1990s.

That concept was Porsche's answer to rising safety concerns over open cars at the time. While 356s were available to the end as cabriolets, Porsche buyers had to wait two years before they could buy an open 911, and then only in the form of the Targa. Porsche did not offer a traditional convertible again until the 1983 model year, with the 911 SC Cabriolet. Thus, Soft-Window Targas are like 356 Speedsters —the sportiest open cars Porsche offered at the time, and the least practical. Today, when most vintage Porsches are sunny day drivers, the charms of open-air motoring in a very early 911 are only available with one of these rare birds. There's still time to find one and tuck it away, even if it's not pristine. Remember when 356 Speedsters were \$5,000 cars and nobody cared? Here we go again. As with Speedsters, buy regardless of engine rating. A 1969 911T Soft-Window Targa, after all, can be rebuilt to any internal engine specs you like. Look for a car with its matching-numbers crankcase, as that will make a difference as these great 911s become "discovered."

1973-74 914 2.0

Decent car, you stole it: \$6,000-8,000

Nice car, decent money: \$10,000-12,000

Insanely nice, high price: \$17,000-22,000+

Watch out for: Rust, evidence of budget repairs, unspeakable and/or irreversible modifications, non-original engine, and trim-needy cars

Since there are a lot of these around, be sure to find an example in excellent condition, as the costs to restore a 914 are well ahead of its value, as is most always the case with the "undiscovered" Porsches. The big surprise here, should you be familiar with similar-year 911s, is how much fun a good 2.0 is to drive. You'll be shocked and delighted at the broad powerband and pulling power of a good, stock 2.0, especially a 1973.

Stay away from cars without their original fuel injection, as there is a certain stigma associated with 914-4s converted to carburetors that implies previous owners were after a cheap and easy fix for fuel-injection woes. That said, there is a lively, but different, market for highly modified 914s with hot-rod four-cylinders and 911 engine conversions. When done well and tastefully, we suspect these modified 914s will hold their value. But as collectors have found for decades, most buyers will desire original cars.

Look very carefully for rust throughout the car and especially below the battery tray, rear trailing-arm mounts, jack points, and longitudinals (hiding behind the outer rocker covers). Chrome bumpers, factory alloy wheels, and period colors — such as one of several oranges, greens, or yellows — may add to the value. Any 914 you consider should have a clean interior, great brightwork, and good rubber seals. For a 914 especially, remember: condition, condition, condition. Find a 914 that's as nice as possible — it will save you money in

the long run.

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