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NISSAN FAIRLADY Z 1969-1978

NISSAN Fairlady 240ZG

Model	HS30H
Engine Name	L24
Displacement	2393cc
Maximum Output	150ps/5600rpm
Maximum Torque	21.0kg-m/4800rpm
Overall Length	4305mm
Overall Width	1690mm
Overall Height	1285mm
Wheelbase	2305mm
Vehicle Weight	1035kg



The top-tier model, the 240ZG, was released as an upgraded version of the 240Z, which had gained high popularity overseas and was even selected as a World Best Car, tailored for the domestic market.



This is the Z-L model from its initial release. Since the headlamp covers were introduced starting with the 240ZG, this model does not have covers.



The rear of the 240ZG. The "240Z" emblem is attached to both the front fenders and the tailgate.





A new Fairlady was born through the collaboration of Matsuo and Katayama

Ten years after the debut of the Datsun Sports (S211) in 1959, and following the success of the Fairlady 1600 and 2000, the S30 Fairlady Z made its debut in October 1969, carrying the name "Fairlady Z."

Unlike the previous open models, the new design featured a closed body with a long nose and short deck, adopting a fastback style and transforming into a sleek coupe model.

The beautiful style of the S30 gained popularity not only in Japan but also in America. The chief designer responsible for this design was Yoshihiko Matsuo, who is affectionately known among Fairlady Z fans as the "Mother of Z." However, the development of the S30 Fairlady Z was not without its challenges and can be considered more of a struggle than smooth sailing. This is partly because the Cedric (130) and Bluebird (410) sedans, which were released by Nissan at the time, were struggling with poor sales. The designs for these models were handled by Italy's Pininfarina, known for its work with Ferrari.

It was Matsuo, who later played a key role in the creation of the

"Bluebird SSS," who proposed a sports-grade version of the Bluebird. The S30 model was a realization of Matsuo's vision, and the late Yutaka Katayama, who is also affectionately referred to as the "Father of Z," praised Matsuo's clay model design proposal. It was thanks to the keen insight of both Matsuo and Katayama that the design of the S30 Fairlady Z came to fruition.

Pursuing a new level of sports car performance and design

Upon its debut, the S30 Fairlady Z launched with four grades: the Z432, Z432R, Z-L, and the four-speed MT Z. However, the Z432 and Z432R were in a league of their own. The Z432R, though listed in the catalog, was a racing version of the Z432, which had been thoroughly lightened as a base vehicle for competition. The "432" in its name refers to "4 valves, 3 carburetors, 2 camshafts." The model code given was "PS30."

In Japan, there were two types of 2L engines available. The six-cylinder SOHC (L20) engine used in the Z-L and Z models boasted a maximum output of 130 hp at 6000 rpm and a maximum torque of 17.5 kg-m at 4400 rpm. On the other hand, the Z432 and Z432-R were equipped with the six-cylinder DOHC (S20)

engine, which had three Solex 40PHH carburetors, a spherical combustion chamber, and a 4-valve head, similar to the engine used in the Skyline GT-R.

The Z432, with its sleek styling and the heart of the Skyline GT-R, was naturally expensive. Priced at 1.85 million yen, it was nearly double the 1.08 million yen of the most popular model, the Z-L. To put this into perspective, the KPGC10 Skyline GT-R, often referred to as the "Hakosuka," was priced at 1.5 million yen when new, highlighting just how costly the Z432 was.

However, it is worth noting that the Z432 also came standard with an LSD (limited-slip differential) and expensive magnesium wheels. Unfortunately, due to emission regulations introduced in the 1970s, the Z432 was discontinued in October 1973, marking a regrettably short production run.

When seated in the low-positioned seats, the driver is naturally in an ideal position for driving a sports car. The bulge of the bonnet is visible in the driver's line of sight. In front of the driver, there are separate speedometers and tachometers, and turning the gaze left reveals a trio of gauges. It's a moment to savor the satisfaction and joy of being behind the wheel of a sports car.



The dashboard area of the 240ZG. The interior design is unified in black to emphasize a sporty mood.



High-back seats with integrated headrests. They feature a reclining function, allowing for a stable driving position.

When combined with comfort and drivability, it's no wonder the car was both admired and enthusiastically embraced.

The S30 Fairlady Z played a role as Nissan's global image leader and was produced for an exceptional nine years. It became a worldwide hit, especially in the North American market. As a result, it achieved a record-breaking 520,000 units sold globally, an unprecedented achievement for a single sports car model. The Fairlady Z soared into automotive history as a "legendary car" that shone brilliantly on the world stage.

After its success in North America, the 240Z was introduced domestically

Let's look back at the changes in the S30 model until its full model change to a successor in 1978. About a year after its debut, in October 1970, a 3-speed automatic transmission option was added to the best-selling Z-L model. In March of the following year, it was also added to the base grade Z. That same year, the first minor change was made, and the 240Z, 240ZG, and 240Z-L were released. However, during the minor change in October 1973 Showa 48, the Z432 and the 240Z series were discontinued. In January 1974, the Z

2by2 and Z-L 2by2 with rear seats were released. The 1975 minor change made the model compliant with the 1975 emission regulations, and the 1976 minor change brought it in line with the 1976 regulations, resulting in the release of the Z-T and Z-T 2by2.

At that time, the popularity of the "Datsun Sports 240Z" in the North American market was immense. The S30 model was offered with a 2.4L 6-cylinder SOHC engine (L24 type), which was an enlarged version of the L20 engine for the North American market. This was the aforementioned export-only model known as the "240Z." Responding to the interest of Japanese fans who caught wind of this information, the domestic debut of the 240Z occurred in November 1971.

There were three grades equipped with this engine. Leading the lineup was the 240ZG (priced at 1.5 million yen), adorned with beautiful aerodynamic parts, followed by the luxury-spec 240Z-L (priced at 1.35 million yen), and the base grade 240Z (priced at 1.15 million yen). The L24 engine, equipped with SU twin carburetors, boasted a maximum output of 150 horsepower at 5,600 rpm and a maximum torque of 21.0 kg-m at 4,800 rpm, making it one of the top-performing Japanese sports cars of the time. Additionally, it was

designed to run on regular gasoline, which was notable.

Among the three grades, the most noteworthy model was the 240ZG, developed exclusively for the Japanese domestic market. Its most distinctive feature was the "G-Nose" (aerodynamic nose) at the front end. It featured an FRP nose piece, headlamp covers, and FRP overfenders to accommodate wide tires. As a result, the overall width was increased by 60mm compared to the 240Z-L and 240Z. Naturally, the 240ZG was expensive and considered a luxury item. This led end-users to create "240ZG specifications" based on the S30 model.

The main specifications of the 240ZG were as follows: overall length × width × height: 4,305 × 1,690 × 1,285mm, wheelbase: 2,305mm. It was offered with a 5-speed MT and 3-speed AT. The tire size was 175HR 14, marking the first time radial tires were equipped on a Fairlady Z. The model number was designated "HS30H type," and its drag coefficient (Cd value) was 0.390, a topclass figure for sports cars of the time. Its top speed of 210 km/h, compared to the standard 240Z's 205 km/h, showcased its grand touring car capabilities. There is no doubt that it was a high-performance car with world-class specs.



The door interior opening and closing lever is positioned quite low. This is designed to match the seating position.



The trio of gauges from left to right includes the clock, ammeter & fuel gauge, and water temperature & oil pressure gauge. This three-gauge setup has also been carried over to the current Fairlady Z.

Captivating car enthusiasts through stellar performances on the racing scene

When discussing the popularity of the S30 Fairlady Z, which gained a following both domestically and internationally, its success in racing cannot be overlooked.

Nissan introduced the Datsun 240Z as a successor to the rally-focused P510 Bluebird 1600SS. Its first appearance was in the 1970 RAC Rally in the UK. Both the works team and privateers entered two cars each, with the best result being 7th place, achieved by Rauno Aaltonen, who was also a development driver. Following this, the 240Z was entered in various events such as the Safari Rally and European World Rally Championships until 1974. The car achieved notable victories, including winning the Safari Rally in 1971 and 1973.

Meanwhile, the 240Z also had a prominent presence in Japan's domestic racing scene. Its debut was in January 1970 at the Suzuka 300km race. Just three months later, it claimed its first victory at the Race of Nippon. The car in this race was the Z432, equipped with the S20 engine. Later that year, in July, the

240Z made its race debut at the All Japan Fuji 1000km race, where it won its very first outing. The drivers for this race were the legendary Kunimitsu Takahashi, who passed away in March 2022, and "Gan-san" Motoharu Kurosawa.

As Nissan's works team competed with top-tier resources, privateers also fine-tuned their machines to challenge the dominance of the factory team. Around 1971, the focus shifted from the Z432 to the 240Z as the star of the show. It was a glamorous, yet fiercely competitive world that captivated car lovers, drawing them into the excitement of motorsport.



The trunk room was directly connected to the seats, and belts were provided to secure luggage.



The switches for lights, wipers, and other controls were integrated to the left side of the steering wheel for improved operability.

The 240Z that participated in the 1971 Monte Carlo Rally saw two out of three cars finish in top positions, further enhancing the Fairlady Z's reputation.





The L24 engine, with intake and exhaust valves aligned on one side, features a layout where both the carburetor and exhaust pipe are positioned on the same side.



Two carburetors, enlarged from 38mm to 46mm to match the increased engine displacement, were installed.



The name 'Z' was chosen to represent 'ultimate' and 'supreme.' The front nose proudly displays the gleaming 'Z' badge.



Like the steering wheel, all models feature a wooden shift knob.

Historical Fairlady Z models used as patrol cars

The 240ZG also served as a highway patrol car. It was assigned to the Kanagawa Prefectural Police's Highway Traffic Police Unit, where it was donated by Nissan in 1972 and remained in service until 1980, accumulating 370,940 kilometers.

Unique police equipment included sirens, red rotating lights, a speedometer with a stop mechanism, a radio, police insignia, a microphone, speaker covers on the bumper, and an additional rearview mirror for the passenger seat. The model was classified as "HS30 Type Modified", and the engine was tuned, featuring larger valves and carburetors as well as port polishing, making it a serious modification.

Interestingly, during the time the 240ZG was in service, the Kanagawa Police

also had a Porsche 912 patrol car. While the 911 is equipped with a horizontally opposed six-cylinder engine, the 912 was a four-cylinder model. This particular vehicle has also been confirmed to exist in Japan and might be spotted at events.

The legacy of "patrol car versions of the Fairlady Z" began with the 240ZG and has since been carried on through the S130, Z31, Z32, Z33, and Z34 (NISMO) models. This means that every generation of Fairlady Z has had a patrol car version. Therefore, we can look forward to the possibility of the recently debuted RZ34 patrol car version.



After retiring from active duty, it was exhibited at the Kanagawa Prefectural Police Traffic Safety Center, but was returned to Nissan in 2004. It is currently housed in the Nissan Heritage Collection in Zama City, Kanagawa Prefecture.