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FEATURE

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1 March 2017

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IMAGE



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Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 76.3 (3.7), Combined 47.9 (5.9) – 72.4 (3.9). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 134 – 103g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained under standardised correct at time of print [March 2017]. More information is available on the Audi website at [www.audi.co.uk](http://www.audi.co.uk) and at [www.dft.gov.uk/vca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vca) Choice of wheels and other options may affect fuel consumption, BIK and emissions 2.0 TFSI 190PS with optional metallic paint (£550.00), black roof rails (£250.00), privacy glass (£375.00). The What Car? Car of the Year 2017 winning model is the Audi A3 Sportback Sport 1.4 TFSI 150PS, £24,145 ROTR.



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# AUTOCAR

The original car magazine, published since 1895 'in the interests of the mechanically propelled road carriage'

## EDITORIAL

Tel +44 (0)20 8267 5630 Email [autocar@haymarket.com](mailto:autocar@haymarket.com)

Editor Mark Tisshaw

Editorial director, Automotive Jim Holder

Editor-in-chief Steve Cropley

Executive editor Matt Burt

Head of video, features Matt Prior

Managing editor Allan Muir

Reviews editor Will Nightingale

Chief tester Matt Saunders

New cars editor Rory White

Deputy reviews editors Nic Cackett, Vicky Parrott

Senior reviewer John Howell

Reviewers Alan Taylor-Jones, Neil Winn, Doug Revolta

News editor Rachel Burgess

Consumer editor Claire Evans

Used car editor Alex Robbins

Senior staff writer Sam Sheehan

Content editor Darren Moss

SEO manager Jon Cook

SEO executive Oliver Hayman

Senior digital reviews editor Mark Pearson

Digital reviews editor Hemal Mistry

Chief sub-editor Tim Dickson

Sub-editor Alex Moores

Production assistant Kris Culmer

Group art editor Stephen Hopkins

Art editor Sarah Özgü

Deputy art editor Michèle Hall

Junior designer Laura Bajorunaitė

Chief photographers John Bradshaw, Stan Papior

Photographers Luc Lacey, Will Williams

Videographers James Holloway, Mitch McCabe

Picture editor Ben Summerell-Youde

Editorial assistants Jimi Beckwith, George Hawkins

## EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

European editor Greg Kable

Used car correspondent James Ruppert

Senior contributing writer Andrew Frankel

Senior contributing editor Richard Bremner

Contributing editor Mike Duff

Special correspondents Mauro Calo, Jesse Crosse, Hilton Holloway, Peter Liddiard, Julian Rendell, Richard Webber

## MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Tel +44 (0)20 8541 3434

Contact Robert Etheridge ([robert@performancemag.com](mailto:robert@performancemag.com))

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Tel 0344 848 8816

Overseas +44 (0)1604 251450

Email [help@autocar.themagazineshop.com](mailto:help@autocar.themagazineshop.com)

## SYNDICATION ENQUIRIES

Tel +44 (0)1962 867705

Contact Simon Fox ([syndication@autocar.co.uk](mailto:syndication@autocar.co.uk))

## LICENSING ENQUIRIES

Tel +44 (0)20 8267 5024

Contact Isla Friend ([isla.friend@haymarket.com](mailto:isla.friend@haymarket.com))

## BACK ISSUES

Tel 0344 848 8816

Email [help@autocar.themagazineshop.com](mailto:help@autocar.themagazineshop.com)

## ADVERTISING

Classified +44 (0)20 8267 5733 Display +44 (0)20 8267 5574

Production +44 (0)20 8267 5814 Fax +44 (0)20 8267 5312

Sales director Julia Dear

Key account director Richard Pottton

Agency group head Andrew Barclay

Agency account managers Adrianna Haynes, Lindsey Dobson

Semi-display/retail executive Hannah Mathew

## PRODUCTION

Tel +44 (0)20 8267 5219

Production manager Anthony Davis

Senior production controller Roxy Agius

## MARKETING

Direct marketing manager Maria Fernandez

Newstrade marketing manager Richard Jeffries

## MANAGEMENT

Brand director Rachael Prasher

Business director Darren Pitt

Brand manager Sarona Taylor

Brand executive Charlene Harry

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Editorial director Mark Payton

Strategy & planning director Bob McDowell

Managing director David Prasher

Chief executive Kevin Costello

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# COMMENT



## WHY E-PACE SHOWS THAT SUVs WILL MAKE, NOT BREAK, JAGUAR



IT'S ONLY FOUR years since the F-Type went into production as the first model from, and the poster child for, Jaguar's new generation of products.

It kickstarted a complete modernisation of the brand. First came some nice yet ultimately conventional saloons, but now we're seeing the really innovative stuff. It started last year with the now hugely successful F-Pace, with which Jaguar discovered it can make SUVs with no collateral damage to its image. The electric I-Pace arrives next year, a car so radical it consigns every Jaguar convention to history.

And in between is the E-Pace, this week's cover subject. It may seem unremarkable – it's a small front-drive SUV on a Land Rover platform – yet it is hugely significant, not only for its potential sales volumes in a rapidly growing market, but also for its cheaper price point and the younger buyers it'll attract, further quelling Jaguar's 'old man' image.

Today's demand for SUVs and crossovers can be traced back to the birth of the Nissan Qashqai in 2007, fully 10 years ago, as Richard Bremner recalls on p54. So with sales of Jaguar saloons dwindling, the real question is not why is the firm making SUVs such as the E-Pace at all, but why didn't it do it sooner?

**Mark Tisshaw** Editor

[mark.tisshaw@haymarket.com](mailto:mark.tisshaw@haymarket.com) [@mttisshaw](https://twitter.com/mttisshaw)

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# NEWS

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# E-Pace to expand Jag's SUV onslaught

New compact SUV set to become Jaguar's biggest-selling model as the firm also readies the electric I-Pace and plots Audi Q7-rivalling J-Pace



**J**aguar is ramping up its SUV sales assault with the E-Pace compact SUV, which is due to be revealed in early summer. It follows just six months after the unveiling of the electric I-Pace at the LA motor show.

With the mid-sized F-Pace SUV making up more than half of the brand's overall sales

since it was launched last year and buyers preferring high-riding vehicles to traditional saloons such as the XE and XF, Jaguar's growing range of SUVs will be key to the brand's future success. As well as the E-Pace, F-Pace and I-Pace, a large SUV called the J-Pace will go on sale by 2019.

The compact E-Pace, which

is set to be a bigger seller than the larger F-Pace, is fundamental to those plans. While the F-Pace has had a major effect on Jaguar sales, the E-Pace promises to catapult the premium brand forward in the same way that the Range Rover Evoque has done for Land Rover.

The five-seat E-Pace, which

will rival the BMW X1 and Audi Q3, is a similar size to the Evoque and will be smaller than both the F-Pace and the electric I-Pace. It will be built on the same LR-MS steel platform as the Evoque and Land Rover Discovery Sport and produced alongside those models at JLR's Halewood plant. Front-wheel-drive

versions will be most popular, but all-wheel-drive will be an option. Both six-speed manual and eight-speed automatic transmissions will be offered.

With the Evoque and Discovery Sport being Jaguar Land Rover's two best-selling models, the Halewood factory is already at its full capacity of 200,000 cars





AUTOCAR  
IMAGE

“The E-Pace promises to catapult Jaguar forward in the same way the Evoque has done for Land Rover”

annually. As a result, JLR is currently assessing how to accommodate production of a new model. JLR also builds the Evoque and Discovery Sport in Brazil, India and China, but it is unlikely that Jaguar would choose to produce the E-Pace abroad without any manufacturing capacity for the car in the UK.

Styling for the E-Pace, as spotted in recent images of the car testing near JLR's Gaydon HQ and inside the Arctic Circle, closely resembles that of the F-Pace, with both the grille and roofline reminiscent of those of its larger sibling.

The E-Pace will also feature the latest development of

Jaguar's InControl Touch Pro infotainment system, recently updated in the F-Pace, and showcase improvements in interior quality. InControl Touch Pro now offers so-called 'Dual-View' technology, which was first introduced on the Range Rover and allows the driver and front passenger to view →

## JAGUAR'S FOUR SUV HOPEFULS



### E-Pace (2017)

Forthcoming E-Pace will be a perfect entry point to the brand for aspiring SUV buyers and catapult Jaguar sales upwards.



### F-Pace (on sale now)

Only launched last year, the F-Pace has already proved its worth for Jaguar. It set the scene for a family of SUVs.



### I-Pace (2018)

The all-electric I-Pace concept, shown at last year's LA motor show, is set to be revealed in production form later this year.



### J-Pace (2019)

The final piece of the jigsaw will be a large SUV, called the J-Pace. It will rival the Audi Q7 when it arrives in 2019.



## HOW GLOBAL SUV SALES HAVE GROWN

Sales in the premium compact SUV class, in which the E-Pace falls, grew by a quarter globally in 2016 year on year, making it the fastest growing segment alongside the mainstream B-SUV sector, which includes models such as the Nissan Juke and Vauxhall Mokka.

Global sales volume of premium compact SUVs was 828,000 units, with the Audi Q3 leading the way (227,310 units), followed by the BMW X1 (206,392 units) and Mercedes-Benz GLA-Class (192,496), according to data from JATO Dynamics.

In Europe, SUVs accounted for 29% of all premium sales and sold more than one million units for the first time, at 1.04m. In the USA, SUVs made up a huge 53.7% of overall premium car sales, at 1.15m. Among the premium SUVs, compact models counted

for only 22.7% of last year's total global sales.

"Until now, the market for premium SUVs has been dominated by mid-size and large SUVs," said JATO's Felipe Munoz. "However, during the past eight years the three German premium brands have started to enlarge their presence in lower segments."

Other top-selling models include the Range Rover Evoque and, in the US, the Acura RDX and Lincoln MKC.

"There has been a sharp growth of premium C-SUV sales during the last eight years," added Munoz.

"Consumers around the world aspire to drive a premium car. This factor, along with the fact that SUVs have become more popular, encouraged premium brands to develop smaller, cheaper SUVs alongside the traditional big ones."



The Audi Q3 is the world's biggest-selling compact SUV

The E-Pace will be sold in 237bhp twin-turbo 2.0-litre diesel form



← different display functions on the same 10in screen.

The E-Pace will use 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol and diesel Ingenium engines, which are produced at JLR's engine manufacturing facility in Wolverhampton. Echoing the engine line-up in the recently updated F-Pace, the units will include an entry-level 161bhp 2.0-litre diesel, which targets company car drivers with its good CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and fuel economy, as well as a 178bhp 2.0-litre diesel.

The compact SUV will also use the same 2.0-litre engine in twin-turbocharged form to create a new high-performance diesel model with 237bhp and "more performance at high engine speeds without

compromising responses at low revs", according to Jaguar.

The E-Pace would also be an ideal car for Jaguar to launch its expected hybrid powertrain, the introduction of which would help Jaguar bring down its fleet-average CO<sub>2</sub> output in order to achieve stricter emissions targets.

The most likely option is a mild hybrid electric vehicle (MHEV) powertrain, a version of which is also expected on the Evoque and Discovery Sport. It will use an electric drive motor and a three-cylinder 1.5-litre Ingenium diesel engine equipped with an electrically powered turbocharger. The MHEV project, which was first shown at an engineering presentation in 2015, uses a

“  
It is likely that the new E-Pace will be offered with a mild-hybrid powertrain  
”

48V electrical system to power the turbo, water pump and air-con. While the electric motor is relatively modest, with an output of just 20bhp, its role is to fill gaps in the torque curve and help boost acceleration. The MHEV will also be able to shut down its engine and coast in order to preserve fuel.

Technology on the E-Pace will include the ability to pay for fuel at Shell service stations with a new in-car cashless

payment system operated via InControl Touch Pro. Owners who install the Shell App can drive up to any Shell pump in the UK, and later globally, and use the vehicle's touchscreen to select how much fuel they want and then pay using PayPal or Apple Pay. An electronic receipt, which will be displayed once the driver has filled up, will be emailed to the driver.

The new Jaguar is set to be unveiled in May, away from the

motor show circuit, and will appear after the BMW X6 and Porsche Macan-rivaling Range Rover Velar. The coupé-styled SUV, which will be revealed this week and will play a key role in Land Rover's fortunes, will sit between the Evoque and Range Rover Sport.

The E-Pace's price is expected to undercut that of the Evoque, which starts at £30,600, and be significantly less than that of the F-Pace, which is priced from £34,730. The BMW X1 starts from £27,850 and the Audi Q3 costs from £27,200.

While Jaguar remains tight-lipped on the E-Pace, the model is due to go on sale later this year.

**RACHEL BURGESS**



AUTOCAR  
IMAGE

## CAN JAGUAR'S SALOONS SURVIVE?

HILTON HOLLOWAY

Has Jaguar been wasting its time for the past 17 years, with the endless honing of its saloon cars into best-in-class driving machines? If you look at the most recent retail sales figures for the company, you could well argue exactly that.

According to Tata's own figures, in the 10 months between April last year and January this year, the company sold 132,825 cars. That's up a massive 83% on the same period year on year.

The XE put on a healthy 27% sales increase and the XF a useful 10% increase, but the

main reason Jaguar is doing well is due to the F-Pace.

Over the 10 months it was Jaguar's biggest-selling model by a significant amount, with 51,853 examples finding a home. And if the F-Pace's sales this January are anything to go by, the new model could settle down to an annual production of around 70,000 units.

Even now the F-Pace is Jaguar's best seller. Over our 10-month window, the XE compact saloon clocked sales of 34,627 – a very healthy jump over the previous period.

But the full-year total for the XE will probably be just under 43,000 units.

By contrast, BMW sold nearly 142,000 3 Series models last year in Europe alone, plus another 100,000 or so in both China and the US.

The XF is in rather worse shape. Over the same 10 months just 28,727 were sold, which adds up to a likely global total of 35,000 units over 12 months. But Mercedes sold more than 210,000 E-Class saloons and estates globally in 2016. The XJ, meanwhile, looks like it will come in under

10,000 sales for the 12 months to April this year.

When the E-Pace is launched – and we'd guess it will be well-priced – Jaguar will quickly become an SUV-majority car maker. Sure, the same thing has happened to Porsche and Volvo. But Jaguar saloons seem destined to remain very small sales fry.

So with the E-Pace and F-Pace doing well but Jaguar's three road cars adding up to


well under 100,000 units per year, what happens next?

The electric I-Pace will further change Jaguar's image, but a major rationalisation of the brand's range of saloon cars is needed, with perhaps just two models in a future range – or maybe even just one. But how do you add conventional models to Jaguar's line-up? A big, Range Rover-size J-Pace seems inevitable.



XF sales are shaded by those of the F-Pace





New Fiesta ST will be sold as a three-door and five-door



OFFICIAL PICTURES

# Three-pot power for Fiesta ST

Ford's new hot supermini will outpace the current model with a 197bhp 1.5-litre triple

**F**ord has revealed its latest Fiesta ST hot hatch, which matches the performance of the brand's current range-topping ST200 model. The new ST hits 62mph from rest in 6.7sec – 0.2sec faster than the outgoing Fiesta ST.

To be unveiled officially at the Geneva motor show next week, the Fiesta ST remains an important halo model for Ford, particularly in the UK, where its Fiesta supermini continues to dominate car sales. It is in its eighth consecutive year at the top of the car sales rankings.

The third-generation Fiesta ST is the first to feature Ford's new, 197bhp three-cylinder 1.5-litre Ecoboost petrol engine. It also introduces three drive modes, which adjust engine, steering and stability controls. There are more customisation options than previously, too.

"Next-generation Fiesta ST customers will benefit from innovations developed by Ford Performance for the Ford GT supercar and Focus RS hot hatch, including fuel injection and drive mode technologies,"

said Ford Performance boss Dave Pericak.

Ford of Europe product boss Joe Bakaj added that the new model will "deliver the most versatile, fun, engaging and rewarding Fiesta ST driving experience yet".

Sitting alongside the well-received 1.0-litre Ecoboost used across the Ford range, the 1.5-litre engine has 214lb ft and uses turbocharging, high-pressure fuel injection and twin independent variable cam timing, all of which delivers "optimised performance and

fuel efficiency", according to Ford. A new turbocharger features an optimised turbine design to build boost pressure more quickly and to minimise lag, according to the car maker.

The engine also features cylinder deactivation technology, a world first for a three-cylinder engine but increasingly common on bigger engines and used frequently on Volkswagen Group TSI petrol units. The move will help improve fuel efficiency by shutting down one cylinder when full capacity

power isn't needed, such as when cruising with little demand on the engine.

A major new addition for the Fiesta ST is the introduction of three drive modes: Normal, Sport and Track.

Normal mode is the default setting, where all systems, including the traction control and electronic stability control, (ESC) are configured to give a natural driving feel.

In Sport mode, engine mapping and throttle pedal response are sharpened and there's more "driving





The ST gets a flat-bottomed wheel and Sync3 infotainment



Ford says the ST's mesh grille is "race-car inspired"



Prominent roof spoiler denotes the ST's sporty intent

feedback", says Ford. Sport mode also creates more noise, through Ford's Electronic Sound Enhancement technology and the opening of the active exhaust noise control valve, both of which heighten the exhaust note and engine noise within the cabin.

In Track mode, Ford says all of the vehicle's dynamics are tuned for the fastest possible lap times, traction control is disabled and electronic stability control is set to wide-slip mode for circuit driving.

ESC offers drivers a choice of three modes – full system intervention, wide-slip mode

with limited intervention and full system deactivation.

The ST's chassis also uses torque vectoring to improve roadholding and reduce understeer by applying braking force to the inside front wheel when cornering.

Available in three-door and five-door versions, echoing the current ST, the car's exterior design includes a "race-car-inspired" mesh grille, large rear wing and exclusive 18in alloy wheels, as well as a new Liquid Blue paint colour.

Inside there are Recaro seats and a flat-bottomed steering wheel. Customers can

choose from a range of trims for the gearlever, steering wheel and door pulls, as well as a number of styling packs.

Ford's latest infotainment system, Sync3, also features. It uses a tablet-like touchscreen up to 8.0in in size that can be operated with pinch and swipe gestures. The ST will also offer a high-end B&O Play sound system, first announced on the standard Fiesta late last year.

The new Fiesta ST goes on sale early next year and is expected to be priced slightly higher than the outgoing model, which starts at £18,145.

**RACHEL BURGESS**



## WILL A THREE-POT DO THE JOB?

**NIC CACKETT**

The new Fiesta ST couldn't have bigger shoes to fill. The current one became an instant classic and its status as the world's best compact hot hatch has remained intact for four years.

Its four-cylinder engine played an important part in that standing, and although the transition to a three-pot is understandable, its success is far from guaranteed.

Notably, Ford hasn't opted to increase the power. Leaving aside overboost possibilities, the new petrol motor only equals the peak output of its ST200 predecessor. Without going to the expense of fitting a limited-slip diff, that's probably sensible. But nor

has the 0-62mph time improved, so the Fiesta has potentially gained little from a presumed cut in mass.

Failing to increase performance doesn't stop the car from being brilliant, but a failure to close the gap to more expensive options, such as the Mini Cooper JCW, risks it looking like a second-class citizen to some buyers.

Still, no one is likely to complain about the engine's efficiency advantage. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 114g/km ought to put the ST's combined claim at about 55mpg – not too shabby for fast supermini. But delivering the sound, burliness and high-rev reward of the Ecoboost will be the real achievement.



# WE DIDN'T STOP AT GREAT



Maybe it's the enhanced styling. Maybe it's the incredible new features such as a 7" Sat Nav with live traffic updates. Or perhaps it's just our refusal to sit back and to always strive for better that gained us our fourth consecutive What Car? Best City Car Award. The new Hyundai i10 has gone way beyond great. **From £8,495.**

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Fuel consumption in MPG (l/100km) for New i10 Range: Urban 38.2 (7.4) – 57.6 (4.9), Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 80.7 (3.5), Combined 47.9 (5.9) – 70.6 (4.0), CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 139 – 93g/km. These official EU test figures are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results. Model shown New i10 Premium SE 1.2 at £13,350 with Passion Red metallic paint included. New i10 S 1.0 at £8,495. Apple CarPlay™ is a trademark of Apple Inc. Android™ is a trademark of Google Inc. 5 Year Unlimited Mileage Warranty terms and exclusions apply. For information please refer to [Hyundai.co.uk](http://Hyundai.co.uk) or consult a Hyundai dealership.



New Turbo S covers  
0-62mph in 3.4sec,  
0-124mph in 8.3sec



# Top Panamera is a hybrid

New 671bhp Turbo S is first plug-in to top a Porsche model range

**P**orsche has revealed a new 671bhp plug-in hybrid Panamera. The Turbo S, which uses a V8 engine mated to an electric motor, is the second petrol-electric model in the Panamera line-up.

The new variant is the first hybrid to serve as the flagship model within a Porsche range. The Turbo S offers more performance and greater economy than the existing 543bhp V8-engined Turbo.

The S is claimed to be able to travel up to 31 miles on electric power and return 97mpg on the NEDC test, with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 66g/km. However,

Panamera model line boss Gernot Döllner said in real-world use the model can travel between 24 and 27 miles on electric power and will return between 22mpg and 40mpg.

The Turbo S's flagship status is reinforced by the combination of its 543bhp 4.0-litre twin-turbo V8 and a 134bhp electric motor, which together produce 627lb ft from 1400rpm. The electric motor is housed within an eight-speed PDK dual-clutch automatic transmission that drives all four wheels. As with other hybrid Porsches, the Panamera's driveline allows it to coast when

the accelerator is released.

Porsche says the Panamera Turbo S is the world's fastest and most powerful hybrid saloon. It can hit 62mph from rest in only 3.4sec, dispatch 0-124mph in 8.3sec and run to a maximum speed of 192mph. The all-electric Tesla Model S P100D, which makes 525bhp and 713lb ft, hits 62mph from rest in 2.8sec.

Key features in the Turbo S include four driving modes – Electric, Hybrid, Sport Plus and Boost – and a 48V electrical system to control the active anti-roll bars. Four-wheel steering, torque vectoring,

carbon-ceramic brakes, three-chamber air suspension, traction management and launch control are also offered.

The battery charges in six hours from a 10A domestic plug, or in 2.4 hours via a 30A supply using an 7.2kW charger.

Döllner said this is the most complex road-going Porsche yet, offering no fewer than 6000 individual control options and containing 100 million lines of computer code. An airliner carries a 10 to 15 million lines.

The Panamera Turbo S goes on sale in July, priced from £137,140.

**RICHARD BREMNER**

## ON TRACK IN THE TURBO S

There's a crest on this Nardo test track that briefly launches our Panamera skywards. Despite its heft, the Panamera Turbo S lands well, feeling as thoroughly planted and secure as it does on the rest of the lap.

Le Mans 2010 winner Timo Bernhard is our chauffeur and claims to be surprised by how keenly it points into bends. "It responds as I would expect a sports car to respond in terms of feedback," he says.

He brakes hard on a downhill, slightly uneven section. I can feel the rear end squirming slightly. Bernhard says: "It feels secure under braking. You can feel the back end move around but it's stable." It's also very fast.

Riding in the rear is more impressive, with the 1g cornering spikes, the lack of body roll, the V8's cultured beat and our sometimes fearsome cornering speeds. Yet it all feels calm and under control. As does a successful assault on its 192mph top speed. This Porsche is a hybrid, but it's like no hybrid you've seen before. **RB**



## MERC F1 CAR REVEALS NEW AMG HYBRID BRAND

Future hybrid performance road cars from Mercedes-AMG will be based around a new sub-brand called EQ Power+. The brand name features on the latest Mercedes-AMG W08 Formula 1 racer, which was revealed last week.

Mercedes' F1 powertrain boss, Andy Cowell, told Autocar that it is inevitable that many of the hardware and drive cycle improvements in the new F1 car's hybrid system would end up in AMG's upcoming hybrid road cars because, "we've got a great marriage between the road and race engineers at our Brixworth plant".



Tech from the new Mercedes F1 car will filter down to AMGs



# DS crossover chases Audi Q5

New 7 Crossback advances DS's upmarket push with new tech and a premium design

**D**S is set to introduce its first European SUV, the 7 Crossback, which Autocar has seen ahead of its official debut at the Geneva motor show next week.

The 7 Crossback is the first of what will quickly become a slew of new models from DS. A smaller crossover and a large saloon will be among them. However, there are no plans to bring the slightly smaller, Chinese-market DS 6 crossover to Europe.

It's less than two years since the PSA Group split DS into a third model line positioned above Peugeot and Citroën. It is determined to portray its newest brand as a premium

player and the 7's styling takes on plenty of upmarket cues – especially in the resemblance at the rear to the Audi Q5. The 7 has a similar full-width tailgate with integral tail-lights.

DS said all versions will feature upmarket materials in their cabins, as well as potential for customisation that's unprecedented for a PSA car. Prototypes seen by Autocar were equipped with a 12.0in central touchscreen and a digital instrument display.

The amount of cabin space in the 7 is generous in the front and rear, and plusher versions are set to get power-operated tilting rear seats.

Most of the 7's mechanical

make-up is familiar, certainly on the launch models. The 7, which has been developed under the codename X74, sits on the mid-sized version of PSA's EMP2 modular platform.

There will be three petrol powerplants: a 128bhp 1.2-litre three-cylinder and the 1.6-litre turbocharged four-pot in both 178bhp and 227bhp varieties. The two diesels will be a 2.0-litre with 178bhp and a new ultra-frugal 1.5-litre engine, dubbed DVR.

The 1.5 diesel and 1.2 petrol will have a six-speed manual gearbox. All other engines will come with a new eight-speed automatic, which will also be an option on the 1.5 diesel.



First UK customers will receive their 7s early next year

## OFFICIAL PICTURES



It's underpinned by a platform also used by Peugeot's 3008



All of the launch models will be front drive only. PSA engineers have confirmed that there are no plans for an all-wheel-drive 7 with a mechanical system.

The only version with a powered rear end will be the range-topping hybrid version, which is due to arrive a year after the rest of the range. The hybrid 7 will feature two 107bhp electric motors, one at the rear, working in conjunction with a 197bhp version of the 1.6-litre turbo petrol to create a total system output of 296bhp.

DS is keen to portray the 7 Crossback as a technology leader and all but the entry-level version will get active LED headlights featuring three powered moving elements. These turn to give a 'welcoming animation' as the car is unlocked and allow different lighting modes, with longer-range beam projection at higher speeds and corner illumination (something

Citroën effectively invented with the original DS).

Elaborate tail-lights, each with 42 LEDs, will also be standard and an infrared-based night vision system capable of identifying pedestrians and animals will be offered as an option. DS has also confirmed plans to offer the 7 with a semi-autonomous Connected Pilot system, Active Scan suspension (see separate story, right) and a state-of-the-art Focal Electra audio system.

Production of the 7 will start towards the end of the year at PSA's Mulhouse plant, with UK customer deliveries due in early 2018. Pricing and the final spec won't be confirmed until closer to the car's launch, but a fully laden range-topper is expected to be less than £40,000 and the entry-level model under £30,000, giving the 7 a price advantage against German rivals, such as the Q5 and the BMW X3.

**MIKE DUFF**



Active LED headlights feature on all 7s apart from the entry one

### ACTIVE SCAN SUSPENSION IS A 'FIRST'

Although PSA no longer produces cars with hydraulic suspension – which caused the ride of the original Citroën DS to be compared with a magic carpet – the DS 7 will be offered with the option of an Active Scan suspension system.

This will use a high-mounted camera near the top of the windscreen to 'read' the surface of the

road as it approaches, pre-setting the stiffness of the electronically variable dampers (which will be standard on more expensive versions) to take account of larger bumps and compressions as they arrive.

Mercedes already offers a similar Magic Body Control system on more expensive models, but DS claims Active Scan will be a segment first.



DS promises upmarket materials for the cabin

### WE RIDE IN THE DS 7 CROSSBACK

Test track demonstrations are normally conducted at a speed designed to make the passenger feel moderate awe, but not today.

Andrea Louis, the DS 7 project manager, is driving a hard-working prototype wearing a tatty disguise at a brisk but restrained pace. He deliberately takes aim at every imperfection he can find, including some nasty artificial ridges across the surface of the track. He's intent on proving the 7 rides like a big French car should.

Unfortunately, our 7 isn't fitted with the Active

Scan suspension, which is apparently still undergoing final tuning, and our car's

variable dampers are working only in their default Normal mode. But the car feels

impressively compliant from both the front passenger and rear seats when asked to digest the Belchamp test track's modest number of rougher surfaces, which are still some way short of the challenge of a British B-road.

We're told that PSA engineers are fully aware of what tarmac in the UK can be like, apparently having been moderately appalled after a group of them was brought over to encounter our potholes, and DS is determined to reclaim the reputation for ride quality that French cars used to enjoy.



Autocar's man (right) gets the lowdown from DS 7 guru Andrea Louis

### CONFIDENTIAL

GOSSIP | RUMOURS | TRENDS

SEAT'S EXECUTIVE vice president for research and development, Matthias Rabe, says a Cupra version of the upcoming new Ibiza "isn't a top priority". Ibiza Cupra R&D costs would be similar to those of the pricier Leon Cupra and it's simply not profitable. Instead, look out for the upcoming Ateca Cupra (Autocar has already spied development cars) and the possibility of a more extreme Leon Cupra 300 R being readied for this year's Frankfurt motor show.

DAIMLER HAS DECIDED to sell only electric variants of its Smart brand in North America, although there are currently no plans for petrol versions in Europe. North America is a very small market for Smart, but its electric models have had a better sales impact than the petrols. In Europe, the petrol-powered variants are still popular, so Daimler does not want to take them off the market.



THERE WILL BE no Mini bigger than the Countryman in this third generation of new Minis – but it could still grow in the future. Boss Peter Schwarzenbauer said that "with this generation and architecture, the Countryman is the largest Mini you'll see", without elaborating on what that meant for the future.

AN ALL-ELECTRIC version of the Kia Niro crossover will go on sale in 2018, shortly after a plug-in hybrid version of the car arrives later this year. The Niro, which will be crucial in helping the Korean brand to grow its portfolio of eco-friendly vehicles, shares its underpinnings with Hyundai's Ioniq.



# Peugeot's autonomous tech vision

Concept sets out Peugeot's plans for self-driving cars of the future

**P**eugeot has revealed a shooting brake concept, named Instinct, which showcases the French firm's plans for autonomous technology in future vehicles.

Peugeot concept designer Matthias Hossann said that although this model won't make production, the intention was to create a car "that didn't look like a UFO" and was genuinely usable as a family vehicle. It has four seats and similar space to the 308 hatchback, Hossann said.

The Instinct uses a 296bhp plug-in hybrid powertrain. Hossann said there was a big focus on efficiency and aerodynamics in its design.

The Instinct demonstrates Peugeot's autonomous tech vision for the first time. Last year, product boss Laurent Blanchet told Autocar the company would introduce a greater level of autonomy across its range by 2020 and confirmed the technology would work in the car maker's existing platforms.

At a launch event for the Instinct ahead of its public debut at the Geneva motor show, Peugeot strategy boss Aude Brille reinforced this,

saying autonomous versions of its models would not be built on a separate platform.

The Instinct demonstrates technology related to level five autonomy – the highest grade of autonomy for a car – meaning that it can equal a human driver in every driving scenario. Brille said she expected to see this technology reach Peugeot cars by 2025, which is in line with the plans of other major car makers, such as Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz.

"You have some elements already in models such as the 3008," said Brille. "But this is level five autonomy, which will arrive in 2025. This concept shows how we can develop i-Cockpit and let's us push the limits."

Asked if autonomous Peugeots would be electric and hybrid only, Brille said: "The mix of energy use is going in the direction of electric and hybrids so it makes sense that there is a connection between the two. It just makes sense for this concept that we use a PHEV. But that does not mean there won't be Peugeot autonomous cars with petrol engines."

**RACHEL BURGESS**

**1** The Instinct has two modes, Relax and Boost, when driving. Boost offers the more engaging drive behind the wheel. The steering wheel retracts when the car is in autonomous mode.

**2** This so-called i-Device lets passengers control the car in autonomous mode. There is a choice of autonomous modes: Soft, which could be selected if you wanted to read in comfort, and Sharp, if you wanted a more dynamic journey.



News editor Burgess gets a taste of how it might be in 2025

## Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port factory is safe – for now

VAUXHALL'S UK PLANT at Ellesmere Port is secure for the current generation of Astra production, which will run until 2021, a spokesman has told Autocar.

The future of the plant, as well as Vauxhall's other factory in Luton, has been under scrutiny after the news a fortnight ago that PSA – the owner of Peugeot, Citroën and DS – is interested in taking a majority stake in Vauxhall and its European equivalent Opel.

With plants across Europe

running at 80% capacity and Vauxhall/Opel planning to introduce two new SUVs this year, the Crossland X and Grandland X, it would not be feasible to move production of the Astra model to another European factory in the short to mid-term, said the spokesman.

If the deal goes ahead, future Astra models can be put on the same platform as Peugeot's 308 hatchback – at which point the car could be built elsewhere, but not

before. With the current-generation Astra expected to sell for at least four more years, this suggests Ellesmere Port will continue in its current capacity until at least 2021.

The spokesman also said General Motors, owner of Opel and Vauxhall, expected to receive a letter of intent from PSA to buy its European arm by the end of next week. After that, due diligence is expected to take a year but it is hoped a deal will be reached before the Geneva motor show next week.



Ellesmere Port will build the current Astra until at least 2021

### GHOSN SWITCHES FOCUS TO MITSUBISHI

Carlos Ghosn has stepped down as CEO of Nissan. He is giving up day-to-day running of the firm to concentrate on revitalising Mitsubishi, which he recently added to the Renault Nissan Alliance with the purchase of a 34% stake in the firm.



### HONDA DEVELOPS ARIEL ATOM RIVAL

Honda has filed a patent for an open-wheel sports car that could become an Ariel Atom rival. The car resembles the 2&4 concept of 2015 (pictured) but patent drawings suggest it uses an electric motor, not the 2&4's 999cc MotoGP racing bike engine.





**3** There's similar space to a 308 hatchback and four seats. The seating positions, lighting and sound options change depending on the chosen driving mode.



**4** Aerodynamic features include an active spoiler and an active air blade, which is deployed above 56mph to provide extra downforce. There is also an integrated air duct along the length of the Instinct, allowing the air to flow within a narrow tunnel through front and rear doors and over the rear wheel arch.



**6** The design of the front LED lights incorporates a camera, which can send data to the driving assistance systems. This design element is one that, according to Matthias Hossann, is most likely to make production in the shorter term. "We would like to integrate this function in the future," he said.

**5** A holographic display shows information such as vehicle speed and battery level. The digital rear-view function tells the driver if another vehicle is in his blind spot.



**7** The central console touchscreen and the ultra-wide display on the passenger's dashboard showcase data procured from the Internet of Things. Using a cloud-based system, data is aggregated from smartwatches, smartphones and social media as well as connecting to home devices. For example, you start the car's engine at home and your house doors could automatically lock; or your smartwatch knows you are very tired after a gym session, so the vehicle switches to Soft autonomous mode.



## WRAPS OFF ALPINE AHEAD OF GENEVA DEBUT

Alpine has revealed the first official image of its forthcoming two-seater sports car, ahead of the model's Geneva show unveiling next week.

The rear-drive Porsche Cayman rival uses a lightweight aluminium platform and upper body for agility, according to the Renault-owned brand.

The car is set to use a 250bhp 1.8-litre petrol engine and will be able to hit 62mph from rest in 4.5sec. A 300bhp performance variant is also expected, along with a convertible.

The first examples will be badged Premier Edition, with prices from around £50,000.

### OFFICIAL PICTURE



The Alpine will use a 250bhp 1.8-litre engine

### UK TO GET FIRST EV-ONLY SHOWROOM

The UK's first all-electric vehicle (EV) showroom will open in Milton Keynes this year, as part of a £9 million investment from the UK's Go Ultra Low Cities programme. The EV Experience Centre will feature 52 cars from multiple brands.



### NEW GT C ROADSTER TOPS AMG SPECIALS

Mercedes-AMG has revealed three special-edition models as part of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. They are the GT C Roadster Edition 50, which will be limited to 500 units, the C63 Ocean Blue Edition and C43 4Matic Night Edition.











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# Steve Cropley

MY WEEK IN CARS

Reborn Defender could face competition from Jim Ratcliffe's Ineos



## MONDAY

Given that its worldwide sales were barely 20,000 units a year, it's amazing how much hot air the Land Rover Defender continues to generate. It's well over a year since the last one rolled out of Solihull and some months since JLR made it clear it wouldn't allow the petrochemicals billionaire and Defender lover Jim Ratcliffe to take over manufacture as he'd like to have done.

What's changed is that Ratcliffe recently announced the results of research into the viability of a Defender-like creation his company, Ineos, might build. The conclusion seems to be that there are enough farmers and off-roading enthusiasts to make the exercise work. I keep examining my own attitude to the idea. It would be easy to diss it and put my faith in JLR. But while I don't doubt they'll launch a viable Defender, the profusion of recent 'soft' Land Rovers makes me think they might move Defender II a bit too far toward civilisation, leaving room for Ineos. In a way, I hope both things happen.

## TUESDAY AM

News that Charles Morgan, former MD of his family's Malvern-based sports car company, is being invited to join a newly formed 'family council' makes happy reading. A car firm so far outside the mainstream needs as many people as possible with their name on the hubcaps. I'll bet a decent percentage of today's buyers are still attracted by the Utopian nature of Morgan, which hand-builds cars where it started well over a century ago and needs no other ambition.

## TUESDAY PM

Interesting two-part drive in a Volkswagen Passat Alltrack, a toughened, higher-riding

“  
Professor Garel Rhys had  
three times the knowledge  
and an extra edge of insight  
”

Passat estate with designed-on bits to signal a higher purpose than forging along highways. On the 'out' leg I felt a bit scathing about the car: I mean, what does it mean if a bloke of my years feels a car is a bit too old for him? But on the way back, I started noticing how sweet and easy to control the six-speed paddleshift 'box felt compared with the latest eight and nine-speeders. And I started thinking how little credit cars get for uniform excellence: this one had a great transmission, unobtrusive comfort, fine visibility, zero wind noise and a classy, easy to use hi-fi. I walked away reluctantly.

## AND ANOTHER THING...

The late Spen King, designer of the original Range Rover, will be beaming from above on McLaren's new 650S replacement. King had a thing about the dangers of modern cars' thick screen pillars and would be delighted that McLaren has found a way to make them thin again, as shown in images of the new car's driver's cell.



Volkswagen Passat Alltrack's appeal grew with use



## WEDNESDAY

Very sorry to hear of the death of Professor Garel Rhys, our country's greatest car industry expert. He advised us with great wisdom and humour, whenever asked, on the British industry's doings (although he preferred to refer to "the car industry in Britain" as a way of puncturing corporate egos). Journalist Julian Rendell, once Autocar's news editor, remembers Rhys fondly. "No matter what you knew, Garel had three times the knowledge and an extra edge of insight," says Jules. "And he backed what he told you with numbers, stored in his amazing memory." Best of all, Garel kept us on track without sounding superior, which is why he was so greatly respected wherever he went.

## FRIDAY

Lounging in the back of an Audi A8 between Milan and Turin at high speed, I pondered how cars like this have developed around us hacks, because we so rarely drive them. It's all SUVs now; sales of luxury saloons are small and mostly to fleets. This A8's refinement was so good, I couldn't help wondering how much improvement will be possible in the coming electric age. There was a vibrating engine as big as a motorbike up there, and yet we hardly noticed a thing...

## GET IN TOUCH

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# FIRST DRIVES

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## BENTLEY MULSANNE SPEED

Facelifted limousine packs an 811lb ft punch and becomes more of a car to drive than one to be driven in





#### TESTER'S NOTE

You have to pay £5320 for the 'Speed Premier Specification' to get, among other extras, the Flying 'B' radiator mascot and the veneered iPod drawer. One passenger thought the latter was a cigar drawer, which we think is much cooler. **VP**



**I**t's a vehicular oxymoron, isn't it? A Mulsanne to drive rather than be driven in. And yet that is just what Bentley maintains this Mulsanne Speed is. And while a 2685kg limousine that is also a driver's car seems like a faintly ridiculous idea, the flipside is that this is a 530bhp, 4.9sec-to-62mph, £252,000 car.

Of course such a gentrified wedge of automotive real estate should be special to drive. Of course people who love cars will want to drive such an opulent thing. So what's wrong with making a version of the

Mulsanne that caters for them?

Even so, the first question we need to address here is one of expectations. Bentley might choose to describe the Mulsanne Speed as a driver's car, rather like Porsche might describe its Cayman GT4 as a driver's car. All this means is that somebody should perhaps have a sit down with Bentley's marketing people and explain why they need to be a bit more imaginative. Let's face it: there are driver's cars and then there are cars that are memorable, enjoyable – spectacular, even – to drive. If it does the job well, this

Mulsanne is only ever going to fall into the latter category, but that's more than enough to delight us.

Having now armed ourselves with the blindingly obvious fact that the Bentley Mulsanne Speed isn't going to be as incisive to drive as any kind of sports car, and thereby isn't actually a driver's car in our book, we can turn our attention to what it does feel like and what it is.

This facelift has brought a fairly small sum of mechanical alterations beneath the substantially new and sleeker-looking exterior. Forward of the A-pillar, in fact, it is all-new.

Changes include new suspension bushes and active engine mounts, plus an advanced foam coating on the inside of the Dunlop tyres to improve refinement. All this combines with standard air suspension and the velvet-gloved hammer blow that is the 6.75-litre twin-turbocharged V8.

This is the first time we've driven the Mulsanne Speed in the UK, and suffice to say that it presses the road into submission in as pleasing a fashion as it ever has. It doesn't drive so much as it parades, preceded at all times by the Bentley forcefield; ➔



“  
There's an edge of irreverence  
to the Speed, a glimpse of  
rock and roll exuberance  
”



The Speed rides quietly but doesn't fully isolate its occupants from surface imperfections

◀ that intangible aura of superiority that seems stitched into Crewe's cars with as much care and thoroughness as the carefully selected bull hide.

Naturally, with 811lb ft from 1750rpm, a quick getaway is perfectly easy – as is a stupendously rapid getaway if you really want it. But everything from the soft throttle response and long pedal travel to the sheer mass surrounding you makes such antics feel frankly vulgar.

It's entertaining, though, because there is an edge of irreverence to the Speed, a brief glimpse of rock and roll exuberance somewhere in the mutter of that V8, the chirrup of tyres

as you make that vulgar getaway, the landslide of torque that sweeps you through the short-lived rev range.

Then, of course, when the buzz has worn off, you can twist the driving mode dial to Comfort and enjoy the sublime refinement. This is really where the Mulsanne excels. Bentley says the fancy tyre technology should cut cabin noise by 4dB, and bear in mind that the pre-facelift Mulsanne was hardly unrefined. Now it's like tooling around in a posh hotel suite, apart from the lack of some unfathomable light switches and a fruit bowl on the dashboard.

Hit a steady motorway stride and

engine and tyre noise die down to a faint thrum. Wind flutter is the only thing that dares to intrude on your consciousness as the Bentley punches a hole in the air.

It's in this unashamedly laid-back attitude that the Bentley feels wholeheartedly epic. In fact, it almost seems to buy you both time and a relaxed attitude. After all, turning up late is only to be expected – everyone else can wait.

And yet there is that tricky question of expectations again. Should this be a car that can deliver a modicum of involvement and handling prowess? Well, snick that

rotary dial into Sport to give it a go, and, to be honest, you might be a little underwhelmed. Any kind of vigorous cornering and the Mulsanne will lean ponderously on its front tyre, which eventually gives up under the pressure and leaves you with fistfuls of rather uncouth understeer.

Yes, you can provoke it into power oversteer. Of course you can – it has 811lb ft going to the rear wheels. But really? Really? You're not going to do that are you? Don't do that. Or do we need to explain the driver's car/not a driver's car thing again?

The steering feels a bit too meaty at low speeds when you might want the oily, light precision that a Rolls-Royce Phantom serves up in spades. The Bentley's steering does, though, weight up to deliver a fair sense of connection at higher speeds when you can inject a satisfying sense of fluidity to proceedings on the right kind of sweeping, high-speed curves.

Now to the biggest problem here: ride comfort. Speed or not, the Mulsanne is a car that will be defined by the level of serenity that buffers its occupants from the road, and, frankly, there isn't quite enough of it in the back or the front seats.

Sure, put it in Comfort and it lopes over high-frequency or long-wave imperfections, brushing off eroded asphalt and awkward cambers with casual ease. And then you hit a recessed drain cover, or a sharp-edged pothole, and feel the



The Bentley will act the hooligan if provoked, but such antics aren't befitting of its status



## BENTLEY MOVES ITS MULTIMEDIA ON

The Mulsanne's new infotainment system is one of its most significant updates. The graphics and layout of the 8.0in screen are bespoke to Bentley (and very classy they look, too). Between the touchscreen, rotary button and voice control, it's an easy system to find your way around and control, although it seems that postcode entry for the sat-nav is somewhat unnecessarily hidden.

This all comes with the full complement of media connectivity and a 60GB hard drive, although you do have to pay extra – some £14,890 – for the Entertainment Specification pack that brings the superb Naim audio system and two 10.4in retracting touchscreens for rear passengers with wireless headphones thrown in.

The screens can display Google Maps with the relevant travel info for your journey, or, of course, any app-based delight you could want.



Seats are fantastically comfortable; dashboard's button count is on the high side

unexpected shiver and thud as those air springs compress to the end of their travel.

Even with the driving mode dial in default Bentley mode, you feel an echo of the road's undulations and scars in the cabin; go for Sport and you seem to get very little extra body control in return for ride comfort that's another notch further away from that which you would want in a Mulsanne. There's a touch of patter here, a shiver there, a hint of a fidget over town roads...

Don't get us wrong, the Bentley Mulsanne Speed rides with the sort of majestic stride that most will be

very happy with, but anyone who drove the now-out-of-production Phantom would know that the Bentley's waft just isn't of quite the same exceptional vintage.

Still, there are other areas in which the Mulsanne Speed has really moved on, namely in the multimedia and driver interface area. A new, 8.0in colour touchscreen nestles in the wood of the dashboard and is a huge improvement (see sidebar).

Maybe we'd like fewer buttons scattered across the dash, since it is easy to get a bit flustered by the sheer number of switches, and the layout doesn't look too pretty, either. But

it's still a lavish treat of an interior, and the redesigned seats are truly wonderful: just soft enough without being armchair-like and supportive in all the right areas.

So after all that, the truth is that the Bentley is neither a driver's car nor quite the class-defining limousine that the Phantom was.

And that past tense might be what saves the day for the Mulsanne, since with the Phantom now no more, the Mulsanne is in a class of one. You could, I supposed, mention the Mercedes-Maybach, but it just doesn't seem in quite the same sphere as the Mulsanne, does it?

So the Bentley isn't faultless. A Rolls-Royce Phantom was better. Even so, there's every reason to want to drive or even own one of these most remarkable automotive creations. There's shock and awe in every burst of speed and every spectacular handcrafted detail.

No shadow of a doubt – there's as much to be enthralled about here as there is in just about any halo sports car. The enthusiast landscape is all the richer for the existence of the Mulsanne Speed, and long may that continue.

**VICKY PARROTT**  
@VickyParrott



Twin-turbo 6.75-litre V8 makes 530bhp and a massive 811lb ft from 1750rpm



## BENTLEY MULSANNE SPEED

An enthralling delight on so many levels and yet disappointing in a few crucial areas

★★★★☆

Price	£252,000
Engine	V8, 6752cc, twin-turbocharged, petrol
Power	530bhp at 4000rpm
Torque	811lb ft at 1750rpm
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
Kerb weight	2685kg
0-62mph	4.9sec
Top speed	190mph
Economy	18.8mpg (combined)
CO <sub>2</sub> /tax band	342g/km, 37%
RIVALS:	BMW 760Li, Mercedes-Maybach S600



TESTED 6.2.17, ITALY ON SALE SEPTEMBER PRICE £42,000 (EST)

# ALFA ROMEO STELVIO

Alfa is talking up the driver appeal of its first SUV, which will fight the Porsche Macan and Jaguar F-Pace. Is it up to the task?

PHOTOGRAPHY LUC LACEY





**I**t has a big boot. It has rear seats split conveniently in 40/20/40 portions. It has sensible black plastic wheel arch lips. It has multiple cupholders, a powered tailgate, shopping hooks and... 276bhp, which is quite a lot for a high-riding five-seat family car.

This certainly isn't the first time that Alfa Romeo has set about building a more practical vehicle – it made a rugged, Jeep-like 4x4 called the Matta in the early 1950s – but what its Canadian boss, Reid Bigland, underlines is that “the Stelvio is an Alfa Romeo first and an SUV second”.

As any car enthusiast knows, that should mean a recipe to include excellent handling, feelsome steering and a tunefully characterful soundtrack. To this end, chief engineer Roberto Fedeli says Alfa Romeo consulted a couple of musicians (of rock, blues and pop

leanings, apparently) to create a backing track in harmony with the rest of the Stelvio in the interests of bestowing it with a “coherent character”.

That character is built on the ‘Giorgio’ platform that forms the building block of the Giulia saloon. Fedeli points out that the Stelvio was developed at much the same time in a cluster of models that will grow from this architecture.

Bigland also reminds us that the Giorgio platform was developed as a premium architecture, and that by making its world debut under the 503bhp Giulia Quadrifoglio, it was possible to develop high-cost items such as the lightweight carbonfibre propshaft that also appears below the floors of all the mainstream Giulias, and the Stelvio besides. Had the less potent versions been developed first, Bigland explains, the finance →



#### TESTER'S NOTE

The Stelvio's wide, shallow sat-nav screen is good at showing you places you're not quite visiting either side of your route, less good at illustrating the road ahead. **RB**



“  
It isn't long before you begin  
to drive this Alfa with the verve  
of its lower-riding Giulia brother  
”



**Turbocharged 276bhp 2.0-litre petrol version is quick enough to sprint from standstill to 62mph in 5.7sec; diesel takes 6.6sec**

← department would have vetoed such functional indulgences.

The Stelvio is rich in lightweight aluminium, too. The doors, bonnet and tailgate are all alloy, as is the suspension and its sub-frames. The result is a mid-sized, four-wheel-drive crossover that weighs 1659kg with fluids. That's impressively competitive, even against the equivalent, predominantly aluminium, 1775kg Jaguar F-Pace.

The body is also exceptionally rigid, a vital requirement of both a keen-handling car and a crossover with off-road capabilities. It's presumably no Land Rover – there are no terrain settings to choose

from – but there is a hill descent facility and a heated steering wheel for sub-zero adventuring.

Mostly, though, the Stelvio's innards have been arranged to provide an entertainingly diverting drive, to which end Fedeli and his colleagues established an unusual dynamic goal: to reproduce the handling of the Giulia in a car whose driving position – or H-point, in industry-speak – is 190mm higher. And that includes replicating the Giulia's low-roll cornering habits.

No trick roll-resisting devices are employed and Fedeli confirms that this goal has been achieved with stiffer springs and anti-roll bars.

To which the obvious next question is: what about the ride? Specially developed dampers are the apparent solution and they were of the non-electronic variety on the petrol and diesel versions we've tried.

There's little chance of finding out how effectively this ambitious approach works at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' Balocco test track, most of which is as smooth as a fresh-shaved cheek, so there's some reassurance to be drawn from the fact that the Stelvio underwent development on roads in Wales, Scotland and England. But for this car more than most, it'll take a UK drive to fully assess the ride.

There's plenty of scope for testing the Stelvio's thrust, though. The turbocharged 2.0-litre engine delivers an enticingly generous 276bhp as well as 295lb ft, the full strength of which you can feel from 2250rpm if you floor the throttle from idle in a low gear. The Multiair four-cylinder unit is smooth, although what you notice most is the mild rort issued across most of the rev range. It's certainly not loud – that would get irritating within miles – and it's not as sweet as you'll hear from an old Alfa 75 Twin Spark, for example, but it's assertive enough to give the engine a characterful voice. It also encourages you to drive the Stelvio with zest, especially as the chassis is at least as eager.

The steering's swift-acting ratio is exactly the same as the Giulia's, and at low to brisk speeds on Balocco's dampened tracks, the Stelvio changes direction with a crisp immediacy that's heightened by the promised lack of roll. What you feel at the rim of the steering wheel is more resistance than topography, but it's accurate and consistent at least.

It's not long before you forget your distance from the road below and begin to drive this Alfa with the verve of its lower-riding Giulia brother. The Stelvio is fundamentally rear-wheel drive. Like the Giulia, 100% of the engine's effort is channelled to the rear axle – for which a mechanical limited-slip differential is available as an option – unless traction issues require a contribution from



**Steering wheel feels good to the touch and you can shift the eight-speed auto using paddles; controller is for the infotainment**



## WHY DRIVER TECH IS DIFFERENT FOR ALFA

"Technology for Alfa Romeo does not mean the lane departure warning, autonomous emergency braking and forward collision warning we have that other manufacturers [also] offer," says Alfa boss Reid Bigland, "but things like chassis set-up and materials."

This philosophy is evident throughout the Stelvio, not least in the competitive base weight and the bold ambition of trying to achieve the same handling capability as the Giulia saloon with a higher-riding SUV.

Part of the secret, says chief engineer Roberto Fedeli, is that the relationship between the Stelvio's roll axis "is the same as the Giulia's". That helps, as do stiffer springs and longer-travel dampers.

Stelvio encourages the driver to be engaged in what's going on and to enjoy it

the clutch-controlled front axle. How much time does this take? A smiling Fedeli explains, somewhat unbelievably, that it takes no time at all. On the track, though, the four-wheel drive system responds briskly enough to ensure it doesn't feel clunky. Up to 50% of the torque can be redirected to the front wheels, and there's plenty of urge to direct. The petrol engine launches the Alfa to 62mph in 5.7sec – usefully faster than the Volkswagen Golf GTI – and the diesel achieves it in 6.6sec.

Balocco's slightly slippery track surface provides a decent chance for exploration of the effectiveness of this hardware. Tight, low-speed

corners soon reveal the amusing discovery that the Stelvio's quite substantial rear end can be poked decisively sideways. That's if you're in the Dynamic setting of Alfa's familiar DNA driving modes, which allows some slippage but not enough to spike your heart rate. The ESP can't be completely killed, which is a good thing given that it's also quite easy to make the Stelvio's front tyres slide towards understeer. The realisation that this intervention is effective comes during a long, 75mph sweeper when the Alfa starts to edge unnervingly wide, a situation you'd be highly unlikely to encounter on the road. As we know, tracks can often

be highly deceptive, so it will take a twisting, bump-scattered road – or indeed the Stelvio Pass – to discover what this Alfa is really like. So far, though, it's more than promising.

And the mundane necessities of family car life, such as seat folding and boot space? The Stelvio manages two fair wins, with decent rear room and a long, uniformly shaped boot, although it might have been wider had its sides not been packed with components unknown behind carpeted trim panels. The rear seats can be semi-released from the tailgate end, but their backrests don't drop once the catches are released, making this facility rather pointless.

Still, the backrests fall to make a fairly flat floor and the tailgate is powered on all versions of the Stelvio.

Other bugs? Wind noise roars too obviously on these early cars and the driver's seat has no tilt facility on this version. But further positives include the Stelvio's robust aura, the high quality of much of the interior trim, a particularly tactile steering wheel and the enjoyment of driving an SUV with a bit of verve.

The Stelvio faces stiff competition from a renewed Audi Q5, the Porsche Macan and the aforementioned F-Pace, but on this evidence it certainly deserves to be short-listed.

**RICHARD BREMNER**

## ALFA ROMEO STELVIO 2.0 280 SUPER AWD

Mixes enthusiastic sounds and thrust with rear-biased handling. On-road ride quality remains an unknown

★★★★☆

Price	£42,000 (est)
Engine	4 cyls, 1995cc turbo, petrol
Power	276bhp at 5250rpm
Torque	295lb ft at 2250rpm
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
Kerb weight	1659kg
0-62mph	5.7sec
Top speed	143mph
Economy	40.4mpg
CO <sub>2</sub>	161g/km, 29%
<b>RIVALS</b>	Jaguar F-Pace, Porsche Macan



With Dynamic driving mode engaged, the Stelvio's handling is crisp





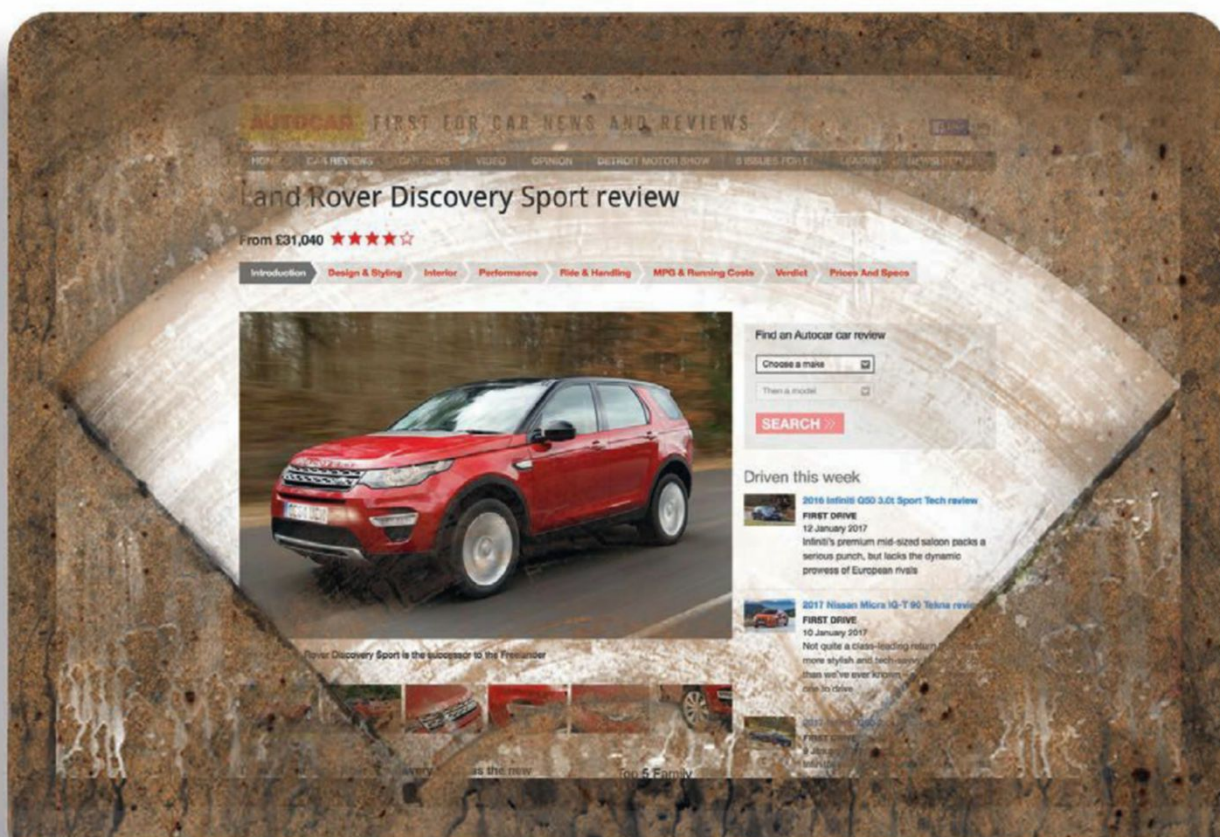
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**TESTER'S NOTE**

The new multimedia system ups the ante, with crisp graphics and logical menus. It's much better to use and has all the features you need. **VP**



TESTED WARWICKSHIRE, 23.2.17 ON SALE NOW PRICE £64,400

# RANGE ROVER SPORT V6 SUPERCHARGED

Potent supercharged V6 petrol engine offers a new entry point to the line-up

**T**he Range Rover stable needed a supercharged 3.0-litre V6 petrol engine like Hannibal Lecter needed a bit more menace. But, with an increasing trend away from diesel and towards petrol, this 335bhp motor, which undercuts the equivalent V6 diesel by £4300, may not be as surplus to requirements as it initially seems.

The engine is going into both the full-fat Range Rover and the Range Rover Sport. We're testing the latter, in which the new V6 it is only available with mid-level HSE Dynamic trim.

Other revisions to the model for 2017 include the addition of the InControl Touch Pro system, which is now in every version of the Range Rover Sport. It brings a bigger, 10in colour touchscreen and various clever sat-nav functions, including a 'commute mode' that

learns your regular routes to work and advises which one is best based on live traffic updates.

Potter about in this Range Rover Sport and the supercharged V6 delivers an appreciably quiet, smooth well of performance. The eight-speed ZF automatic gearbox blurs its shifts as well as ever, and normally at the right moment, but it can be a touch hesitant to respond if you ask for a sudden burst of acceleration.

And you may well want to do that regularly. This is a fast car and there's fun to be had in enjoying the long and predictable yet progressively more frantic build of speed. The incongruousness of having this hefty car sprint along with such willingness still impresses, although to get the best from the V6 it has to be revved quite hard, and that doesn't suit the Range Rover as well as the torque-heavy, muscular diesels and

dramatically potent V8 petrols do.

On top of that, it doesn't really offer the thrilling exhaust note that you might hope for. There's certainly none of the dramatic, characterful bellow that this same engine generates in the Jaguar F-Type; instead there's a rather harsh, slightly flat soundtrack that resonates through the cabin in a way that seems somehow at odds with the otherwise rather gentrified Range Rover Sport.

Still, the Sport's ride and handling balance remains a thing of wonder, and the interior is, as ever, a top-notch example of practical luxury.

We love the Range Rover Sport. It's a familiar beast, and yet every time we prop an elbow on the door sill, it never fails to impress anew with its sheer breadth of ability.

But this is not the one to go for. Yes, it's cheaper than the V6 diesel – which is still expected to

account for the bulk of sales – and it is also quieter, unless you stray into the higher rev ranges. But the oil-burner's hearty torque delivery is nonetheless just as satisfying and actually better suits the Range Rover Sport in the everyday mix of driving.

Even if it had a bit more character to it, this V6 would still be hard to justify given that the diesel will also be more economical and will hold its value better. Without that added sparkle and the crucial 'want one' factor that manages to seep out of every stitch and bolt in other Range Rover Sport models, including the worthy SDV6, this version feels like a niche choice in the range.

**VICKY PARROTT**

@VickyParrott

## RANGE ROVER SPORT V6 SUPERCHARGED HSE DYNAMIC

As much as we love the Range Rover Sport, this version feels like a niche choice within the line-up



Price	£64,400
Engine	V6, 2995cc, supercharged, petrol
Power	335bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	332lb ft at 3500-5000rpm
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
Kerb weight	2147kg
0-60mph	6.9sec
Top speed	130mph
Economy	26.9mpg (combined)
CO <sub>2</sub> /tax band	243g/km/37%
<b>RIVALS</b>	Audi SQ7, Porsche Cayenne



Familiar cabin gets impressive new InControl Touch Pro set-up; new V6 is quick but not loud







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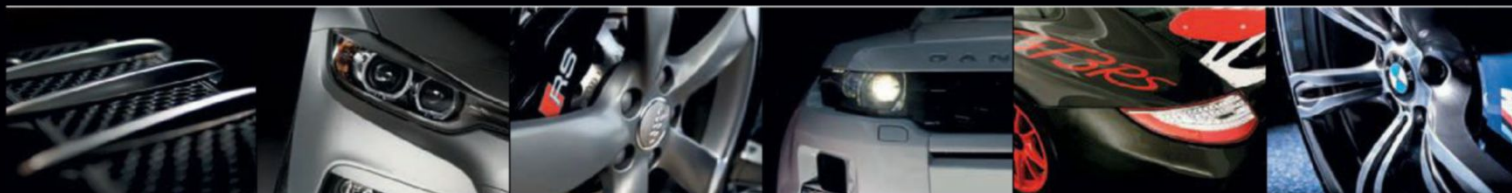
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AUDI RS3/RSQ3 » 420+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
AUDI S3 / GOLF R » 373+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
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AUDI 3.0 Bi-TDi (ALL MODELS) » 380+ BHP  
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M4/M3 3.0T » 520+ BHP  
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M5 F10/M6 (STAGE 2) » 730 BHP  
F10 520D » 240 BHP  
F10 530D » 305 BHP  
335i/135i/X6 » 370+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)  
123D » 252 BHP

316D/216D/116D » 160 BHP  
318D/218D/118D » 225 BHP  
330D E90 » 296+ BHP  
320D E90 » 215 BHP  
420i/320i/220i/120i » 275+ BHP  
435i/ F30 335i » 390 BHP  
428i/328i » 295 BHP  
535D / 335D / X5 SD » 355+ BHP  
640D/335D/535D/435D » 390 BHP  
730D » 305+ BHP  
X5 4.0D / 740D » 370 BHP  
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C400 » 400 BHP  
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997 CARRERA PDK » 368 BHP  
997 CARRERA GTS » 435 BHP  
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BOXSTER 3.4S » 336+ BHP  
CAYMAN S » 342 BHP  
MACAN 3.0D » 315 BHP  
CAYENNE GTS » 440 BHP

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MASERATI Ghibli 3.0 PETROL » 400 BHP  
MASERATI Ghibli 3.0 DIESEL » 312 BHP  
MASERATI GT/QPORT » 438 BHP  
MASERATI GT S / MC » 479+ BHP  
BENTLEY 4.0 T V8 » 690 BHP  
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TESTED 14.2.17, FRANCE ON SALE NOW PRICE £17,000 (EST. AFTER GOV'T GRANT)

# SMART FORFOUR ELECTRIC DRIVE

Distinctive four-seat city car gains electric-only propulsion



The Smart Fortwo and Forfour are expensive and quirky city cars for style-conscious metropolitan drivers. The cars themselves, and their target audience, suit a zany electric model perfectly.

Smart's new electric line-up can be charged up to twice as fast as its previous electric model and it has a slightly bigger range and more power. Previously, you could get only the two-seat Fortwo as an electric car but now, for the first time, you can get an electrified four-seat Forfour.

Although it isn't quick over a longer distance, its nippy acceleration to 30mph is a great asset around town, which is the Smart's natural habitat.

The battery adds 140kg of weight compared with the petrol model. The battery pack is sited low in the car, resulting in a lower centre of gravity, which helps improve the handling.

The steering is very light and lacks feel but it is at least precise. The Forfour also has a brilliantly tight turning circle of 8.65m, which makes manoeuvring in town a breeze.

The ride is unsettled by imperfections in the road surface, but this Forfour has firmer springs and dampers than its petrol sibling, helping to give it better body control.

The brake pedal feels a little spongy but the off-throttle regenerative braking, which uses radars to adjust the severity of braking depending on traffic around the car, is effective.

Out on the open road at faster speeds, the Smart feels a bit underpowered, the steering doesn't weight up and you get a fair bit of wind noise and road roar. At slow speeds, though, the cabin is a very serene and peaceful environment.

Inside, there's an impressive amount of tech, including a touchscreen infotainment system as standard, and the cabin generally feels premium for a small car.

With an expected asking price of £17,000 after the government grant, it is expensive, but it's a much more compelling choice than the equivalent top-spec petrol version.

It is also cheaper than the Volkswagen e-Up, Nissan Leaf and Renault Zoe. Ultimately though, those three are better electric cars than this Forfour ED because they offer bigger ranges, more space and a slightly better driving experience.

A 75-mile real-world driving range won't suit everyone, but if it works for you, then this characterful electric city car is worth considering.

**DOUG REVOLTA**  
@DougRevolta

## SMART FORFOUR ELECTRIC DRIVE

Limited range and high price but still Smart's best electric car. It could make a great green city car for some

★★★★☆

Price	£17,000 (est. after government grant)
Engine	Synchronous electric motor
Power	80bhp
Torque	118lb ft
Gearbox	Single-sp'd
Kerb weight	1200kg
Top speed	80mph
0-62mph	12.7sec
Range	96 miles
CO <sub>2</sub> /tax band	0g/km, 7%
<b>RIVALS</b>	Renault Zoe, Volkswagen e-Up



## ALFA ROMEO GIULIA 2.0 MULTIAIR SUPER

Price £31,180 On sale Now

**What's new?** It's the sole petrol choice at launch if you shy away from the 510bhp Quadrifoglio

JUST 20% OF UK buyers will opt for a petrol-engined version of the Giulia, but for those who do, the 197bhp model tested here is a fantastic choice.

This Giulia is great fun to drive quickly, even if it can't quite match the dynamic poise of a Jaguar XE. The petrol's free-revving nature and fizzy exhaust note have strong appeal and you won't miss the extra pull of the diesel alternative.

It's reasonably fast, too: 0-62mph takes 6.6sec, which is faster than a BMW 320i SE. The Giulia is comfortable inside, but there are a few cheaper materials on show and its infotainment system can be decidedly dim-witted. **DM**

★★★★☆



## AUDI A5 CABRIOLET 2.0 TFSI 252 QUATTRO S TRONIC

Price £45,630 On sale April

**What's new?** Faster, lighter and more efficient drop-top promises sumptuous open-air cruising

THE TOP PRIORITY for buyers of convertibles isn't necessarily driving dynamics. If they wanted those, they would buy the stiffer and technically superior fixed-roof models. No, convertibles such as this all-new Audi A5 Cabriolet should be fun. So is it?

Yes and no. This 2.0-litre petrol isn't the most engaging of engines, with a rather insipid note under hard acceleration, but it's effective, with a decent power band.

The handling is composed, but for cornering thrills, choose a BMW 430i. Yet the A5 is supremely comfortable, even with the roof down, and wafts you around with a je ne sais quoi. If you desire a carefree and relaxing drive in the sun, then, yes, it is fun. **JH**

★★★★☆



Touchscreen infotainment system is part of the standard roster of kit

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autocar.co.uk



# ROAD TEST No 5309

# KIA RIO

Kia sends its fourth-gen supermini out to win a top-10 European sales ranking

**MODEL TESTED 1.0 T-GDI 3 ECO**

Price £16,295 • Power 99bhp • Torque 127lb ft • 0-60mph 10.0sec • 30-70mph in fourth 16.8sec  
• Fuel economy 39.7mpg • CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 102g/km • 70-0mph 54.0m





**T**he Kia Rio is now one of the biggest-selling global models of the world's third-largest car-making group. Last year, at the tail end of its life cycle, the outgoing version of the Rio registered sales of just under 450,000 units.

However, the car has a much greater profile elsewhere in the world than it has here in Europe, where, despite consistent sales growth, it has yet to break into the top 10 best-selling cars in the supermini class.

You don't come by a top-10 place in the European supermini sales charts easily, of course. In order to earn

one, the Rio needs to displace a more established European-built small cars, such as the Seat Ibiza, Citroën C3, Fiat Punto or Skoda Fabia (it already sells better than the Mazda 2, Honda Jazz and Nissan Micra). With that in mind, slowly but surely over the past couple of revisions and not at all by coincidence, the Rio has begun to feel more and more like a small car tailored to European tastes – and this latest version develops that trend.

Now in its fourth model generation, this new Rio is marginally longer and more squat than the outgoing one, and was designed by a team at Kia's design centre in Germany charged with the idea of making it look more cleanly and sharply cut, and more smoothly surfaced, than it used to.

Under the bonnet, the car gets a new, very Europe-focused downsized 1.0-litre turbocharged three-pot petrol engine. The unit promises to bring the Rio bang up to date and in line with the likes of the Fabia, Ford Fiesta and Renault Clio on driveability, economy and emissions. Inside the cabin there's a new ergonomic approach to the fascia design and a focus on new connectivity features. And, perhaps most interesting of all, there's even a new focus on dynamic sophistication for the Rio. Kia has trumpeted the efforts of its chassis engineers in introducing more agile handling, crisper steering, greater driver appeal and a more compliant ride.

We ran the road test ruler over the car, fitted with its new 99bhp 1.0-litre T-GDi turbo triple engine, to find out if that top-10 sales rank beckons.

## DESIGN AND ENGINEERING



The Rio has been stretched by 10mm in the wheelbase and by 15mm in overall length. You might not imagine you'd notice that kind of difference, but combine it with a longer bonnet and front overhang, a shorter rear overhang, a roof that has been lowered by 5mm and a C-pillar that's much slimmer and more upright than it was, and it begins to explain why the new car appears so markedly changed when compared with the old model.

The Rio not only has a better stance but also a much more convincing air of visual sophistication and maturity about it than the cutsie-looking, big-featured third-generation car. It may be a touch less characterful, but it certainly looks serious about its assault on Europe. It also looks more like a car deserving of having a fairly large amount of money spent on it. ➔



Outgoing Rio was one of Kia's best sellers

## WE LIKE

Flexible, smooth engine • Comfortable ride • Practical cabin • More sophisticated looks

## WE DON'T LIKE

Handling lacks agility, feel and verve • It's not cheap • Trim levels make it hard to spec just right



• Headlights are standard halogen projectors with a cornering function built in. New, bracket-shaped daytime running lights are illuminated by LEDs.



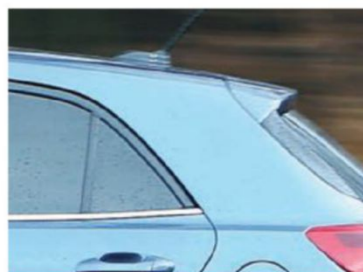
• 'Tiger-nose' grille is longer and thinner than it was on the last Rio. It helps to emphasise the car's width and contributes to a more refined and sophisticated overall look.



• The mirrors have moved from the door panel upwards to the corner of the window. Kia says the move improves front three-quarter visibility. Repeater indicators are via LEDs.



• Wheel sizes are 15in at the entry level, through to 17s at the upper end, but only on First Edition models in the latter case. Entry-level Rios have steel wheels; pictured are the upper-mid 16in alloys.



• A more upright, slimmer C-pillar is one of the key visual distinguishing features of the new Rio versus the old one. It should make for better rear visibility and a less gloomy second row.



• This is the badge that marks out one of Kia's new three-cylinder turbocharged petrol engines, which come in 99bhp and 118bhp tunes, the former emitting just 102g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>.



• Kia has mounted the reversing camera in the boot handle, but it's still a carbuncle on the Rio's behind. Details like this are where others do it better.



• Kia says the parking sensors may not match some body colours perfectly. This is surely a quality issue – which Kia is supposed to be good at these days.





● Luxury car makers tend to find room on the steering wheel for its heater switch; by putting it on the centre console, Kia saves itself some engineering expense.



● Excellent USB socket access is a Kia trademark. Ditto the 12V socket under the left-hand panel. Standard Bluetooth makes aux-in almost redundant.



● There's no faulting the climate controls: separate knobs for temp and blower, a proper button for air flow direction and an 'off' switch. Elementary but correct.



## MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM



While it isn't integrated into the dashboard with any particular sympathy, Kia's multimedia set-up mirrors the straightforward overall appeal of the Rio's interior.

The menu system is a workmanlike effort that eschews a flashy interface in favour of easily understood icons. There are certainly more intuitive alternatives offered by its rivals, but the Kia is unlikely to provoke many exasperated moments – even among the uninitiated. Certainly, though, it is best sampled in the upper-mid-level 3 trim tested, where you get a 7in

touchscreen and all the trimmings, including TomTom-powered satellite navigation, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto thrown in as standard. Away from the range-topper, the display shrinks to 5in, and while Bluetooth and a DAB tuner remain standard, you can't have the nav.

The inability to upgrade particular bits of kit from within a set trim level is a familiar feature to Kias, and to an extent it simplifies the process of choosing and specifying a car – but it does also slightly limit its offerings compared to the competition.





Under its skin, the Rio remains a conventionally constructed supermini with a steel body, a front-mounted engine, an in-line gearbox, driven front wheels, a MacPherson strut front suspension and a torsion beam at the rear.

The car's structure has been stiffened as well as enlarged and it now consists of 51% high-strength steel (up from 33% in the last version). Kia claims this delivers better refinement and handling and improved crash performance (although no crash test results have yet been published by Euro NCAP). It seems to make for no significant weight saving, given that our upper-mid-spec test car's kerb weight was claimed at 1228kg. That figure would have been pretty typical of an equivalent 1.25 or 1.4-litre naturally aspirated petrol version of the previous-generation Rio.

There are four petrol engines and two diesels to choose from. The entry-level 1.25-litre petrol produces 83bhp while the larger 1.4 makes 98bhp, and plumping for the latter gets you six speeds in your manual gearbox instead of five. Further up the engine range come the new 99bhp and 118bhp Kappa-branded 1.0-litre T-GDi turbo petrols, both of which make 127lb ft, which is available from just 1500rpm. And

since there's a 98bhp normally aspirated petrol there for direct comparison, it's easy to quantify what that accessible pulling power is worth to the 1.0-litre T-GDi turbo Rio in terms of acceleration: it's the 1.5sec difference between a claimed 10.7sec and 12.2sec to 62mph.

If you prefer a diesel engine under the bonnet, the choice is from two tunes of the same 1.4-litre CRDi four-cylinder unit, producing either 76bhp or 89bhp and emitting as little as 88g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## INTERIOR

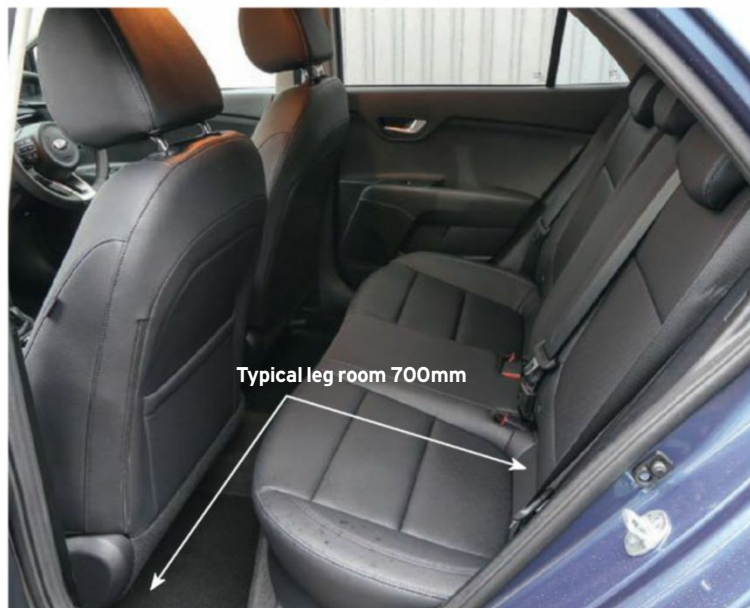


Functional and ergonomically sound is how we characterised the last Rio's cabin, and neither description is misplaced in its replacement. Kia measures itself chiefly against Volkswagen, and it's a yardstick that manifests in sensible placement of most of the car's switchgear. The temperature and blower are controlled by knobs, as they should be, with their own digital readout (ditto), and the USB socket, which glows invitingly, is sited front and centre, while a smattering of other ancillary functions migrate to buttons on the centre console.

Kia's improved build quality provided a pleasant surprise in the last generation, but its failure to →



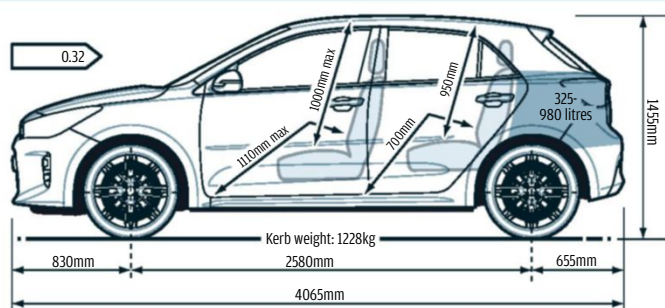
● There's a familiar aroma of plastic in the Rio's cabin and a familiar feeling of spaciousness, both stock Kia traits. Expect to find no fault with the driving position.



Typical leg room 700mm

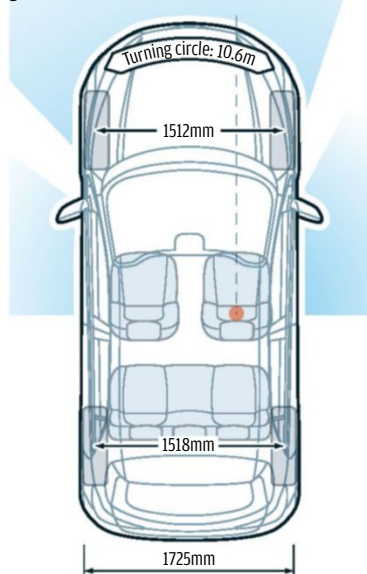
● Folding rear bench is a conventional affair, although its flatness ensures that three abreast is an easy prospect. Transmission tunnel is helpfully small, too.

## HOW BIG IS IT?



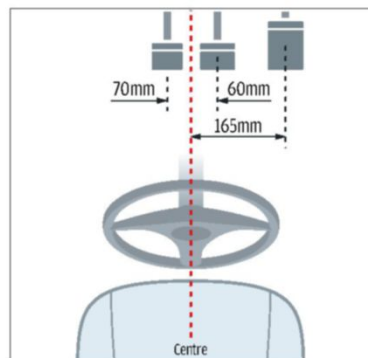
## VISIBILITY

Nothing untoward to report. Rear parking sensors are complemented by a rear-view camera on the 3 trim grade tested.



## HEADLIGHTS

Bi-function headlights with a cornering facility are standard across the range and decent enough. LED headlights are not yet an option.



## WHEEL AND PEDAL ALIGNMENT

Broad spacing is typical of Kia's right-sized philosophy. There's plenty of space on the left-hand side to dock your clutch foot, too.



● Modest boot is the most prominent reminder that you're buying a rival to a Fiesta rather than a Focus. Decent, then, but don't expect a family sized weekly shop to fit.



◀ move the game significantly on now generates pause for thought. The cabin materials feel much like the same medley of plastics that graced the previous car, so while they're fine to look at and touch, and apparently well secured, they are not a match for the best of the European competition.

The Rio's cabin design is correspondingly unremarkable. Kia is hardly alone in making its touchscreen infotainment system look a bit like an afterthought, but its more successful competitors tend to at least set it against a striking swoop of dashboard. The Rio, though, declines the opportunity to try to be aesthetically interesting in its fascia layout, choosing instead the sort of conservative look that will put off as many supermini buyers as it attracts.

Nevertheless, Kia's by-the-numbers approach pays dividends in spaciousness. The last Rio was a large car for its class, and its replacement makes even more of the advantage. Its extended wheelbase only underlines the idea that this is a small hatchback built to accommodate adults in the rear. The lower roofline

has not significantly impinged on head room, and the largely flat bench will cater for three abreast at a push. The boot is also adequately large for a class that tends to underwhelm in the stuff-swallowing department. Naturally the load bay's seats-up length is not hugely plentiful at 700mm, but its claimed 325-litre capacity – a 13% increase on that which went before – is certainly not to be sniffed at. Much like the hard work that has gone into the marginal gains everywhere else.

## PERFORMANCE

★★★★☆

The introduction of Kia's latest three-cylinder 1.0-litre turbocharged petrol engine is welcome. The outgoing Rio suffered for its lack of a decent downsized motor, and in the ways likely to matter to most buyers, this new model prospers where previous incumbents floundered. Principally this is because it fulfils the modern three-pot brief of being relatively quiet, tractable from low revs and parsimonious enough to compete with a small diesel's running costs.

With modest expectations applied, being 'fast enough' is much the same as being 'good enough'. Two-up, the Rio reached 60mph from rest in 10.0sec – almost a second and a half quicker than its 1.4-litre-engined predecessor we figured five years ago and marginally quicker than even the 1.5-litre Mazda 2 tested in 2015.

It helps that only one gear change is required to get there, with the second of this Rio's five very long ratios being good for the national speed limit. Third gear is sufficiently drawn out to hit 100mph within the one-mile mark of Millbrook's straight. Getting there, it must be said, is a mite less than compelling: credibly industrious the three-pot may well be, but the upper reaches of its delivery are muted compared with the thrummy excitableness of Ford's 1.0-litre Ecoboost triple. So benign is the Kia's engine above 3000rpm, in fact, that it's quite possible to travel substantial distances in a lower gear, oblivious to any need for an efficiency-aiding upshift.

The slightly high 71dB recorded at 70mph is mostly a component of

tyre noise on Millbrook's unforgiving concrete; on asphalt the Rio is agreeably hushed. We'd still favour a sixth gear, though; the three-pot needs to turn briskly at 80mph, and an additional cog on the slightly gummy-feeling manual shifter would give you the perfect ratio for cruising on the motorway.

## RIDE AND HANDLING

★★★★☆

Much like the engine under its bonnet, the previous Rio's handling was some way short of compelling, much like the engine under its bonnet. This would be less of a problem if the car didn't necessarily rub shoulders with some standout supermini specimens, but this Kia's Ford Fiesta, Mini Cooper and Mazda 2 rivals provide concrete evidence of the sporty and engaging dynamic compromise that can be successfully struck in a supermini.

But the latest Rio, although quite competent, provides no additional evidence that Kia's engineers are any closer to reproducing such a savvy state of chassis tune. Instead,

## TRACK NOTES

At the limit of grip, the Rio does inevitably suffer for the softness of its suspension. Placed under the microscope of the endless gradient changes of the Alpine Hill Route at Millbrook, the car occasionally feels a mite under-damped, either failing to settle properly after crests or else not hunkering down in the flat-bodied way that one of its more purposeful rivals might.

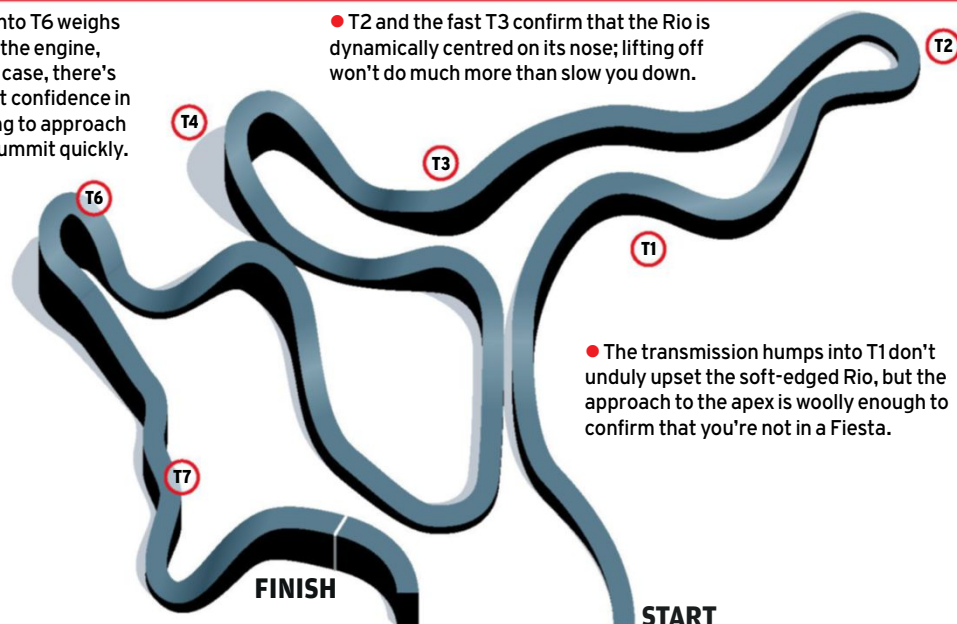
Off-camber corners also tend to unsettle the slightly blunt-feeling front end, which lacks both the precision and purchase generated by some (a facet hardly helped by the steering's failure to find any weight at speed).

There is also a tendency for the ABS to fire a little earlier than is realistically required. Nevertheless, front-drive predictability and fail-safe composure are present in ample quantity and, ultimately, they are the benchmarks for any cooking hatchback.

● Ascent into T6 weighs heavily on the engine, but, in any case, there's insufficient confidence in the steering to approach the blind summit quickly.

● T2 and the fast T3 confirm that the Rio is dynamically centred on its nose; lifting off won't do much more than slow you down.

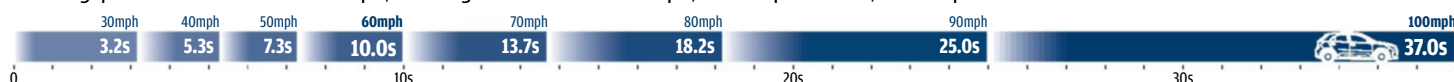
● The transmission humps into T1 don't unduly upset the soft-edged Rio, but the approach to the apex is woolly enough to confirm that you're not in a Fiesta.



## ACCELERATION

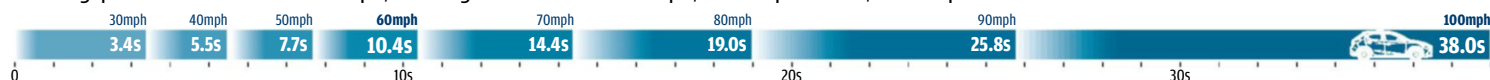
### Kia Rio 1.0 T-GDI 3 Eco (8deg C, damp)

Standing quarter mile 17.7sec at 79.0mph, standing km 32.7sec at 96.8mph, 30-70mph 10.5sec, 30-70mph in fourth 16.8sec



### Mazda 2 1.5 90 SE-L Nav (2015) (15deg C, dry)

Standing quarter mile 18.0sec at 78.1mph, standing km 33.0sec at 96.5mph, 30-70mph 11.0sec, 30-70mph in fourth 23.3sec

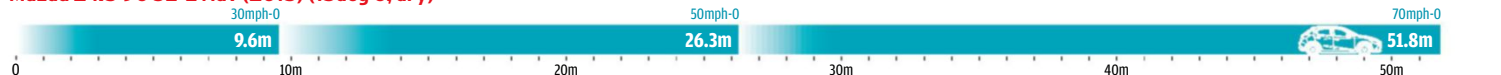


## BRAKING 60-0mph: 3.2sec

### Kia Rio 1.0 T-GDI 3 Eco (8deg C, damp)



### Mazda 2 1.5 90 SE-L Nav (2015) (15deg C, dry)





“ Third gear is sufficiently drawn out to hit 100mph within a mile ”



they have persisted with a comfort-biased approach and produced a car that is easy to use, inoffensive and ultimately not very memorable.

The Rio's soft-edged attitude to ride quality, bolstered by plenty of tyre sidewall, results in the sort of genial progress that successfully deals with all but the nastiest intrusions. The wheel control lacks the light-footed élan that some rivals benefit from having plumbed into their suspension travel, yet, and on motorway journeys in particular, it's hard to find fault with the deliberate care Kia has taken in solemnly causing you no discomfort.

The obvious drawback is that any attempt to break out of the suspension's spongy morass is at once very difficult and singularly unrewarding. Where its rivals seek to lift a driver's mood via the levity that comes with the instant handling agility of a compact wheelbase, the Rio prefers an unruffled sort of plod that makes it seem larger and heavier than it actually is.

The mismatched weighting of the control surfaces don't help: the light steering is too keen to promote muscle atrophy in your right arm, while muscle growth is promoted in the left arm working the gear lever. The clutch pedal is a shade heavier than it ought to be, too, and the result is a mild unevenness to the driving experience. It's a minor gripe, but one that would nevertheless be noted by any owner of a Volkswagen Polo or Skoda Fabia.

#### BUYING AND OWNING

★★★★☆

Rio prices start from £11,995 for the entry-level petrol, rising north of £17,000 for the range-topping petrol and diesels – prices that won't instantly scream 'bargain' at anyone: you can get a Vauxhall Corsa, Citroën C3 and others for less than £11k.

Some very uncompetitive-looking 'PCP' finance deals won't exactly help the car fly off the forecourts, either. According to Kia's own finance calculator, the Rio we tested would cost 40% more a month, over a typical term, than an equivalent Skoda Fabia.

There are four trim levels at launch (1, 2, 3 and Final Edition), and only the option of metallic or mica paint. Our upper-level '3'-spec test car had a generous kit level, but '2' trim is likely to be more popular – and gets 15in alloy wheels, heated door mirrors, electric windows all round, cruise control, rear parking sensors and six-speaker audio with a 5in colour infotainment system with DAB radio.

You do have to move up to the pricier '3'-spec to get smartphone mirroring, though; you can't simply upgrade the infotainment on its own. That's not a cheap upgrade, costing the thick end of £2000.

Kia claims the Rio is the first car in its class to offer autonomous emergency braking with pedestrian detection. That may be true, but it's only by a matter of weeks, since the new Nissan Micra will offer it too. →



● The Rio's soft suspension set-up is commendably comfortable, particularly at a cruise, but there's little to no enjoyment to be had when pressing on in corners.



## DATA LOG

### KIA RIO 1.0 T-GDI 3 ECO

On-the-road price	£16,295
Price as tested	£16,680
Value after 3yrs/36k miles	£6250
Contract hire pcm	£208.54
Cost per mile	39.8p
Insurance/typical quote	8/£367

### EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

16in alloy wheels	■
Cornering lights	■
7in touchscreen infotainment with sat-nav, DAB, USB and aux-in inputs, reversing camera, Bluetooth, Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and Kia Connected Services	■
Cloth upholstery	■
Front, side and curtain airbags	■
Autonomous emergency braking and lane departure warning	■
Alarm and immobiliser	■
Privacy glass	■
<b>Metallic paint, Smokey Blue</b>	<b>£485</b>
Options in <b>bold</b> fitted to test car	
■ = Standard	
na = not available	

### RANGE AT A GLANCE

ENGINES	POWER	FROM
1.25i	83bhp	£11,995
1.4 CRDi 1	76bhp	£13,495
1.4 2	98bhp	£14,245
1.0 T-GDi 2	99bhp	£14,545
1.4 CRDi 3	89bhp	£17,245
1.0 T-GDi First	118bhp	£17,445

### TRANSMISSIONS

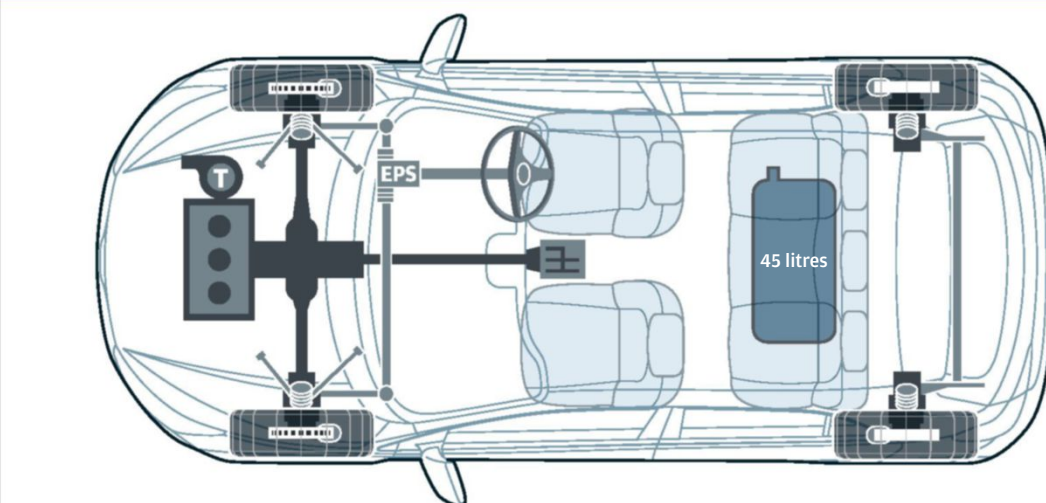
5-spd manual	■
(1.4, 1.4 CRDi and 1.0 T-GDi First Edition get 6-spd manual as standard)	
4-spd automatic	£750
(1.4 petrol only)	

### ECONOMY

<b>TEST MPG</b>	<b>Track</b>	19.7mpg
	<b>Touring</b>	50.6mpg
	<b>Average</b>	39.7mpg
<b>CLAIMED</b>	<b>Urban</b>	54.3mpg
	<b>Extra-urban</b>	68.9mpg
	<b>Combined</b>	62.8mpg
	<b>Tank size</b>	45 litres
	<b>Test range</b>	393 miles

### ACCELERATION

MPH	TIME (sec)
0-30	3.2
0-40	5.3
0-50	7.3
0-60	10.0
0-70	13.7
0-80	18.2
0-90	25.0
0-100	37.0
0-110	-
0-120	-
0-130	-
0-140	-
0-150	-
0-160	-



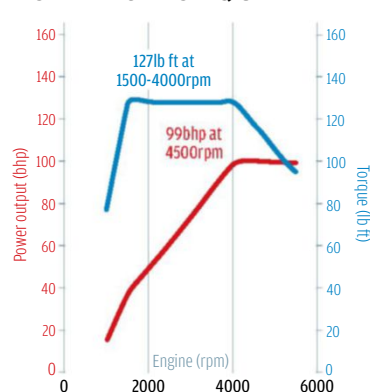
### TECHNICAL LAYOUT

This latest generation of Rio continues with a typical supermini layout: engines are installed transversely up front and drive the front wheels through a choice of gearboxes mounted in line with the crankshaft via unequal-length half-shafts. The suspension is MacPherson struts up front and a coupled torsion beam at the rear; steering is via electromechanical assistance.

### ENGINE

<b>Installation</b>	Front, transverse, front-wheel drive
<b>Type</b>	3 cys in line, 998cc, turbocharged, petrol
<b>Made of</b>	Aluminium block and head
<b>Bore/stroke</b>	71.0/78.8mm
<b>Compression ratio</b>	10:1
<b>Valve gear</b>	4 per cyl
<b>Power</b>	99bhp at 4500rpm
<b>Torque</b>	127lb ft at 1000-4000rpm
<b>Red line</b>	6500rpm
<b>Power to weight</b>	81bhp per tonne
<b>Torque to weight</b>	103lb ft per tonne
<b>Specific output</b>	99bhp per litre

### POWER & TORQUE



### CHASSIS & BODY

<b>Construction</b>	Steel monocoque
<b>Weight/as tested</b>	1228kg/na
<b>Drag coefficient</b>	0.32
<b>Wheels</b>	7.0x16in
<b>Tyres</b>	195/55 R16, Michelin Energy Saver
<b>Spare</b>	Mobility kit

### TRANSMISSION

<b>Type</b>	5-spd manual
<b>Ratios/mph per 1000rpm</b>	1st 3.61/5.3 2nd 1.95/9.7 3rd 1.20/15.8
<b>4th</b>	0.89/21.3 5th 0.70/27.1
<b>Final drive ratio</b>	3.83:1

### SUSPENSION

<b>Front</b>	MacPherson struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar
<b>Rear</b>	Torsion beam, coil springs

### STEERING

<b>Type</b>	Electromechanical, rack and pinion
<b>Turns lock to lock</b>	2.8
<b>Turning circle</b>	10.6m

### BRAKES

<b>Front</b>	280mm ventilated discs
<b>Rear</b>	262mm solid discs
<b>Anti-lock</b>	Standard, with brake assist

### CABIN NOISE

<b>Idle</b>	41dB
<b>Max rpm in 3rd gear</b>	78dB
<b>30mph</b>	66dB
<b>50mph</b>	68dB
<b>70mph</b>	71dB

### SAFETY

<b>ABS, EBD, BAS, CBC, ESC, VSM, AEB, LDWS</b>	
<b>Euro NCAP crash rating</b>	Not tested

### EMISSIONS & TAX

<b>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions</b>	102g/km
<b>Tax at 20/40% pcm</b>	£52/103

### ACCELERATION IN GEAR

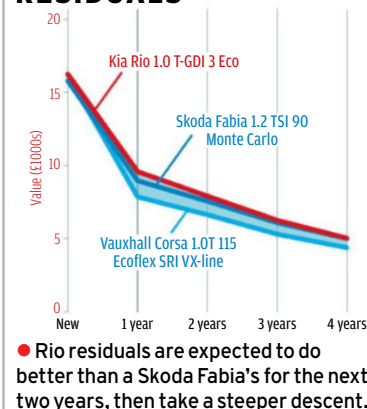
MPH	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
20-40	3.3	5.5	-	-
30-50	3.8	5.5	7.7	12.0
40-60	4.8	5.9	8.1	11.2
50-70	-	6.3	9.1	12.3
60-80	-	8.1	10.3	14.8
70-90	-	11.7	12.0	19.3
80-100	-	18.9	17.1	-
90-110	-	-	-	-
100-120	-	-	-	-
110-130	-	-	-	-
120-140	-	-	-	-
130-150	-	-	-	-
140-160	-	-	-	-

### MAX SPEEDS IN GEAR

<b>34mph</b>	<b>103mph</b>	<b>115mph*</b>
6500rpm	6500rpm	4241rpm
1	3	5
2	4	
<b>63mph</b>	<b>115mph</b>	
6500rpm	5392rpm	
		*claimed

RPM in 5th at 70/80mph = 2581/2950

### RESIDUALS



THE SMALL PRINT Power-to-weight and torque-to-weight figures are calculated using manufacturer's claimed kerb weight. © 2017, Haymarket Media Group Ltd. Test results may not be reproduced without editor's written permission. For information on the Rio, contact Kia UK Customer Services, Walton Green, Walton-on-Thames KT12 1FJ (0333 202 2990, [kia.com/uk](http://kia.com/uk)). Cost-per-mile figures calculated over three years/36,000 miles, including depreciation and maintenance but not insurance; Lex Autolease (0800 389 3690). Insurance quote covers 35-year-old professional male with clean licence and full no-claims bonus living in Swindon; quote from Liverpool Victoria (0800 066 5161, [lv.com](http://lv.com)). Contract hire figure based on a three-year lease/36,000-mile contract including maintenance; Wessex Fleet Solutions (01722 322888).

**AUTOCAR ROAD TEST No 5309**

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VERDICT

## KIA RIO

More comfortable and more grown-up but not much more fun



**T**he new Kia Rio, one imagines, must have fulfilled its maker's intentions for it rather neatly. It's an even more practical, parsimonious and mature prospect than the car it replaces, and you could hardly ask for a more resolutely worthy, servile or grown-up supermini.

Yet for all its functional virtue, the Rio is made to look one-dimensional by the opposition. And that's because while it succeeds in the narrowest of furrows, the Ford Fiesta, Mini hatch and Mazda 2 all seek to go that extra mile in one way or another, while in every way doing so in a more well-rounded and fulfilling manner.

Consequently, while none of those rivals can claim to accommodate a rear passenger quite as easily, all of them drive in a way better suited to indulging the enjoyment of their owner. For us, unexpected driver engagement is still what best distinguishes a small, affordable car – and this Kia, although undoubtedly improved, still doesn't offer enough of it to qualify as a true great.

### TESTERS' NOTES



**MATT SAUNDERS**  
Rare to find such a big fuel tank in a car as small as this: 45 litres, up from 43. That gives the cheaper diesel the potential for 700 miles to a tank if it hits its claimed economy mark.



**NIC CACKETT**  
No one has a deeper love of heated steering wheels than me, but Kia perhaps needs to rethink the grade of its covering. After a while there was a slightly sweaty pong about the cabin.

### SPEC ADVICE

It's a bit of an own goal that you can't have Apple CarPlay without also paying for navigation. Still, have a 1.0-litre T-GDi in 3 trim with metallic paint, exactly like our test car.

### JOBS FOR THE FACELIFT

- Another gear ratio for the lesser-powered 1.0-litre variant.
- A steering tune that panders to our needs away from a multi-storey car park.
- Some bright colours, perhaps? This car's predecessor did a better job of standing out from the crowd.

### ROAD TEST RIVALS



**FORD FIESTA 1.0T ECOBOOST TITANIUM 5DR**  
**£16,395**

About to be replaced but top of the pile nevertheless. Handling sublime; packaging less so.



**MINI COOPER 5DR**  
**£16,375**

Breathing down the Ford's neck dynamically and miles ahead of it inside. This petrol Cooper is the pick of entire Mini line-up.



**MAZDA 2 1.5 90 SPORT NAV**  
**£15,595**

Suffers for the lack of a modern three-pot, but the chassis offers a superb compromise of comfort and crisp control.



**VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.2 TSI 90 BEATS 5DR**  
**£15,990**

Slightly more mature than it needs to be, but that doesn't stop it being a quality item.



**RENAULT CLIO TCE 90 DYNAMIQUE S NAV**  
**£16,265**

Further down the list than its heritage suggests it ought to be, but still a cut above the Rio.



VERDICTS ON EVERY NEW CAR, P82









# Strife begins at £40k

The rules on road tax change on 1 April and cars costing more than £40k will be penalised. Nic Cackett chooses four cars that can offer big thrills without lining the taxman's pocket

PHOTOGRAPHY STAN PAPIOR





BMW i3 feels less at home here than in urban environments

**L**et's talk about £40k. This significant but cannily less than exorbitant amount of money is about to become a crucial figure in the financial minefield of new car buying. Why? Because that's the apparently arbitrary sum the government has decreed will mark the boundary between those paying a new £140 standard rate of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED, or road tax between friends) and those paying an additional supplement of £310 for years two to six of ownership.

Years two to six? Indeed, because for the first year of ownership, the amount you'll pay in VED will be linked to the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of your new car. However, the CO<sub>2</sub> thresholds that determine what you pay have been dramatically revised compared to those of the present system. At the moment, no money at all is levied from those buying a car that emits less than 130g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>. From 1 April, the meaningful rate (£100) starts at just 76g/km and extends to £2000 for a car that breaches 255g/km – getting on for double the current M band for the heaviest polluters.

Are you still with me? Good.

For some new car buyers, this new system will radically change the amount they pay. Let's take the new

BMW 520d xDrive M Sport saloon for example: under the present system, you'd pay no tax on it in the first year and only £110 annually thereafter. From 1 April, however, the BMW will command a first year VED payment of £160 then, for each of the ensuing five years, you'll pay £450. That's only £50 per year shy of the annual amount currently being coughed up by the owner of a McLaren 570S.

Fair? That's a sticky one. The powers that be would argue, not unjustifiably, that the current system, based squarely on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, has chiefly benefited those financially capable of buying increasingly efficient new cars while penalising those stuck in older models, which tend to emit more pollution and are therefore subjected to more tax.

By introducing a supplementary rate based on purchasing power, it can claim to be taxing only those who can afford it. Naturally, the underlying reason for the change to VED rates is less about fairness and more about ensuring the Treasury's revenue stream.

Why has the threshold been set at £40k? Good question. The government hasn't revealed the reasoning behind its headline number, but it's probably no coincidence that the vast majority of models that make up the UK's top 10 best-sellers slide comfortably →

#### WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH THE £1060 TAX SAVING?

##### Peugeot 406 Coupé



£1060: that could be how much you save in VED over three years if you buy your dream car now rather than wait.

Let's say, for example, that you have your eye on a £45k BMW M2 Coupé with a manual 'box. Get it registered before next month and three years of VED will cost you £1040, but register the same M2 in April and you'll pay £2100 over three years: £1200 in year one followed by two years of £450.

So what could you do with your spare £1060? Buy a cheap, fun second car, of course. I'd go for a Peugeot 406 Coupé: wonderful Italian design, a tuneful V6 petrol engine and a brilliant chassis. **MS**



#### NEW VED SYSTEM FOR CARS REGISTERED ON OR AFTER 1 APRIL 2017

Emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> g/km)	First-year rate	Standard rate*
0	£0	£0
1-50	£10	£140
51-75	£25	£140
76-90	£100	£140
91-100	£120	£140
101-110	£140	£140
111-130	£160	£140
131-150	£200	£140
151-170	£500	£140
171-190	£800	£140
191-225	£1200	£140
226-255	£1700	£140
Over 255	£2000	£140

\* Cars with a list price of over £40,000 are liable for a £310 supplement for five years

#### S3 Saloon feels surefooted and covers ground fast





“  
The BMW i3's real attraction is the  
sophisticated and inspired packaging  
”



**WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH  
THE £1060 TAX SAVING?**

**BMW 5 Series E39**



Long gone are the days when £1000 would buy you the twilight years of a two-decade-old hot

hatch. Now you're far better off going 'big' and hoovering up the kind of petrol-burning V8 that no one builds any more. There's plenty of high-mile examples but, personally, I'd go for an E39-era BMW 5-Series, most likely in its 3.5-litre 535i format. Having said that, the real steal is the 4.4-litre motor in the 540i – tougher to find but good for driving to the moon and back. **NC**



All four S3 wheels  
can take drive;  
tyres are low profile

Exquisite cabin  
awaits S3 occupants  
and is a big draw





← under it. Nor does it seem entirely serendipitous that Porsche's line-up starts at that price.

Or at least it almost does. In fact, you can have an entry-level 295bhp Cayman with a manual gearbox for £39,878, but here we arrive at the rub: because the supplementary rate is charged on the list price with cost options attached, even the lightest smattering of chargeable ticks (for essentials like metallic paint and the locking rear diff with PASM) will have you forking out an additional £310 on top of your £140 standard rate in years two to six.

In some cases, it is a spectacularly fine line. You can have a BMW 330d xDrive Luxury saloon, but you can't have the Touring model. You can have a Land Rover Discovery Sport HSE 2.0-litre TD4 automatic, but only in Fuji white. You can have an Audi TTS with a manual 'box and everything as standard you'd really need, except the rear parking sensors required to stop you reversing into concrete bollards.

Of course, that's right now.

Manufacturers' prices fluctuate marginally all the time and, come April, it's hardly inconceivable that some may think it in their interest to make some popular models sneak under the magic £40k threshold.

Until then, there are two courses of action. One – and car companies are certainly anticipating this – is to buy this month and (in some cases) save yourself some significant money. Bought in March, the new Porsche 911 GTS will cost £650 in VED in the first year and £295 annually from then on. Register it in April and it'll be £1200 followed by £450 for the ensuing half a decade.

Your second course of action is to wait. If your fantasy driveway filler costs less than £40k already, you should consider this. The most grin-worthy example has to be the

#### WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH THE £1060 TAX SAVING?

##### Austin Metro



I'd not have written this until the start of this year, but I now know I'd buy the best early Austin Metro I could find (for less than £1060, I hope) and spend the balance rejuvenating it. I saw a really nice Metro HLE at Brooklands on new year's day and was struck by (a) how much rarer it was than the Minis that abounded, and (b) how good it looked. I reckon it'd still drive well, too. Imagine a soft-riding, amazingly spacious (for its size) baby hatch – with Mini steering and very decent comfort – and you've got the Metro. The day is coming when these will be sought after, and it's not so far away. **SC**



Cackett (on left) discusses fun, sub-£40k cars

V8-powered Ford Mustang. Right now you'll pay £1120 in the first year and £515 annually thereafter. As of 1 April, you'll pay £2000 followed by £140 per year. The latter is the same a Toyota Prius owner will be paying.

Granted, you'll be stung for that £880 rise in the first year, but so significant is the annual saving that you'll have recouped it in a little over two years of ownership – and, in that time, you get to cruise about in a proper, right-hand-drive, rear-driven, manually geared, unapologetically large muscle car.

No, it doesn't do 40mpg. Or even 30mpg. On the A303 for three hours, it managed 26mpg in our hands. But who's to complain when the gallons gargle away so eloquently?

The West Country's main artery might actually be the perfect UK road for the Mustang. The road's weird, capricious meander periodically evokes the sweeping scale of the interstate. Drive a 410bhp European horizon-chaser along it and it'll repeatedly strain against the 60mph leash. Ford's funship, though, settles into an unworried groove, gently bubbling atop its suspension travel as it barrels forward.

Pushing the pedals and pulling at the cue-ball gearlever is portentous work. The steering is as dull as a 9lb sledgehammer. The car doesn't even seem fast. The 5.0-litre V8 works like the bellows of a great forge: inhaling and exhaling, sucking and squeezing and banging and blowing in book-chapter-long ratios. There's no neck snap as you push on past caravans and Polish lorries, only a weightless sort of headiness as your barrel tumbles over the falls. Cast an eye →



No point having a V8 Mustang unless you do this now and then



“  
The Audi S3's turbocharged four-pot is as forthright as a Pete Sampras serve  
”



#### WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH THE £1060 TAX SAVING?

##### 1989 BMW 735i



I saw one of these online.

Okay, so it's not got an MOT and the bloke wants £1450, but if you turned up with £1060 in used notes, I reckon he'd struggle to turn you down. And what a machine you'd be getting. BMW's best non-M straight six, the most entertaining big BMW there has been and goodies galore. But the killer is that it has a manual gearbox and a factory-fitted limited-slip differential. In the wet, it would be completely hilarious.

So, to recap: a huge BMW luxury limo and a weapons-grade sideways machine, all in one and for the price of a 10-year-old Nissan Micra. **AF**



Ford's cabin is okay but not a reason in itself to buy the car



Mustang's brakes are up to the job



◀ downward at this point, though, to the green glow of your 'ground speed' and you'll find yourself thundering incredulously toward a magistrate's extreme displeasure.

It's a tongue-out great shaggy mongrel of a car, then; not for everyone and not precisely perfect, either. But it's the quintessential antidote to driving torpor and, even with £2k worth of optional extras, costs just £37,925.

Alternatively, you could funnel the money in the Continent's direction and buy Germany's idea of a four-seat hot rod. Handing nearly £40k to Audi is as unimaginative as betting on a fixed fight, but the returns are similarly guaranteed: where the Mustang feels fit inside for driving you to the shops two towns over, the S3 saloon has the sort of cabin you'd hope to be sealed in should you find yourself blasting off to Mars.

Truth be told, we've brought the car to Exmoor as a stand-in for the new Volkswagen Golf R, the model with which it shares a powertain. However, that doesn't prevent Audi's Q-car saloon from working its own peculiar charm.

Naturally, with quattro-branded all-wheel drive and a 306bhp 2.0-litre engine, it's fast. Fast in precisely the way the Ford isn't. Irrevocably fast. It is like this because the turbocharged

four-pot, although sounding disappointingly distant after a V8's throb, is as immediate and as forthright as a Pete Sampras serve. It zings. And because it is wedded to the S tronic automatic 'box, it excels at propelling you mindlessly forward. On the B-roads spanning Exmoor proper, should you feel minded to try among the crests and dips and blind bends, the Mustang driver (saddled with winter rubber in the case of our test car) wouldn't see where you went.

I rather like the S3. As with the Ford, it feels like a lot of car for the £35,405 you'd pay for one equipped with the preferable manual gearbox. It's a price that leaves plenty of wiggle room to add metallic paint and parking sensors and even the Virtual Cockpit infotainment system with three years of 4G internet access without troubling the £40k mark.

Also, in contrast to the Mustang's climate-warming 299g/km, the S3 we drove emits just 151g/km, making its first-year tax obligation a more bearable £500 – and you'd probably manage 35mpg from its 43.5mpg combined claim.

If ecological reasoning or running-cost efficiency are primary concerns, then there are plenty more sensible places to invest – and that, too, is a good thing because the new VED rules do tend to hit drivers who →



Tiguan sticks to the VW rules for a neat, feelgood interior



As well as all-terrain ability, this model is quick on the road



VW is four-wheel drive but tyres are biased for the road



“The Mustang is a tongue-out great shaggy mongrel of a car, but it isn't for everyone”


**WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH THE £1060 TAX SAVING?**
**Morris 1100**


Since this is a taxing issue, let's take the whole road fund licence out of the equation. All we need is a motor that is over 40 years old. Prices for any old classic rubbish are now north of a couple of grand, even for a Morris Marina. Search hard enough, though, and you could find something unfashionably odd.

My oddity lives in Bristol and is a fairly rusty Morris 1100. It does have 11 months MOT but it's up for £1400. I offered £1000. The owner is considering it. Wish me luck. **JR**


**FIVE CARS BADLY HIT BY THE ROAD TAX CHANGES**

**MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER PHEV 5HS**

Qualifying for the plug-in car grant doesn't stop a top-spec Outlander breaching £40k, so its 41g/km CO<sub>2</sub> obligation will go from zilch to £450 annually.


**TESLA MODEL X**

Tax exemption for EVs is still a feature of the VED system in year one, but since you can't have a Tesla for less than £60k, you'll have to pay a total of £2250 in years two to six.


**LEXUS GS300H F SPORT**

The petrol-electric saloon's 115g/km CO<sub>2</sub> would previously have cost you a modest £20 a year, and nothing in the first. Now, it'll be £160 initially, then £450 per annum for five years.


**BMW M2**

It's bad news for the cheapest M car: the £500 in showroom tax will now be £1200, and the £270 annual road tax cost thereafter will almost double for the ensuing five years.


**JAGUAR F-TYPE V6 MANUAL**

You'll pay £1700 in the first year rather than today's £885, although the £450 annual charge for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 234g/km will be unchanged.



← were previously rewarded for their parsimony. The BMW i3 – still our preferred electric city car option – is a perfect case in point. Buy it in its zero-emissions, battery-only format and the £4500 plug-in car grant will ensure that it's still free across the board, attracting no showroom tax or subsequent annual charge. Opt for the Range Extender version pictured, which adds the 647cc two-cylinder petrol engine-generator, and its measly 12g/km CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will mean parting with a £140 standard rate after £10 in the first year.

Given that the introduction last year of a denser 33kWh (or 94Ah as BMW prefers) battery increased the standard i3's range to around 120 miles – and assuming you're buying electric in the classic 'second car, urban runaround' mould – the electric-only i3's diddly-squat tax liability only reinforces the idea that it's probably the one to pick.

The i3's skinny, low-resistance tyres don't particularly endear it to damp B-roads on Exmoor, but drop into the seaside town of Lynmouth and its supreme about-town usability, centred on its still eye-opening torque delivery and minuscule turning circle, is unmistakable. The real attraction, though, is the sophisticated and inspired packaging, a high-budget conglomerate of carbonfibre-reinforced plastic and exposed hemp fibres that casts you as a member of the bourgeoisie in some near-future mega-city.

What a shame, then, that the present hasn't yet caught up to BMW's conceptualising: even with its generator and 9.0-litre petrol tank to fall back on, the i3 still threatened to exhaust its range at inopportune moments during our time with it and it needed an additional hour to get back to London from the West

#### WHAT WOULD I BUY WITH THE £1060 TAX SAVING?

##### Toyota MR2 Mk3



You've just spent £40k on a car. What on earth could a car that costs £1060 do that your £40k car can't?

Mostly, absolutely nothing. Which is why you want a Mk3 Toyota MR2, the last of the midship roadsters and notable for having no luggage space whatsoever. Which is fine, because your new £40k car does. What it might not do, though, is engage you with brilliant steering, weigh next to nothing, have a roof that peels off easily and be hilarious to drive. Which is why I would I have one – and why I might actually soon have one; for reasons that will become apparent online, if my expenses will cover it. **MP**



Tight turning circle and instant torque make i3 ideal in town

Country because of broken motorway services charging points.

If £40k seems like a lot to pay for a vague sense of anxiety, our final real-world VED-beater plugs all the holes. The steep upward sales trajectory of the mainstream family-sized crossover will likely be untroubled by the rate change because most contenders are well within the £40k threshold. We've picked the Volkswagen Tiguan here because (a) we've already awarded it four-and-a-half road test stars and (b) the SE L 4Motion model we drove back from Exmoor came equipped with the firm's new 237bhp 2.0-litre twin-turbodiesel engine.

Much like BMW's 3.0-litre straight six is to the X3, the gutsy four-pot is the barbecue sauce to the Tiguan's established rack of ribs – and because you can't currently have an X3 xDrive30d SE for less than £40k, it's about as likeably burly as a £140-standard-rate diesel SUV gets.

Predictably, the burliness remains under wraps while you're in return-leg A303 traffic, although you need only a whiff of space on the road to deeply appreciate the way 369lb ft is deployed. The go-faster charm is all the more noticeable because this is the kind of scenario in which the standard 2.0-litre TDI lump – even in its more powerful 187bhp guise – suddenly shows the strain, getting louder and harsher but not notably more productive. Consequently, rather than redefining the Tiguan's appeal, the additional power slots seamlessly into the back of the driver's mind as yet another ticked-off facet, there for when it is needed.

Opting for the new 2.0 engine now over the equivalent front-drive 148bhp variant would mean paying an additional £100 a year in tax, having already summoned up £300 extra at the showroom.

Wait a month and it'll be £340 more initially, then the same £140 a year for being happier, earlier, smarter, safer and better energised. And with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to thank. **A**



Loud and proud, but not as exasperatingly American as you might think. Engine worth the price of admission





Cabin's materials, airiness and design add to an i3's appeal



BMW's tyres major more on efficiency than outright grip

Already the archetypal crossover. New biturbo lump simply lubricates the appeal

Fiercely quick everywhere and practically faultless inside, the saloon earns your respect, but go for the manual

Still the electric runaround of choice, but it's an expensive second car or a compromised first one



	Audi S3 Saloon	BMW i3 94Ah Range Extender	Ford Mustang 5.0 V8 GT	Volkswagen Tiguan 2.0 BiTDI 240 SE L 4Motion DSG
<b>RATING</b>	★★★★☆	★★★★☆	★★★★☆	★★★★☆
<b>Price</b>	£36,085	£35,280	£35,745	£36,725
<b>Engine</b>	4 cyls, 1984cc, turbo, petrol	Electric motor (plus 650cc, 2 cyls, petrol generator)	V8, 4951cc, petrol	4 cyls, 1968cc, twin-turbo, diesel
<b>Power</b>	306bhp at 5500-6500rpm	168bhp	410bhp at 6500rpm	237bhp at 4000rpm
<b>Torque</b>	280lb ft at 2000-5400rpm	184lb ft	391lb ft at 4250rpm	369lb ft at 1750-2500rpm
<b>Gearbox</b>	7-spd dual-clutch automatic	Single-spd	6-spd manual	7-spd dual-clutch automatic
<b>Kerb weight</b>	1470kg	1440kg	1720kg	1795kg
<b>Top speed</b>	155mph	93mph	155mph	142mph
<b>0-62mph</b>	4.6sec	8.1sec	4.8sec	6.5sec
<b>Economy</b>	43.5mpg (combined)	470.8mpg (combined)	20.9mpg (combined)	44.1mpg (combined)
<b>CO<sub>2</sub>/tax band</b>	151g/km, 27%	12g/km, 7%	299g/km, 37%	167g/km, 33%



# How Qash became king

Ten years ago, Nissan replaced its Almera hatch with the new, high-riding Qashqai. As **Richard Bremner** explains, this gamble transformed the company's fortunes and changed the face of the car industry

PHOTOGRAPHY STAN PAPIOR







The Qashqai found a sweet spot between 4x4s and MPVs

**B**y the time the 20th century was becoming the 21st, Nissan's Japanese bosses had become used to the sensation of desperation.

The company had travelled to the brink of existence by 1999 and bankruptcy had been fended off only by an audacious manoeuvre led by Renault's Carlos Ghosn. The French manufacturer acquired a 37% controlling stake in Nissan for a life-saving \$5.4 billion (£4.33bn).

What happened next is automotive legend. Ghosn's foundation-shaking Nissan Revival Plan turned the company around by doing the culturally unthinkable in Japan: shutting factories, breaking up cosy and costly 'keiretsu' cross-shareholding arrangements with suppliers, making redundancies and more. But it worked. In amazingly short order, Nissan returned to profit and started to produce desirable cars again, under the guidance of talented designer Shiro Nakamura.

But not in every quarter. Several less than scintillating cars were too close to the end of the development pipe to be scrapped or significantly altered. One of these was the second-generation Almera small family hatchback. It was certainly an earnest improvement on the curiously barrel-bodied first-generation model, the interior of which was as inviting as a smashed bus shelter on a winter's day.

The new version threw off the eaten-too-many-pies look, sported tail-lights as big as salad bowls and came with excitements such as shopping bag hooks, a load-securing net and more in-cabin nooks and crannies than a Cheddar Gorge cave. It was also pretty tidy in the chassis department and had no serious flaws other than a rear →



Concept made its debut in Paris in 2004

“ Since the model's 2007 launch, Nissan has sold more than 3.3m Qashqais in 137 countries ”





Replacing a regular hatchback with this was a brave move



◀ leg room shortfall. However, the big problem was that it didn't have the brand and showroom appeal of the Volkswagen Golf and Ford Focus. Once again, Nissan was left wondering how it would ever enjoy the heady success it had seen in the UK during the 1970s, when the Cherry and Sunny regularly appeared among Britain's top 10 best-sellers.

Nissan's Focus-chasing sales goals were receding like the unreachable refuge of a chase nightmare. But despite that, the company was masochistically lining itself up for a third pop at an Almera bullseye. During 2002, its designers and engineers were hard at it, as product planning chief Pierre Loing recounted a couple of years later. But Ghosn, by now steering a robustly recovering Nissan, cancelled the programme in December. "Merry Christmas!" was Loing's understandably bitter-sweet reaction to this news. Despite binning a heap of work, Loing knew that Ghosn was right.

The next problem was how to conceive a car decisively more appealing than a shopping hook-kitted Almera. The Ghosn way is not to stare at a blue sky waiting for a vision but to get down and understand what customers might want, using plenty of research and analysis. What that turned up was that the C-segment in which the Focus, Golf and Almera were competing was already fragmenting

towards MPVs and four-wheel-drives. Further delving uncovered signs that punters didn't necessarily need the absolute versatility of an MPV, and that while they liked the chunkily adventurous, high-riding demeanour of a four-wheel-drive, they didn't want the bulk and complication of the breed. So perhaps there was something in between.

From today's perspective, it seems a fairly modest leap to deduce this, but in the early 2000s, it was only a research-backed hunch. "The Qashqai has a distinctive flavour born out of the theoretical buyer's emotional and functional needs," explained product planner Etienne Henry in 2005. And at that point, two years before project P32L was ready to go on sale, the Qashqai buyer really was only theoretical.

"Back in 2007, the introduction of the Qashqai was a risk," says Nissan's vice president for Europe, Paul Willcox. "It was defining a new segment that didn't exist and therefore we were uncertain as to what the reception would be. But it's been unbelievable, from launch right the way through to today. We have won many press awards, the industry has followed our lead and every competitor has brought a crossover into the segment.



"It's clear that consumers love the Qashqai. You can tell that from the number we've sold. We're selling 250,000 cars a year, every year, and there's no sign of a decline in demand, which is remarkable."

It may be a Nissan chief telling it, but the numbers say he is not wrong. Since the model's launch in February 2007, Nissan has sold more than 3.3 million Qashqais of both generations in 137 countries. Of those, 2.3m were bought in Europe, its primary market, and 261,429 in the last year alone.

For many, the Qashqai makes a stage in people's motoring life more palatable than it would have been in the days when frumpy MPVs and rattling estates were the only choices. Some of this writer's neighbours are a case in point: before kids, a BMW

320d Coupé occupied the drive; after kids, it's a Qashqai.

"When the Qashqai launched in 2007, it was unique in the market," says Willcox. "It has remained as the number one crossover because it has stayed true to its original ideals and because we have consistently added technology through the car's life."

Nissan's Sunderland plant has played a huge role in the Qashqai's success, this factory being the primary supplier. By the end of 2016, it had produced 2,655,551 of the 3.3m global total. Of those, 1,752,232

“The introduction of the Qashqai was a risk. It was defining a new segment”





High driving position  
and ease of use are  
part of its appeal

were examples of the original model, including the seven-seat Qashqai +2.

Not only has the UK produced most Qashqais, but much of the creative design and engineering work was carried out in the UK, too. Of the 200 people who worked on the original car, 80% of them were UK-based, although their task was somewhat eased by the use of an existing platform. By the time the second-generation Qashqai was under development, there were 500 people on the project at Cranfield and it has helped propel Nissan's European R&D centres towards a 50% increase in staff.

By the end of 2015, sales of SUVs reached a landmark in Europe, outselling superminis and small hatchbacks for the first time. Many models contributed to this, but there can be no doubt that the Qashqai lit the fire of growth. These days, this quietly accomplished crossover seems a bit ordinary. But count that as another measure of its success: the best ideas are the ones that take root so deeply that they become the norm. **A**

## TAKE FIVE: PRE-QASHQAI CROSSOVERS

### 1948 Willys-Overland Jeepster

Mixing WW2 Jeep and saloon comforts, this may well be the first crossover. 'Planadyne' front suspension and a 'Go Devil' 2.2 four failed to overcome the triple hit of high pricing, draughty side curtains and rear drive only. It survived just three years.



### 1977 Matra Simca Rancho

It had only three doors and front-wheel drive, but this ingenious Matra rework of the Simca 1100 pick-up produced a ruggedly appealing, high-riding estate reminiscent of a Range Rover. There was an optional seven-seat version, too.



### 2000 Pontiac Aztec

Initially infamous for its baffling ugliness, and later for being the broad-bean green wheels of Breaking Bad's Walter White. Functionally not bad, but even General Motors' Bob Lutz described it as "an angry kitchen appliance".



### 2003 Chrysler Pacifica

The first progeny of the ill-fated DaimlerChrysler coupling, the Pacifica attempted to combine MPV, SUV and saloon. Owners soon found that high prices, low quality and lame performance were also part of the mix.



### 2006 Mercedes-Benz R-Class

Sports cruiser or a family tourer? Mercedes reluctantly admitted to the latter after boldly claiming the former but, either way, its mix of estate, SUV and minibus failed to find anywhere near the 50,000 annual sales originally sought.

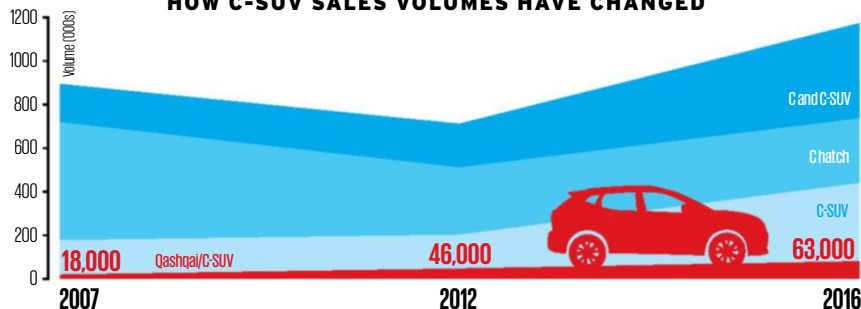


## THE RISE OF THE QASHQAI AND C-SEGMENT SUVs

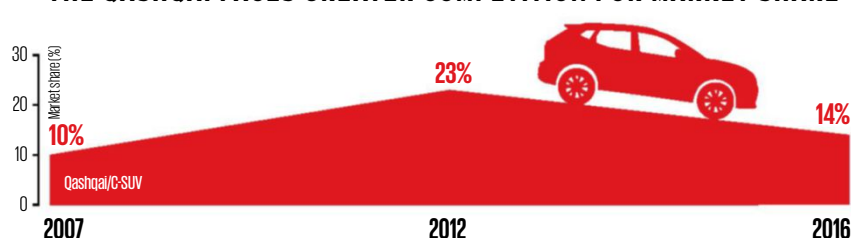
Qashqai volumes have more than trebled since the car's debut in 2007, and in 2010 it accounted for one in four C-SUV sales. However, as the bottom graph shows, greater competition from rivals in the sector has lowered the Qashqai's C-SUV market share, despite increasing sales. The combined C and C-SUV segments now account for 38% of the UK's new car market.

Note: 'C hatch' refers to C-segment (eg, Focus, Golf, Astra, hatches); 'C-SUV' refers to crossovers in the Focus/Golf C segment; 'C and C-SUV' refers to both segments combined.

### HOW C-SUV SALES VOLUMES HAVE CHANGED



### THE QASHQAI FACES GREATER COMPETITION FOR MARKET SHARE







# Tale of the snake

The Dodge Viper is 25 years old this year. Alex Robbins finds out whether it still lives up to its venomous reputation

PHOTOGRAPHY STAN PAPIOR





#### WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A USED VIPER

The great thing about the Viper is that its simple engineering means very little goes wrong. Tyres are expensive, so check treads, and make sure the clutch isn't slipping – on a low-mile car, it's a sign of abuse. Servicing is far cheaper than on most cars with this sort of pace, and because the engine is so big, it's unstressed, so bits rarely fall off. C check the fibreglass body for damage, and the interior plastics for cracks.

**P**ull for emergency exit," says the oversized catch on the door. It's winter, there's patchy black ice on the West Sussex lanes we're driving along and said catch is attached to a Dodge Viper GTS – not exactly a paragon of clinical precision. It is my fervent hope that I don't have to use the catch, but it's not a bad idea to keep its location in mind.

The Viper has always been a hero car for me. Forgive the straight lift from the motoring hack's book of cliché, but I really did have a poster of one on my bedroom wall when I was a whippersnapper. That poster was most likely of the earlier and original RT/10 model, which was launched in 1992. That makes the Viper 25 years old this year, and that seems like the perfect excuse to revisit this glowering hunk of American excess.

Those first Vipers were production versions of a concept car first unveiled in 1989 at the Detroit show. It took three years for engineers to bring the concept to life. The original plan was for the Viper to use an evolution of the LA360 V8 with, in effect, two extra cylinders grafted on. The engine was also destined for use in Dodge's Ram line of trucks.

But a series of refinements by Lamborghini, then part-owned by Dodge's parent company Chrysler, resulted in the engine projects growing apart, with the biggest change of all being the switch from a cast iron block to an aluminium one for the Viper. Remember this the next time someone tells you the Viper had a truck engine: it's not quite true.

The myth is believable, though, largely because the Viper was something of a 'bitsa'. Indeed, it's often forgotten that low cost was one of Chrysler's stated aims with the project, so the production engineers scavenged parts from wherever they could around the Chrysler organisation. It showed in that first RT/10, despite their best efforts.

"Even with all those cylinders, the engine wasn't as smooth as you'd think," says Autocar's Steve Cropley, recalling the first time he drove the RT/10. "The car was cumbersome, with really heavy controls. It was the look of the thing, and the torque, that made it extraordinary, but it clearly needed development." →



In GTS guise, the Viper's V10 makes 450bhp





That development came in 1995, with the advent of the second-generation car and, most notably, the new GTS coupé – a late example of which we're driving today. Power was up to 450bhp and while it might look similar, in fact 90% of the GTS's parts were either upgraded or switched out completely.

It shows. A strong shove is still needed to get the gearstick into first, and the combination of a long-travel clutch pedal and hair-trigger accelerator requires careful moderation of each foot when pulling away, but there's none of the heft you might expect from the steering. Once rolling, the Viper is remarkably benign, with a smooth and progressive throttle and even a reasonably comfortable ride.

But what you really want to know is how well it goes. Well, even on these cold roads, the Viper isn't uncontrollable. Lairy, for sure, and a moment's inadvertent exuberance with the throttle will light up the rear tyres. But there's a monumental amount of front-end grip, so the car snicks into corners surprisingly well, and a squeeze of the throttle on the way out hunkers the back end down at first, rather than simply sending it sideways straight away.

But be under no illusion: this is a car that's happier on the straights than it is in the corners. Simply placing it is the first problem: that long, wide nose obscures half of the road ahead, and then there's the slow steering and the wooden brakes. No, far better to amble through the twisty bits at a moderate pace and then point 'n' squirt to your heart's content once there's a clear, flat bit of asphalt ahead.

And squirt it most certainly does. When you pin the throttle, it feels as though you've just been pushed off a cliff. An initial shove in the back is followed by an ever-more urgent gathering of momentum until, knuckles white, you find yourself hoping that whatever comes next is as quick and painless as possible.

But instead of oblivion, you find yourself at the redline. So you manhandle the gearlever through the gate and go again, revelling in an engine note more guttural than that of a contemporary V10 from Italy or Germany; one that's halfway in tone between such engines and the American V8 you sense this one has been tuned to mimic.

The volume hits you, too. Even off the throttle, it chunters and

growls, attracting the wrong kind of attention even when you're trying to remain as inconspicuous as possible.

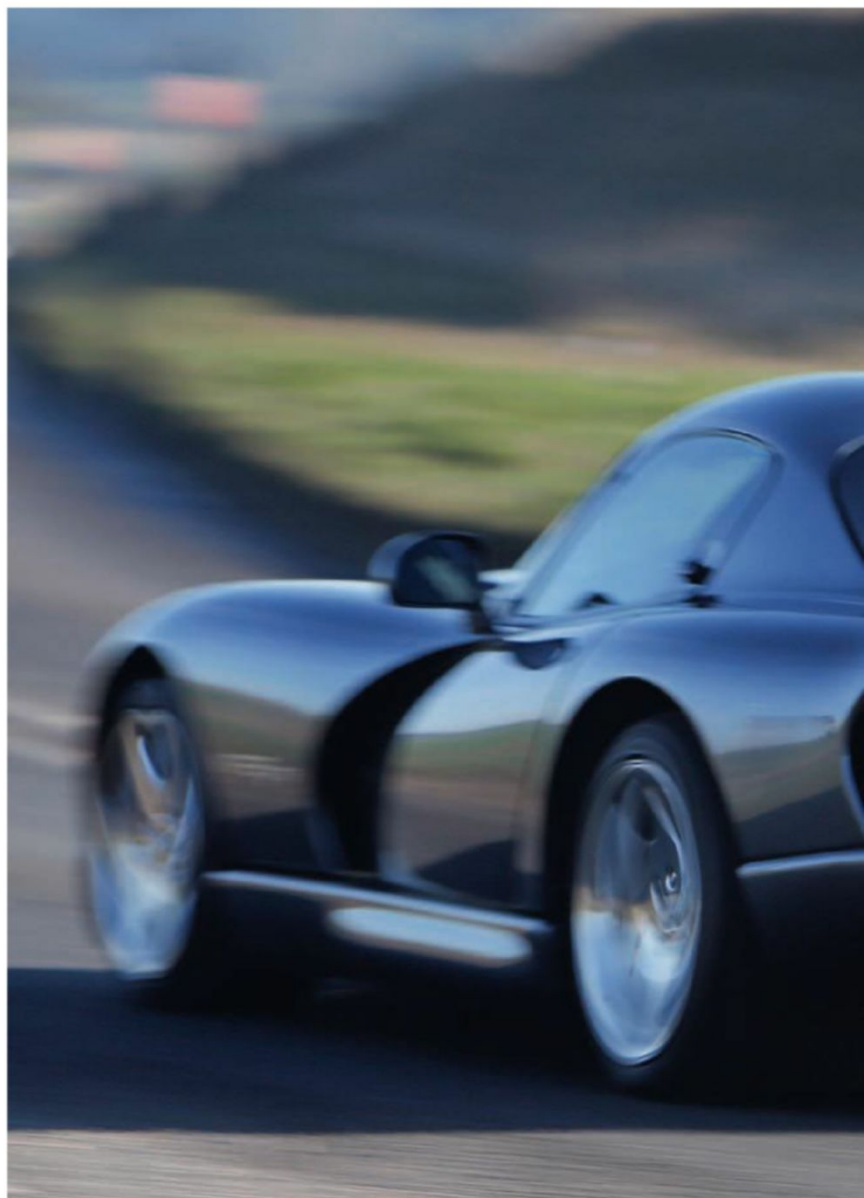
This is a fantastic good-time car, then, and brilliant fun to drive. But to own? Hmm. The problem comes when you spend enough time with it for the novelty to wear off. It's then that you notice you're cramped up against the door, looking at an acre of shiny, brittle plastic and trying

to ignore the squeaks and rattles and the health and safety notices that remind you that objects in the mirrors are closer than they appear.

For some, this car's unapologetic drama and in-your-face attitude has no equal. With production of the current-generation Viper set to come to an end later this year, it seems unlikely that it ever will. If the prospect of Viper ownership appeals, the price to join the club is £49,995 in the case of this GTS, a 2000 example with just 26,000 miles on the clock, although earlier cars with higher mileages can be found for much less.

Think of the Viper as a bona fide supercar and that might not sound too bad. Trouble is, the Viper isn't really a supercar. It's a modern-day hot rod; a car unto itself, which doesn't really bear comparison with anything. Whether a used example is worth the money is therefore an entirely subjective question.

I'll stick with the poster on my bedroom wall, but when you pass me in your Viper, that V10 engine note ripping the air in two as you squirm up the road, I'll feel a pang of envy. **■**  
*With thanks to Premier GT for the loan of the Viper, which is currently for sale. Call 01903 254800 to find out more.*



**It's left-hook only and the driving position is cramped**



“  
A squeeze of the throttle hunkers the back end  
down rather than sending it sideways  
”



The Viper majors on  
mastering straights  
rather than corners



Dashboard gauges, bonnet scoop and chrome exterior styling flourishes mark the Viper out as more of a hot rod than a supercar

## CARS 'N' STRIPES

Don't fancy the Viper? Consider these used US classics instead



### CHEVROLET CAMARO

The latest Camaro is officially available in the UK via special order. You'll have to put up with left-hand drive, but who can argue with a 426bhp 6.2-litre V8? Its rarity as a used car means prices are falling slowly, so a low-miles 2013 car will still cost at least £25k.



### PLYMOUTH PROWLER

Another of Chrysler's early 1990s fantasies made flesh, the Prowler was pretty good to drive. It will come as no surprise to hear these rarely come up for sale, but as we went to press there was one for sale with just 4000 miles on the clock and going for £30k. Imagine pulling up outside the pub in it.



### DELOREAN DMC-12

Technically Northern Irish, but built for the US market, the DeLorean needs little introduction. It was average to drive at best, but if you're tempted, that probably won't matter. With prices of cult and classic cars from its era soaring, £35k for one of these seems pretty reasonable. Buy now before they rocket out of reach.

## DODGE VIPER GTS

Built from	1996-2002
Price now	£30,000-£50,000
Engine	V10, 7986cc, petrol
Power	450bhp at 5200rpm
Torque	490lb ft at 3700rpm
Gearbox	6-spd manual
Kerb weight	1531kg
0-60mph	4.0sec
Top speed	177mph
Economy	16.8mpg





# LEADING THE CHARGE

Electric GT will pit 20 Teslas against each other on the race track.  
Sam Sheehan gets the lowdown on the new zero-emissions series

**T**he new zero-emissions Electric GT series aims to follow the lead of Formula E by injecting excitement into the image of electric vehicles.

The series, which will begin in the autumn, will initially be contested by track-prepared versions of the Tesla Model S P100DL. Formula E has showcased electric single-seaters, whereas EGT is based around cars that resemble road-going EVs. At the moment, of course, there aren't many performance-orientated pure EVs on the market, hence EGT's initial focus on Tesla. However, the series is open to all and the hope is that more varied grids will be seen in the future.

The racing Tesla has beefed-up bodywork, with flared wheel arches and a large rear wing. The car sits on racing suspension and 18in wheels shod with Pirelli racing rubber. The interior has been fully stripped out

and an FIA-standard rollage has been fitted. At first glance, you might mistake it for a petrol-drinking GT racing car, apart from the fact that it makes hardly any noise.

"The changes we've made to the car are quite straightforward because we've used the P100D road car's standard battery and motors," says championship boss Mark Gemmell.

The racing car has bodywork made from carbonfibre and although an official weight figure hasn't been revealed, it is estimated to weight

around 1600kg. Gemmell says: "The P100DL is 25% lighter [about 500kg] than the road car, so the racing car will be under less stress."

It'll also be much quicker: tweaks to the rest of the electric propulsion system mean the P100DL makes 778bhp and 734lb ft and can cover 0-62mph in 2.1sec. That acceleration is not only 0.3sec better than the road car, but also neck and neck with a modern Formula 1 car. A Formula E car requires a further 0.9sec to hit 62mph from a standing start.

EGT races will have standing starts in order to showcase the impressive acceleration. The car can hit a top speed of 155mph.

"It'd be insane not to do standing starts," he says. "Seeing 20 of these cars launch into turn one will be very exciting. You will get an interesting sense of power."

Silverstone will host the opening round on 12 August. The following races will take the Electric GT circus to Assen in the Netherlands and then the Nürburgring to race on the German track's DTM configuration. After this, Portugal's Algarve International Circuit, Misano in Italy and Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya will host a race each, before Paul Ricard in France closes the 2017 season on 25 November.

That means the inaugural EGT series is condensed into just 15 weeks, which Gemmell says is intentional: "Having the races so close together

“  
The acceleration of an EGT racer  
is on a par with that of an F1 car  
”



BLANCPAIN GT SERIES ASIA DRIVER

## TIM SUGDEN

Experienced racer explains why he is back on track in 2017

**What convinced you to return to full-time racing?**

"I had two or three years where I didn't race regularly and I really missed it. Although the Blancpain Asia series is a full championship, it's just six races during the year, which is perfect for me."

**You're driving a Mercedes-AMG GT3 for GruppeM Racing. What's your aim for the season?**

"I'm going for the championship win. As you get older [Sugden is 52], you think maybe you'll get slower, but last year [in GT Asia Series races] I was just as quick as anyone else, so I'm expecting to be quick in 2017. I wouldn't do it if I didn't think I was quick enough to win. I think the day you don't go to a race to win, it's time to stop."

**You've raced British GT, Le Mans, single-seaters and more. How does the Blancpain Asia compare?**

"Six or seven years ago, it wasn't at the top level for driving standards, but now it's the same as the best. There are a lot of talented Asian drivers and lots of Europeans. The level is very high now. I'd say it's higher than the British GT championship."

**What's your best racing memory?**

"When I finished fourth overall at Le Mans in a privately entered McLaren F1 GTR in 1998. We weren't too far behind a factory works Nissan that finished on the podium. It was a giant-chasing race for us."

**Is the McLaren the best racing car you've driven?**

"The best car was a Formula 3000 single-seater. It was phenomenal to drive. In terms of GT cars, the McLaren was very cool."

**What do you do when not racing?**

"I have a lot on in 2017. I'm also a driver manager and I've just started a new car tuning business, called Purple Dot. It means I can use my years of racing experience to test and develop parts."



Model S Teslas tuned for 778bhp will race in EGT



Championship boss Gemmell: "Electric vehicles are cool"

means we can keep a good rhythm. It also helps to engage the audience more; if you have a big gap in the calendar, people can lose interest."

Maintaining interest is something EGT intends to do by pulling fans close to the action. Spectators will be able to stream live video feeds from each car's cabin during races. They will also be able to engage with the drivers via what Gemmell calls "a non-distracting heat map of support". Put simply, a fan watching a race at home will be able to use social media to 'like' a particular driver who has impressed them.

This support will be displayed for the driver on the Tesla's infotainment screen, with the intention that it will encourage the driver much in the same way that a cheering crowd can spur on a football team.

The interaction between drivers and fans will be two-way, according to Gemmell: "By removing the

engine noise, the driver can also interact more with spectators. In normal motorsport, where the car is loud, the driver in their helmet can seem like a bit of a robot. In EGT you'll be able to hear drivers in the car easily, [so] they'll become a human being again."

Gemmell compares the experience with watching a tennis match, where a player's effort can be heard as they strike the ball. "It gives you a tremendous degree of empathy with them," he says.

EGT races will be fairly short, with the chequered flag falling after the leading car has covered 37 miles, which will equate to about 17 laps at Silverstone. There'll be two races: one in the day and the other at dusk.

The first race will be contested by 20 identical cars divided into two-car teams. Although Gemmell won't reveal the identity of any drivers who will be competing in the

opening season, he says they will be "fantastic, quality professionals".

Prior to the start of the series, EGT has established a drivers' club that has attracted support from seasoned competitors such as British Touring Car Championship driver Tom Onslow-Cole, sports car racer Oliver Webb and former Formula 1 test driver Dani Clos.

"We're also trying to get top-quality women drivers involved, because that attracts another huge section of the public to the events," says Gemmell. "We want to involve women in every role: as drivers, in teams and as marshals."

When the lights go green at Silverstone in August, he thinks zero-emissions motor sport will take a significant stride into the future.

"People are still saying electric cars will make life more dull and drab," says Gemmell. "Electric GT will prove that this is not the case." **A**



# YOUR VIEWS

WRITE TO  
autocar@haymarket.com

## An acquired taste

Why do alternative-fuel cars have to look so weird? Your Toyota Mirai looks like the bastard child of a Jaguar XJ and my Smeg fridge, the Nissan Leaf seems to have had a botched chin implant and the new Toyota Prius leaves me speechless.

**Peter Grimsdale**  
London

*One reason for the distinctive looks is to optimise aerodynamics, but electric powertrains also free designers of the need to work around an engine, so they can try something a bit different. Not saying it always works, mind – MB*

## US cars have merit

Karl Cradick is correct that the Far Eastern brands have done well in the US (Your views, 15 February). This is because they have embraced the native styling and engineering talent to create the right products for the market, including the latest Honda NSX, which was designed and is produced in the US.

Such products, along with those of Tesla and others, will produce a cluster of expertise that will influence the global car market.

There may be question marks over GM and Fiat Chrysler Automotive. This uncertainty would be present whoever was US president. But Ford has re-established itself as a confident global brand with good products, and the Mustang is a characterful halo model that is light years ahead of its predecessors. It shows improvement, not decline.

Mr Cradick seems to ignore just how unsuccessful the non-premium European car brands are in the US, something not helped by Volkswagen's use of defeat devices to cheat emissions tests.

**Adrian Rollings**  
Via email

## Let diesel develop

Initiatives aimed at curbing diesel pollutants, such as the T Charge Zone being introduced in parts of London, smack of a kneejerk reaction.

Given the clamour by successive governments to encourage us to



Mirai's styling is too much for Peter



## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### Show me the money

Readers have suggested it's time for F1 to ditch electronic aids and return to using a manual gear lever as a way to drive down costs and make the drivers work harder (Your views, 8 February).

In reality, F1 has relatively few driver aids. My own club-level racer has auto-upshift, launch control, traction control and data-logging, and my budget is a bit more modest than an F1 operation.

A much greater proportion of F1's budget goes on aerodynamic development. Rules imposing a freeze on aero packages or limited in-season development would be a step in the right direction.

**Stephen Alexander**  
Glasgow



buy diesel, it is hypocrisy to now devalue such cars, leaving tens of thousands of motorists out of pocket as they try to sell cars that no one will buy (unless they accept the pittance offered under the rumoured government scrappage scheme).

A better way forward, surely, is to encourage the industry to step up the pace of development of diesel engines until they reach a level where their emissions drop to an acceptable level.

Once the motor industry has been set improvement targets, its pace of advance can be meteoric. The 2.1-litre diesel engine in my car develops 204bhp, accelerates the car to 62mph in 6.6sec and still averages 54mpg.

Only 10 years ago such figures would have seemed impossible, but they were achievable once car makers were set targets backed by customer perception and market need. Let's have more carrot and less stick please.

**Stuart Crewe**  
Bristol

## Get active

So pleased to see you are turning your attention to EVs and hybrids, but mystified you have not considered

the BMW 225xe Active Tourer. It has BMW quality, five doors, five seats, excellent carrying capacity, a 134bhp three-cylinder petrol engine and an 87bhp electric motor, giving a total of 221bhp and 284lb ft.

It's capable of a claimed 141mpg, has a 25-mile electric range, four-wheel drive and does 0-62mph in 6.7sec. In M Sport trim it has a sunroof, sports seats, leather, head-up display and sat-nav. What's not to like?

**Chris Bird**  
Via email

*We reviewed the 225xe Active Tourer in January last year, Chris, giving it four stars and declaring it "an intriguing proposition". Read the full review on autocar.co.uk – MB*

## See the light

I share the concerns of Mark Putman (Your views, 15 February) that modern lighting controls mean some cars may be less visible in rain, mist or fog than they otherwise would be.

Unlit cars in these conditions are a growing problem and the automation may be considered more sophisticated than it really

is. It would be good if car makers could address the problem, but in the meantime the Department for Transport should publicise the issue, which is very relevant to road safety.

**John Bergman**  
Blackpool

## Even more superchargers

In your road test of the Tesla Model X (Autocar, 15 February) you say there are more than 30 Superchargers in the UK. There are, in fact, 168.

**Daniel Fearn**  
Via email

## Not a great outlook

The news that GM is preparing to sell its European operations is hardly a surprise, and the PSA Group was always the most likely partner.

At least it ends the unhappy involvement of GM in Europe. Look at the model range: the Astra and Corsa are vaguely competent but not exciting; the Cascada, Adam and Viva are proof of GM's total failure to understand European buyers.

Likewise GM's investment in the new Insignia. It may be competent, but no one wants big imageless saloons any more. It got lucky with the Mokka, but that's really a Daewoo in disguise, and best not mention the Crossland X and Grandland X. Most car makers are culling their MPVs, or







Does the prancing horse logo have its roots in Germany?

at least making them look like SUVs, but GM simply makes new MPVs and gives them silly SUV-type names.

I still worry it could be the end of Ellesmere Port and Luton for car and van making. PSA will use the best bits of GM's facilities in Europe and combine it with its own. At least PSA has woken up to car making reality.

I hope all the Brexiteers will notice that no foreign-owned manufacturer wants to make anything in a post-EU Britain, least of all a French car maker, probably to be followed by Honda, Toyota and Nissan/Renault.

**David Imrie**  
Via email

#### Badge of honour

In Andrew Frankel's excellent article on Ferrari at 70 ('Something Old, Something new', 15 February), he mentions the "prancing horse emblem of Great War air ace Francesco Baracca".

According to the late Brock Yates in his book *Enzo Ferrari: the Man and the Machine*, the emblem was not

Baracca's personally but that of his squadron, 91a. Baracca probably took it from an Albatross he shot down, piloted by a German from Stuttgart. The prancing horse is the emblem of the city, which is why the Porsche badge has an almost identical design.

**Andrew Stronach**  
Sevenoaks, Kent

#### Alame pony?

The recent story about the Ford Mustang caught my eye (News, 1 February). In the US it received a five-star safety result but in Europe it achieved just two stars from Euro NCAP because Ford downgraded the safety kit for European sales.

Shame on you, Ford. Whoever made this decision should be used as a crash test dummy in a Euro-spec Mustang. These actions are far more serious than any emissions scandal.

At least Ford has been shamed into addressing the problem, but what about cars already with owners?

**Bill O'Shea**  
Fleet, Hampshire

Mustang's poor Euro NCAP rating is a big deal, says Bill



# GREAT REASONS TO BUY NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

ON SALE 8 MARCH

## NEWS SPECIAL



## Geneva motor show latest

All the new car reveals, interviews and gossip from the year's first major European show

### FIRST DRIVE



### Volkswagen ID

We drive the rear-drive hatch that marks the start of VW's EV offensive

### ROAD TEST



### Audi A5 Sportback

Eight-page analysis of the second-gen BMW 4 Series Gran Coupé rival

## INSIGHT



## The Italdesign story

How it has developed from a styling house to launching a car in its own name

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# OUR CARS

## FEATURED THIS WEEK



BENTLEY BENTAYGA



BMW i8



KIA NIRO



MINI CLUBMAN



RENAULT CLIO RS TROPHY



RENAULT KADJAR



SEAT ATECA



SKODA OCTAVIA VRS



### FINAL REPORT

## RENAULT KADJAR

This compact crossover has coped effortlessly with the travails of everyday life during its 10,000-mile year with us



It's child's play to get a comfy perch when the floor is flat with the lip

**T**ime's up for the Renault Kadjar. Its time with us, that is, not its time in the showrooms or on driveways across the country. Far from it. The increasing number of them visible on our roads suggests that the Kadjar's time is very much now.

There's a reason for that – or several reasons. The Kadjar absolutely fits the mould of the contemporary urban crossover, with the added kudos of sharing its heritage with the class-defining Nissan Qashqai. It looks good, it's priced competitively and it comes with all the right equipment and trim options.

Our Kadjar was in Dynamique

S Nav form, which sits right in the middle of a choice of five spec options. Its generous list of kit included automatic dual-zone climate control, automatic headlights with an auto high/low beam function, cornering foglights, lane departure warning and one-touch folding of the 60/40 split rear seats. It also came with Renault's R-Link 2 multimedia and sat-nav system.

The car was powered by what Renault simply refers to as its dCi 110 engine, which means it's a 1.5-litre four-pot diesel, and also had the six-speed EDC dual-clutch automatic gearbox. The only cost option was £625 worth of metallic red paint,

and it rode 17in wheels, which were a free downgrade from this trim's standard-fit 19s.

All that added up to a very agreeable, if not overtly exciting, proposition over the past year and 10,000 miles. Actually, there was a lot about the car I really quite liked and one way of quantifying the Kadjar's good bits would be to list those that I miss now it's gone.

I miss its size, for a start. Despite its apparently chunky proportions, it's not much bigger than a Ford Focus (it's a tiny bit wider and a bit longer, plus it's higher) so it's as handily dimensioned for the motorway as it is for those back-and-forth local runs

to the childminder/shop/dentist that can make a big estate or larger SUV feel like a cumbersome hindrance. One of my first issues with the Kadjar was that it felt much larger and more unwieldy than it actually was, mostly because the view out across the front wings gives you little idea where its extremities are. But once I'd got used to it, it was fine.

And I miss the easy-going flexibility and fine economy of the 1.5-litre diesel engine and, for the most part, the smooth operation of the six-speed EDC dual-clutch automatic gearbox. You have only 108bhp to play with, so it's not exactly quick, but it's a refined powertrain,





Ikea held no fears for our Kadjar, with its 60/40 split rear seats



Front extremities are hard to see but you get used to it



Looks can deceive: it isn't much larger than a Ford Focus

“I liked the easy-going flexibility and fine economy of the 1.5-litre diesel engine”

in terms of the smoothness of delivery and the suppression of vibration and, for the most part, noise in the cabin. The best fuel economy figure I recorded was 72.4mpg with an almost unrealistic degree of sustained restraint on my commute. Overall, it averaged 58.2mpg over a mix of urban and motorway routes. You could perhaps better that if you tried and almost certainly do worse if you didn't.

I also miss its usefully big but not huge boot, with the handy adjustable floor (standard on Dynamique S Nav trim and above). It gives you the option of a decent-sized luggage hold with no load lip and hidden storage beneath, an expanded overall boot volume with a load lip, or, if you're creative with the rear half of the removable floor and insert it on its edge in an upright position across the width of the boot, a handy partitioned section ideal for storing shopping bags without them falling over.

Other things I miss include the tidy, hatchback-like handling (although there's a caveat that I'll mention in a moment), the high-ish but not step ladder-tall driving position and the almost-hidden stubby

stalk behind the steering wheel that lets you operate some multimedia functions with your fingertips in a wholly distraction-free way.

In short, the Kadjar has the fundamentals covered pretty well, but the thing it did best was slip into the role of easy-to-use everyday driver – which is probably what an awful lot of people want from their contemporary crossover. That perhaps borders on damning with faint praise, but I really don't mean it to. If the Renault's humdrum usefulness ever bordered on the bland, it was always offset by its attractive and purposeful off-road aesthetic. And as subjective as that may sound, simply thinking your motor looks pretty good as you approach it on the driveway or in a car park has real value. It's largely why crossovers and SUVs have become such a sales phenomenon.

What I miss less is the crashy secondary ride, although that's a grudgingly accepted payoff for the otherwise decent handling. And I don't really miss the R-Link multimedia system. Its menu logic isn't exactly intuitive and its poor functionality is exacerbated by a

TEST DATA	
RENAULT KADJAR DCI 110 EDC DYNAMIQUE S NAV	
TEST STARTED 6.4.16	
Mileage at start	362
Mileage at end	9695
PRICES	
List price new	£23,595
List price now	£24,845
Price as tested	£24,220
Dealer value now	£17,974
Private value now	£15,817
Trade value now	£14,688
OPTIONS	
Metallic paint	£625
FUEL CONSUMPTION AND RANGE	
Claimed economy	74.3mpg (combined)
Fuel tank	55 litres
Test average	58.2mpg
Test best	72.4mpg
Test worst	44.0mpg
Real-world range	746 miles
TECH HIGHLIGHTS	
0-62mph	11.7sec
Top speed	112mph
Engine	4 cyls, 1461cc, diesel
Max power	108bhp at 4000rpm
Max torque	184lb ft at 1750rpm
Transmission	6-spd dual-clutch auto
Boot	472-1478 litres
Wheels	8Jx17in
Tyres	215/60 R17, Continental EcoContact5
Kerb weight	1407kg
SERVICE AND RUNNING COSTS	
Contract hire rate	£276 per month
CO <sub>2</sub>	99g/km
Service costs	None
Other costs	None
Fuel costs	£888.21
Running costs inc fuel	£888.21
Cost per mile	10 pence
Depreciation	£9532
Cost per mile inc dep'n	£1.07
Faults Alarm sounding at random, warranty fix	
PREVIOUS REPORTS	
6 Apr 2016, 20 Apr, 4 May, 25 May, 8 Jun, 6 Jul, 27 Jul, 17 Aug, 7 Sep, 28 Sep, 26 Oct, 16 Nov, 28 Dec	

## LOVE IT



### POWERTRAIN

Doesn't offer much on paper but the 1.5-litre diesel and six-speed EDC gearbox are a great combination.



### FUEL ECONOMY

Bettered 70mpg on one occasion, but a day-to-day return in the high 50s is easily achieved.



### BOOT

A good size and with flexible storage options thanks to the flat floor. Rubber mat was ace, too.

## LOATHE IT



### FUEL GAUGE

That its range to empty went blank below 60 miles was a source of continual annoyance.



### CRASHY RIDE

Payoff for the Kadjar's tidy handling is a slightly harsh and noisy secondary ride.

OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE  
tim.dickson@haymarket.com





## Alpine Adventure

Fri 16 - Tue 20 June, 2017

£2250 until 1/1/17  
normal price £2500



The Alpine Adventure is a 1500 mile, 5 day driving event that travels to Lake Lucerne, the San Bernardino Pass, the Julier Pass, St Moritz, the Umbrail Pass, the Stelvio Pass, the Bormio Pass, Lake Como, Monaco, the Col de Turini and the Route Napoleon, along the way staying in only the finest luxury hotels and chateau mansions.



## California Run

Sat 16 - Sat 23 Sept, 2017

£5500 until 1/1/17  
normal price £6000



The California Run is a 1500 mile, 1 week driving event starting in Los Angeles, travelling to Las Vegas, Death Valley, Mount Whitney, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Yosemite National Park, San Francisco then finally down the Pacific Coast Highway back to Los Angeles. All participants get a 2017 Ford Mustang cabriolet for the week and are flown in to and out of LA.



## Western Cape Safari

Sat 02 - Sat 09 Dec, 2017

£5500 until 1/1/17  
normal price £6000



The Western Cape Safari is a 1500 mile, 1 week driving event that travels along the Western Cape province of South Africa, starting at Cape Town, travelling to Cape Agulhas, Knysna, the Aquila Safari Park and back to Cape Town. All participants get a 2017 Jeep Wrangler cabriolet for the week and are flown in to and out of Cape Town.

Please visit our new website [www.circuit-days.co.uk](http://www.circuit-days.co.uk)  
for more information and to book.





MILEAGE 13,226

# BMW i8

Pondering its merits against the competition from Porsche

**I**t's been a Porsche Panamera-intensive month, which may seem like an odd thing to say in a report on a BMW i8, but bear with me. The one pictured above is the 4S Diesel, and with 4.0 litres of twin-turbo V8 power at its disposal, it gives a similar level of performance to that offered by the BMW's 1.5 litres of three-pot single-turbo hybridised petrol power. How? Because once you've offset the Porsche's extra power and torque against its half tonne of additional weight, they actually stack up pretty closely.

I'm a huge fan of both powertrains. Truth is, I've never driven a V8 diesel I didn't like, and the Panamera's velvet wallop is something to behold.



Andrew would take his i8 over a hybrid Porsche Panamera

But the i8 counters with a deliciously snarling soundtrack, despite some sneering at its synthesised nature.

What I like best about these cars are their iconoclastic natures. I'd rather drive the i8 on an open road and sit in traffic in the Porsche, but the important point is that both demonstrate that there remain different ways of getting the job done, and you don't have to subscribe to the jelly-mould norm prevalent in other areas of the market.

The more relevant Panamera, of course, is the E-Hybrid. Apologies for not having a picture of it next to the i8, but I was on another continent when I drove it. It uses a 3.0-litre turbo V6 petrol engine boosted by electricity and offers a 30-mile electric range. It's a lot more affordable than the BMW, Porsche having slashed its price so, curiously, it's now almost £10k cheaper than the less powerful, non-hybrid petrol 4S using the same engine. But even though it costs half as much again, the i8's pint-sized powertrain is in a different league to the Porsche motor.

Porsche says it's a car bought more by head than heart, and for a certain kind of user the running costs are compelling. But the i8 has both bases covered (albeit for a different customer) and, hypercars aside, it remains the only hybrid so to do.

ANDREW FRANKEL

## TEST DATA

### BMW i8

Price £104,540 Price as tested £108,615

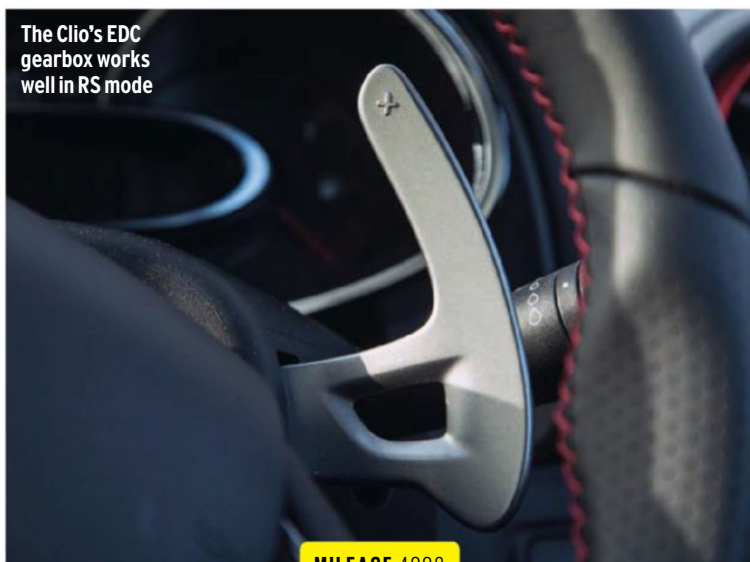
Economy 43.2mpg Faults None

Expenses None Last seen 1.2.17

## OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

autocar@haymarket.com

The Clio's EDC gearbox works well in RS mode



MILEAGE 4008

# RENAULT CLIO TROPHY

Learning to live with the quirks of our hot hatch's paddle shift gearbox

A LONG CONTINENTAL drive is traditionally considered a great opportunity to properly get to know your new car. However, my Clio RS Trophy is not the ideal mode of transport for four lads heading the French Alps for a snowboarding trip, despite the fact it has a longer wheelbase than its predecessor.

Although fitting the four of us inside might have been doable, no supermini's boot can accommodate four sets of cold-weather luggage and snowboards, too. The Trophy, then, has been on the shelf, and I've been driving our Audi SQ7.

That doesn't mean I haven't been getting to grips with the Renault. First on the agenda: that gearbox. The pronoun is appropriate there, because whenever I'm asked about the car, that is where enquiries begin and end. How am I living with it?

Well, mostly fine, thanks. Granted, it's not as invigorating as a manual would be, but I'm not as down on the EDC 'box as the my colleagues on the road test desk appear to be. In the RS driving mode, the changes are snappy, and downshifts

are accompanied by the kind of Akrapovic exhaust 'pop' that makes a hot supermini so much more memorable than a regular one.

However, there's no escaping the fact that the auto makes the keen driver suffer when left to its own devices. This occurs in less frenetic moments, such as coasting up to a roundabout, when you've minutely judged a gap in the traffic – only to find a lull in momentum as the 'box ponders which cog you might need when you get back on the gas.

That is hardly a fault noticeable solely in the Clio's automatic 'box – many slushers suffer from it – but because you're otherwise surrounded by the trappings of a hot hatch, it's all the more noticeable – and, by degrees, less forgivable.

LUC LACEY

## TEST DATA

### RENAULT CLIO RS 220 TROPHY

Price £22,425 Price as tested £26,520

Economy 30.1mpg Faults None

Expenses None Last seen 8.2.17





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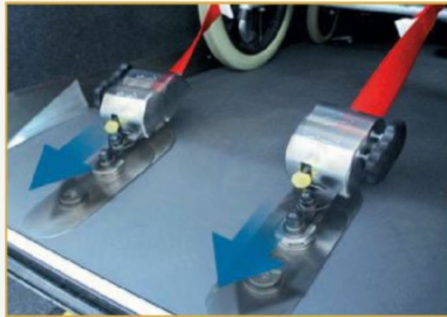
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MILEAGE 5094

# SKODA OCTAVIA VRS

A cross-country mission to collect magazines tests its mettle

**I** was on a mission to drive from my home in Basingstoke to Shropshire, to pick-up a 50-year collection of Autocar back issues. It's a three-and-a-bit-hour trip each way, so I needed a car that was adept at covering ground quickly and able to carry a fair load. Our Octavia vRS Estate ticked those boxes.

As an added bonus, it was an absolute hoot to thread along the dry A-roads north of Shrewsbury, and both comfortable and secure during the drive back down the M6 and M5 in horrendous monsoon conditions.

The only area that showed up the Octavia was its infotainment. I'm somewhat spoilt by a modern car that seamlessly hooks up to my smartphone, but I ran out of patience trying to work out how to pair my phone to the Octavia, even though a sub-menu on the main screen teased me that it was possible. The car's regular keeper, Alex Robbins, later



Tech lags behind today's standards

explained that you pair your phone via the multi-function display on the instrument panel. Of course you do.

Another blow was the lack of DAB radio. I'd forgotten what it was like to listen to the Saturday afternoon football on BBC Radio 5 Live as waves of static wash over the medium-wave signal.

Minor quibbles both, though; we managed without such things for decades, and it just means the engaging manner in which the Octavia drives is the real focal point.

Well, that and its load-lugging ability. As it was, I was only able to carry half of the collection. The Skoda had plenty of space to spare, but I'd underestimated just how heavy the stash of mags would be. As each large box was loaded into the boot, I checked the clearance between rear wheel arch and tyre and wondered whether I would have been better off using a less-potent load-lugger with a standard ride height. Mind you, that wouldn't have been half as much fun.

**MATT BURT**

## TEST DATA

### SKODA OCTAVIA 2.0 TDI VRS ESTATE

Price new (2011) £19,905 Price now £15,000  
Economy 47.3mpg Faults Starting glitch  
Expenses None Last seen 25.1.17

**OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE**  
matt.burt@haymarket.com

MILEAGE 2014

## KIA NIRO



KIA CLAIMS THE petrol-electric Niro hybrid can achieve combined fuel economy of 64.2mpg. I devised a basic test to see what the car is capable of in the real world.

I planned to drive 100 miles from my home in Sunbury to visit my parents in Northamptonshire, a journey that includes motorways, dual carriageways and urban roads.

On the outward leg I'd use some 'hypermiling' driving techniques in a bid to tease out the fuel economy, but for the return leg, I'd drive the Niro in a more carefree fashion.

Autocar's resident eco-driving obsessive, Tim Dickson, offered advice, namely to anticipate the road ahead, avoid sudden acceleration or deceleration and stick to electric

power at lower speeds. I also travelled at night when there was less traffic.

I measured the fuel economy on the trip computer. It isn't always the last word in accuracy, but it gave me a comparison. The result was a disappointing 48.5mpg for the outward leg and 45.0mpg for the return trip. A fluke, perhaps? To find out, we're putting a Niro through our more thorough True MPG test. Stand by for the results.

**DARREN MOSS**

## TEST DATA

### KIA NIRO 1.6 GDI HEV 3 DCT

Price £24,695 Price as tested £25,240  
Economy 45mpg Faults Drained battery  
Expenses None Last seen 18.1.17



## Bentley Bentayga

MILEAGE 4784

LAST SEEN 12.17

I always knew the Bentley's fuel economy would be steep (18-22mpg), but I didn't expect it to drink screenwash quite the way it does. You have to fill it every week or so. It stands to reason, what with all those screen jets, the tendency of the rear screen to need a lot of cleaning and the consumption of the integral headlight washers. With everything on, it's like the Niagara Falls. **SC**



## Mini Clubman Cooper D

MILEAGE 6426

LAST SEEN 12.17

Lots of cars have a little red light that flashes to show they're locked/alarmed. It is often on the dash, or on the door top. The Mini has one but, curiously, it's on the aerial at the back of the roof. Nothing wrong with that, mind, but it's surprising – maybe – how many people notice it and mention it. Should stop planes landing on it, if nothing else. **SP**



## Seat Ateca

MILEAGE 4987

LAST SEEN 12.17

Such is the world in which we live, I occasionally feel vulnerable walking to my car in the dark. Of course, the more light the better, and so it's an encouraging by-product of the Ateca's branded puddle lights that I feel more comfortable returning to the car with them than without them. It's likely a false sense of security, but every little helps. **RB**





# USED CARS

WITH JAMES RUPPERT, THE HIGH PRIEST OF BANGERNOMICS



A 2.0 V6-engined Rover 75 would be a great buy for £1000

## LEAD US NOT INTO SENSATION

Don't let scare stories put you off, but do your homework first, says **James Ruppert**

**I**n an effort to prove that we do keep our fingers ever so slightly on the used car market pulse, isn't it terrible about those Nissan Navaras snapping in half?

The interesting thing about stories like that is when they make the crossover from part-apocryphal 'don't buy one of those because that happens' status to making the national news in a sensationalist fashion. It helps if there's a dramatic picture of a brokeback pick-up, or a Vauxhall Zafira on a medium heat, to reference two recent tabloid exposés.

With that in mind, I don't think many of these issues are going to affect Autocar readers very much at all. You don't do kneejerk responses. The truth is that it's always best to apply scepticism and cynicism to every used car purchase, irrespective of what the vehicle actually is.

I get to hear my unfair share of used car rumours, and I'm glad that I don't choose to give them an airing. So for the time being, until we have all the facts, it is best not to speculate on which are, or are not, the models to considering buying.

Over the years there have been more than a few used cars that you may have been told not to buy because of one thing or another.

There's the old Rover head gasket chestnut, for one. It's important to be careful, and the four-cylinder unit certainly has issues and should make you think again about an MG F (but then you probably weren't considering one in the first place).

But, as I never tire of pointing out, a Rover 75 with a 2.0 V6 has to be the perfect comfy runaround, and it has less propensity to blow its top than a four-pot. For £1000 you can get a nice Connoisseur with a year's MOT.

Then again, I wouldn't splash out £1000 on a W210 Mercedes-Benz E-Class, which can be stupidly rusty. You do have to shop carefully for those. It doesn't matter which spec you go for, because an Elegance will rot just as badly as a Classic. This was a full-blown nightmare on our salty roads in the early 2000s, but Mercedes seems to have survived it all with barely a scratch. Certainly better than Rover, anyway.

This all goes to prove that these

stories fade away with time, and once the problem has been satisfactorily sorted, nobody cares any more. See the Takata airbaggeddon situation for further evidence of that.

If sensational car reliability stories have any worth in the red-tops – and increasingly on social media – then it is to make all used car buyers think twice before taking the plunge, so they do have a purpose of sorts. Meanwhile, just remember not to jump to any used car conclusions.

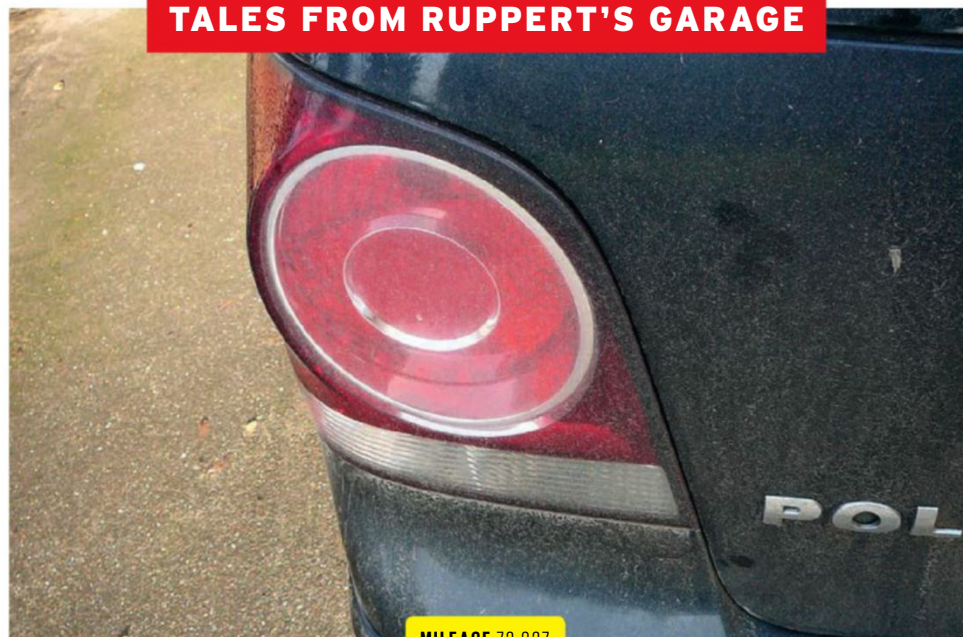
“Over the years there have been a few used cars you may have been told not to buy”



W210 E-Class has a history of rust issues



## TALES FROM RUPPERT'S GARAGE



MILEAGE 72,827

### VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.4

Water polo: I'm sure it's fun to play – it looks like a sort of organised semi-drowning – but it isn't so clever when it comes to the teenager's toy car. In this case it means a slightly damp rear footwell, but only when it rains, of course.

The other week I asked the garage to investigate, but it couldn't find a problem. Then helpful reader Ed Sinclair got in touch and suggested that I look at the seals around the rear light clusters. It worked for him on his daughter's Polo. A dab of sealant later, he says, the leak was no more. I'll make some time to try it out in the coming days.

## READER'S RIDE



### Ford Focus Estate

Andrew Thornton likes to put his faith in Ford Focus Estates. The one pictured had two owners before him and was bought for £700 at the end of 2012.

"It was a 2001 TDDi with 138,000 miles and a full history," he says. "The original plan was to keep it for two years and then sell it, but because it was so reliable, I kept it for just over three years, by which time it had done 183,000 miles. Apart from routine

servicing, all it needed was a new heater fan, two lower wishbones and two track rod ends. It averaged 49mpg.

"I sold it for £150 and it was replaced with another Mk1 Focus Estate, this time a 2003 1.8 petrol."

SEND YOUR USED CAR TALES TO  
✉ [james@bangernomics.com](mailto:james@bangernomics.com)

## WHAT I SPIED IN THE CLASSIFIEDS



SMART  
SOVEREIGN  
FOR £6K

### Drive away in a distinguished Daimler

Will the Daimler name will ever return? At least it's not too late to get a crinkle-grilled XJ8 from the classified ads. So here's a 1999 4.0 Sovereign for £6000. It's got 79,000 miles, a long wheelbase and all the walnut and chrome you could want. Just a few owners and the last one since 2003, which is the consistency you need with older, expensive and more complicated cars.



£135K  
FERRARI  
4X4

### Net yourself a four-wheel-drive Ferrari

The practical, four-seat Ferrari FF really exists to tempt those who want to put a few miles on the clock and possibly do the school run. They're not especially cheap, and here's a 2012 example for £134,990 to prove it. It has a solid 29,000 miles under its wheels and comes with bi-xenon headlights and 20in alloys. There's a tonne of specification, but the parcel nets in the boot would arguably be the most useful day to day.



£7K  
FAMILY  
SUV

### Captur the moment in a small SUV

SUVs are where it is at for most family and mature buyers. Here, then, is a photofit picture of what we should all be driving: a Renault Captur TCe Dynamique MediaNav. It's from 2013 and has 51,000 miles and all the Bluetooth trickery and easy fingertip controls for the audio. Paying £7288 for a small, state-of-the-art people-mover with some attitude seems reasonable, especially given the cruise control and heated mirrors.



WHY YOU NEED A USED

# AUDI S3

IN YOUR LIFE



## PREMIUM RATE NUMBER

The second-generation Audi S3 is an understated performance hatch that's holding its value. **John Evans** finds out if the high prices are justified

**T**here's nothing like stuffing a few extra horsepower under the bonnet to set tongues wagging. The original S3, which was on sale from 1999 to 2003, made do first with 207bhp and later with 221bhp from its 1.8-litre turbocharged engine. Useful enough for 0-62mph in a claimed 6.7sec, but not exactly the stuff of legend.

So in 2006, Audi presented an all-new S3. Powered by a strengthened version of the VW Group's 2.0 TFSI engine, it breathed through a larger turbocharger, its air was chilled by an uprated intercooler and it produced 261bhp at 6000rpm. It spooled up quickly for a big blower, developing 258lb ft from as low as 2500rpm and feeding it to all four wheels, as

required, through a Haldex coupling. The result? A 0-62mph of 5.5sec and a limited top speed of 155mph.

Now people were talking, and not only about the S3's VW Golf R32-beating performance. The Audi's suspension – made of aluminium to reduce unsprung weight – had been retuned to make the car more incisive but was still capable of riding sweetly.

The choice of transmissions was either a six-speed manual or a six-speed S tronic. The latter changes gears in a blink, but the manual is more tactile. That is to be valued in a car that, in truth, doesn't feel quite as connected or communicative as, say, the Renault Mégane RS.

The Audi S3 was a three-door from the off. The five-door Sportback followed in 2008 but is a rare bird,

partly because it weighs more and is longer and less agile.

Being an Audi, the S3's design is conservative inside and out and has weathered changing fashions well. The interior is mostly tough, although the standard seats can look very tired and the optional sports seats are better in all respects.

Standard kit included part leather, dual-zone climate control and 18in alloys, but most buyers upgraded to full leather, heated seats and smarter wheels. You could add full sports seats, a surround-sound stereo, a flat-bottomed steering wheel and parking sensors, too.

A facelift in 2008 brought a restyled front and rear with a new grille, daytime running lights and xenon headlights, optional

magnetorheological dampers and a quicker-reacting Haldex system. A Black Edition arrived a couple of years later touting dechromed looks and a sat-nav.

Prices are all over the place today, with many early 2007 S3s well into five figures, which is ambitious. And it's not just dealers: private sellers are in on the game too. In part, it's a legacy of the model's steep £30,000 retail price, but even so, there's a whiff of opportunistic speculation.

Our advice is to look long and hard, placing a value on originality, history and condition over kit and upgrades. Assume most mid-priced cars are being advertised at about £1000 too much. Sober colours suit the S3; go for Solar Orange if you must, but the paint must be in very good condition.



## HOW TO GET ONE IN YOUR GARAGE



## An expert's view

**MARK MCMANUS,**  
**MDM TECHNIK**

"The S3 is a tough car, although the interiors of older ones can look tired. Take care when buying earlier, pre-facelift models. The high-pressure fuel injection system brought problems, including carbon build-up on the inlet valves. The fuel is sprayed so precisely that there's little chance for it to spread out and wash the valves, so over time they accumulate deposits and must be cleaned. You'll feel it because power will be reduced. Early cars also had coil issues, which was resolved by fitting upgraded OE coils. For S3s of all ages, you want evidence of regular 9000-mile oil changes and air filter and plug changes every 38,000 miles."

can wear badly. Check all controls work; rear wiper is prone to failure.

■ **BODY AND CHASSIS**

Rust protection is excellent, so suspect accident history if you see rust. Rear subframes should be free of it, too.

## Also worth knowing

Consider a 12-month extended all-component Audi warranty. Cover for the 'One we found' car below would cost £1285, with a £100 excess.

## How much to spend

**£4500-£6250**

Early S3s with around 130,000 miles.

**£6500-£8500**

More early cars but with 80-100k miles.

**£8750-£9750**

Some strongly priced 07-plate cars; more 08/09 cars with up to 100k miles.

**£9995-£10,500**

High-mileage facelift 2010/59-plate cars; pricey 07-09s up to 100k miles.

**£10,995-£11,995**

Best of the low-mileage 07-09 cars, and still some leggy examples. The occasional 2010 Sportback, too.

**£12,000-£13,500**

Lots of 2009 cars; also 2010 cars with reasonable miles and the first 2011/12s.



## One we found

**AUDI S3, 2008/08,  
85K MILES, £8995**

A strongly priced S3 in 'excellent condition' would fetch around £7850 at auction, so there's some haggling to do. Still, it has a full Audi history, both keys and two previous owners, and the private seller points out a small dent, which is reassuringly upfront.

S3 uses a Haldex-based four-wheel drive system



1 litre

How much oil even a healthy S3 can consume in as little as 600 miles.



Seats wear easily; optional sports items are better

“The S3 is conservative inside and out and has weathered changing fashions well”





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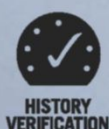
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36 Monthly Payments	£299	Duration of Agreement (mths)	37
Option to Purchase Fee (inc in final payment)	£10	Representative APR	5.9% APR
Optional Final Payment	£12,120	Interest Rate (fixed)	3.1%



MITSUBISHI  
APPROVED  
USED

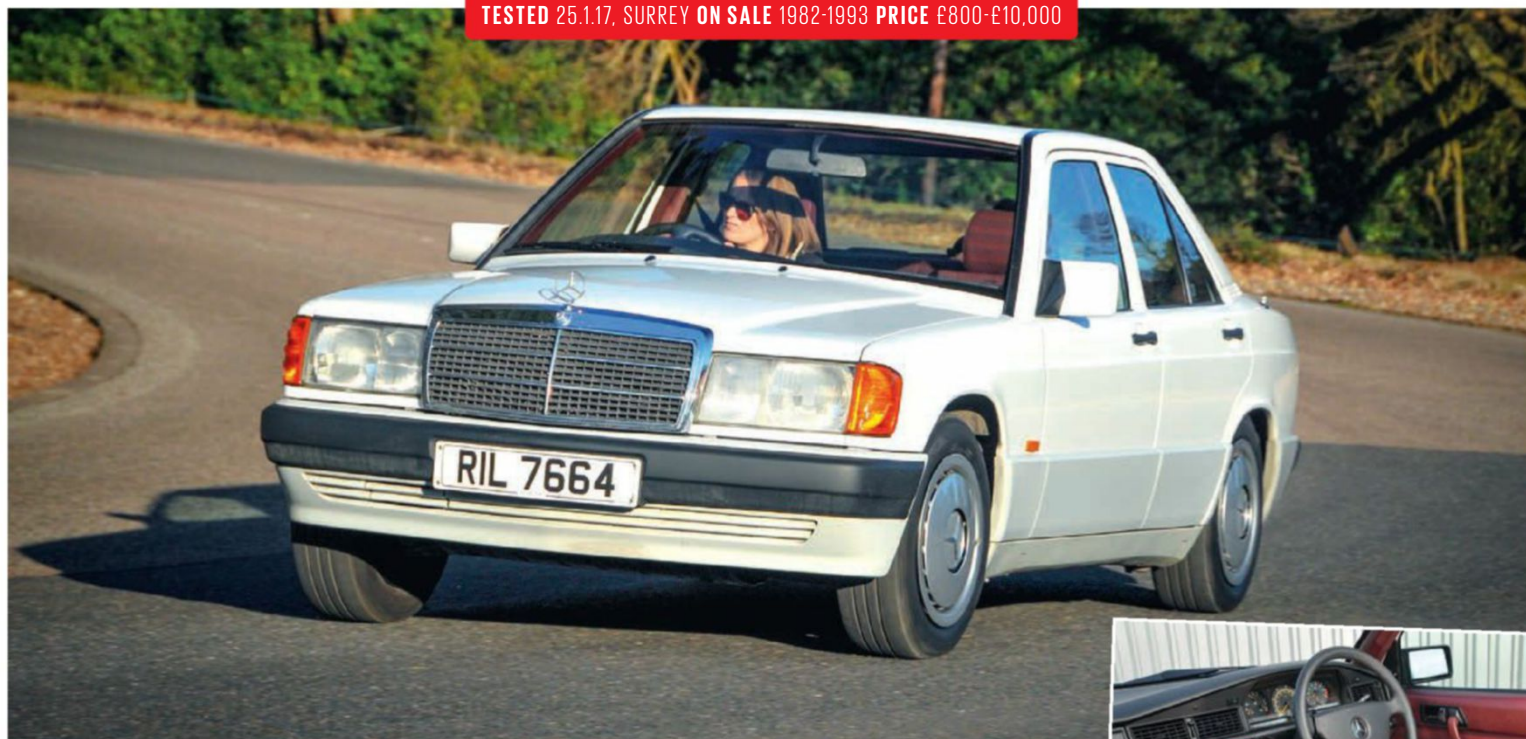
1. The PCP finance plan shown above is only available between 29th December 2016 and 29th March 2017 at participating Retailers only. With PCP you have the option at the end of the agreement to: (a) return the vehicle and not pay the Optional Final Payment. If the vehicle has exceeded the maximum agreed mileage a charge per excess mile will apply. In this example, 9p plus VAT per excess mile above the maximum agreed mileage. If the vehicle is in good condition (fair wear and tear) and has not exceeded the maximum agreed mileage you will have nothing further to pay; (b) pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (c) part exchange the vehicle subject to settlement of your existing credit agreement; new credit agreements are subject to status. The example is based upon an annual mileage of 10,000 miles. Credit is subject to status and only available to UK residents aged 18 and over resident in Mainland UK and N. Ireland. This credit offer is only available through Shogun Finance Ltd t/a Finance Mitsubishi, 116 Cockfosters Rd, Barnet, EN4 0DY. Finance Mitsubishi is part of Lloyds Banking Group. Optional Final payments and monthly repayments may vary dependent upon date of registration and mileage, examples are a guide. Offer subject to availability, whilst stocks last and may be amended or withdrawn at any time. 2. Congestion Charge application required, subject to administrative fee. 3. Official EU MPG test figure shown as a guide for comparative purposes and is based on the vehicle being charged from mains electricity. This may not reflect real driving results.



# MERCEDES-BENZ 190

The reassuringly weighty and mechanically robust original baby Merc makes a superb starter classic, as **Alex Robbins** finds out

TESTED 25.1.17, SURREY ON SALE 1982-1993 PRICE £800-£10,000



**T**ake just one look at the styling of a Mercedes-Benz 190 and you'll know in an instant what it's like to drive and own. That three-box profile speaks of the solidity, comfort and robustness it delivers – and that's exactly what makes the first baby Mercedes such a cracking modern classic today.

The 190 was released in 1982, in 90bhp carburettor and fuel-injected, 122bhp 190 E forms. The latter remained at the core of the 190 range for most of its life. It was joined by a 2.6-litre straight six, a series of diesels and a succession of ever more potent 16-valve models, which culminated in the truly special 2.5-16 Evolution II. Production stopped in 1993 – an impressively long run with barely any major tweaks – when the 190 was replaced by the W202, the first C-Class.

Cooking 190s like this one have long sat at the bottom of the Mercedes tree in terms of used values, and only now that the W202 is into banger territory are they being undercut. But a good 190 like this one can still be bought for very reasonable money.

The example tested here has a manual gearbox. Merc manuals have never been great, and this one is no exception. The rubbery change, vague action and long throw mean you'll quickly decide that an auto 'box is pretty much a must-have.

“  
In common with most Mercs of its era,  
the 190 is a smoochy old cruiser  
”

It'd suit the character of the car far better, too. If you're rowing through the gears, chances are you're driving a 190 the wrong way. Corners are not to be blasted through at maximum attack speed; that approach will provoke a dose of tail squat and body roll, sending the inside front corner into the air.

Mind you, even then there's a sense of the hilariously over-engineered nature of the car, because the roll is progressive, the chassis is balanced and the responses are predictable. In other words, a 190 might not like being driven in this way, but at least it will deal with it safely and securely.

It is much more enjoyable to

relax and bumble along in a 190. In common with most Mercs of its era, it is first and foremost a smoochy old cruiser. It's quiet and unassuming while pottering around town, and out on the motorway it lopes disdainfully over expansion joints and remains wonderfully stable yet eternally comfortable. Although it never gets anywhere near being fast, the crisp throttle response and the 1997cc engine's solid wedge of torque are endlessly satisfying.

This one has done more than 200,000 miles yet still feels as tight as a button. That's partly because it's owned by Mercedes and, as such, has been frequently and carefully fettled.



The 190's robust build makes it ideal for daily use

The chassis isn't set up for a press-on approach to corners



## MERCEDES-BENZ 190 E 2.0

A modern classic that is comfy, unhurried and solid, and even now feels like it will go on forever

★★★★☆

Price	£800-£10,000 (excl. 16V)
Engine	4 cyls, 1997cc, petrol
Power	122bhp at 5300rpm
Torque	129lb ft at 3500rpm
Gearbox	5-spd manual
Kerb weight	1180kg
0-62mph	10.9sec
Top speed	121mph
Economy	26mpg
RIVALS	BMW 3 Series, Audi 80, Saab 900



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# ROAD TEST RESULTS

Facts, figures, from the best road tests

No one produces as thorough a judgement on a new car as Autocar. As well as acceleration, braking, fuel economy and noise tests, we carry out benchmark limit-handling tests, setting lap times if appropriate. But we don't just drive at the track, essential as it is for finding the limits of performance; we also drive on a wide range of roads. We aim to produce the most complete, objective verdict in the business, so you can be sure how good a car is. Where we have tested more than one model in a range, the rating is for the range overall; where a model within the range meets our coveted five-star standard, it is highlighted in yellow.

- » **30-70MPH** Indicates overtaking ability through the gears
- » **50-70MPH** Recorded in top gear (\*kickdown with an automatic) and demonstrates flexibility
- » **FUEL ECONOMY** Prior to 7.1.15, figures are touring, recorded over a set road route, and test average. From 7.1.15 on, figures are average and extra-urban, to the What Car?/True MPG standard
- » **BRAKING 60-0MPH** Recorded on a high-grip surface at a test track
- » **MPH/1000RPM** Figure is the speed achieved in top gear



Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/touring	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE
<b>ALFA ROMEO</b>												
Mito 3dr hatch ★★★★★												
1.4 Cloverleaf	136	7.9	21.1	6.9	7.3	2.7	168	184	23.2	36/42	1265	7.4.10
Giulietta 5dr hatch ★★★★★												
2.0 JTDM	135	8.4	22.3	7.7	7.9	2.7	168	258	34.8	40/57	1475	13.10.10
4C 2dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
Spider	160	5.1	12.4	4.0	5.8	2.97	237	258	29.6	32/44	940	27.1.16

<b>ALPINA</b>												
B3 Biturbo 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
B3 Biturbo	155	4.7	10.3	3.8	6.8	2.9	404	443	41.5	27/35	1610	29.8.13
<b>ARIEL</b>												
Atom 0dr open ★★★★★												
V8	170	3.0	5.7	1.9	3.7	2.55	475	268	16.4	21/37	650	10.8.11
Nomad 0dr open ★★★★★												
Nomad	125	4.5	12.7	3.9	7.7	3.10	235	221	26.7	-/-	735	24.6.15

<b>ASTON MARTIN</b>												
V8 Vantage 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
V8 Roadster	175	5.2	12.0	3.6	7.9	2.7	380	302	26.0	17/22	1713	25.4.07
GTE	190	4.6	10.4	3.6	6.1	2.6	440	361	25.3	19/29	1530	12.10.16
DB11 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
Launch Edition	200	4.0	8.4	3.0	10.1	2.6	600	516	46.2	24/34	1910	21.9.16
Rapide 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
Rapide S	190	5.3	11.3	4.3	8.3	3.03	550	457	33.6	19/23	1990	20.3.13

<b>AUDI</b>												
A1 3dr hatch ★★★★★												
1.4 TFSI Sport	126	8.4	22.4	8.9	12.8	2.2	120	148	30.2	34/43	1165	10.11.10
S1	155	5.9	14.4	5.2	5.4	2.6	228	273	25.6	30/39	1390	28.5.14
A3 3dr/5dr hatch ★★★★★												
2.0 TDI Sport	134	8.9	25.9	11.4	10.8	2.7	148	236	30	48/59	1355	26.9.12
S back-e-tron	138	7.9	20.9	6.6	8.5	3.0	201	258	30.7	45/49	1540	31.12.14
RS3 S'Back	155	4.1	10.3	3.7	7.7	2.8	362	343	34.2	26/37	1595	10.6.15
A4 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
2.0 TDI S line	147	8.4	22.2	7.3	11.2	3.1	187	295	37.1	45/50	1940	4.11.15
A5 2dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
S5	155	4.9	11.7	4.4	9.7	3.0	349	369	40.5	26/33	1615	11.1.17
A6 4dr saloon/5dr estate ★★★★★												
3.0 TDI SE	155	7.2	20.3	6.4	3.9	2.9	201	295	39.9	34/46	1805	19.10.11
RS6 Avant	155	3.7	8.7	3.1	12.8	2.4	552	516	40.0	20/28	2010	3.7.13
A7 Sportback 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
3.0 V6 TDI	155	6.7	18.7	6.5	*4.0	2.8	241	369	42.9	31/40	1940	9.2.11
TT 2dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
2.0 TFSI S line	155	6.6	14.5	5.0	6.5	2.5	227	273	30.1	29/35	1305	26.11.14
RS	155	3.6	8.4	3.0	7.8	2.7	394	354	35.1	27/37	1440	7.12.16
Q2 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
1.4 TFSI Sport	132	8.1	23.9	8.2	9.8	2.7	148	184	29.4	45/56	1265	9.11.16
Q3 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
2.0 TDI SE	132	8.3	25.5	8.1	*11.5	2.7	175	280	35.8	33/46	1710	16.11.11
RS	155	5.0	12.6	4.5	8.3	2.8	306	310	32.4	32.4	1655	1.1.14
Q7 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
3.0 TDI S line	145	6.2	17.6	6.2	*3.8	-	268	443	47.6	32/36	2245	12.8.15
SQ7 4.0 TDI	155	5.1	12.6	4.4	7.0	2.9	429	664	47.6	24/38	2330	26.10.16
R8 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
V10 Plus	205	3.1	6.7	2.6	5.7	2.8	602	413	26.8	15/23	1555	30.12.15

<b>BENTLEY</b>												
Continental GT 2dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
GTC V8	187	4.5	10.8	3.9	*2.7	2.8	500	487	27.4	18/27	2470	4.4.12
GT	198	4.6	10.9	4.2	*2.4	2.5	567	516	34.9	7/15	2375	1.6.11
Flying Spur 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
W12	200	4.5	10.4	3.6	8.4	3.0	616	590	44.5	18/26	2475	7.8.13
Mulsanne 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
6.75 V8	184	5.7	13.7	4.8	*2.8	2.6	505	752	44.8	18/21	2745	21.9.11
Bentayga 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
W12	187	4.9	11.6	4.4	8.7	3.0	600	664	48.2	20/25	2440	18.5.16

<b>BMW</b>												
1 Series 3dr/5dr hatch ★★★★★												
116d ED Sport	124	10.2	30.0	10.0	17.3	-	114	199	37.7	54/60	1395	27.5.15
2 Series 3dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
220d SE	143	7.8	20.9	7.3	8.8	2.9	181	280	39.6	46/62	1450	19.3.14
220d xDrive	140	8.5	24.7	8.4	9.0	2.1	187	295	34.5	50/53	1610	1.4.15
M235i	155	6.3	14.7	5.7	5.4	2.7	322	332	28.1	26/35	1530	23.4.14
M2	155	4.4	10.3	3.6	6.2	2.6	365	343	33.7	31/37	1595	15.6.16
2 Series Active Tourer 5dr MPV ★★★★★												
218d Luxury	129	8.9	26.5	8.7	12.1	3.0	148	243	40.4	42/56	1450	24.12.14
3 Series 4dr saloon/5dr estate/5dr hatch ★★★★★												
320d Sport	146	7.7	20.9	7.6	9.7	2.6	181	280	36.2	41/57	1535	22.2.12
330d Touring	155	5.5	14.2	5.1	8.8	2.6	255	413	45.2	43/54	1735	21.11.12
318d Sport GT	130	9.5	28.6	9.5	12.4	2.7	141	236	36.5	50/57	1615	17.7.13
4 Series 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
435i M Sport	155	5.5	13.2	5.2	6.3	2.7	302	295	28.2	28/37	1585	18.9.13

Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/touring	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE
M4	155	4.1	8.8	3.2	6.1	2.4	425	406	34.0	29/36	1585	9.7.14
5 Series 4dr saloon/5dr GT/5dr estate ★★★★★												
530d SE	155	6.4	16.1	5.4	*3.3	3.0	241	398	48.1	36/46	1830	31.3.10
ActiveHybrid5	155	5.6	13.5	5.0	10.5	2.6	335	332	40.4	27/33	1925	23.5.12
M5	155	4.3	9.0	3.6	6.4	2.8	552	502	38.2	19/28	1975	29.12.11

6 Series 2dr coupé/convertible ★★★★★												
640d M Sport	155	5.3	13.1	4.6	*2.7	2.6	309	464	42.1	33/45	1840	2.11.11
7 Series 4dr saloon ★★★★★												
730Ld	153	6.4	17.1	6.0	8.2	3.1	261	457	50.2	40/49	1795	11.11.15
i3 5dr hatch ★★★★★												
1.3 Range Ext'd	93	8.1	-	7.6	*4.9	3.4	168	184	-	294wh/m	1390	22.1.14
i8 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
i8	155	4.5	10.6	3.7	3.3	2.8	357	420	33.3	50/40	1560	17.9.14
X1 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
xDrive20d xLine	136	8.2	24.2	8.0	11.8	2.8	187	295	35.1	43/49	1625	14.10.15
X3 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
xDrive20d SE	130	8.4	27.4	8.7	10.7	3.15	181	280	33.5	37/43	1825	12.1.11
X4 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
xDrive30d	145	5.9	16.9	5.8	11.1	2.6	255	416	43.7	34/45	1895	27.8.14
X5 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
M Drive M50d	155	5.7	15.3	5.2	9.5	2.9	376	546	40.5	28/34	2265	13.11.13
M	155	4.2	9.8	3.5	10.2	2.8	567	553	42.3	21/26	2350	13.5.15
x6 5dr SUV ★★★★★												
xDrive35d	147	7.3	21.2	7.1	*4.1	2.6	282	428	34.0	26/31	2275	11.6.08

<b>BUGATTI</b>												
Veyron 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
Super Sport	268	2.6	5.0	1.7	5.9	2.6	1183	1106	40.6	12/18	1995	2.3.11
<b>CATERHAM</b>												
Seven 2dr roadster ★★★★★												
CSR 260	143	4.1	9.8	3.1	4.4	3.3	260	200	22.8	24/26	570	11.10.05
160	100	8.4	-	8.7	7.6	4.8	80	79	16.7	39/45	490	20.11.13
620S	145	3.8	9.2	3.2	5.7	2.7	310	219	21.2	25/29	610	9.3.16

Seven 2dr roadster ★★★★★												
CSR 260	143	4.1	9.8	3.1	4.4	3.3	260	200	22.8	24/26	570	11.0/0.05
160	100	8.4	—	8.7	7.6	4.8	80	79	16.7	39/45	490	20.1/13
6205	145	3.8	9.2	3.2	5.7	2.7	310	219	21.2	25/29	610	9.3/16
CHEVROLET												
Camaro 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
6.2 V8	155	5.6	12.4	4.5	12.2	2.7	426	419	43.3	23/29	1175	20.6/12
Corvette 2dr coupé ★★★★★												
Stingray	181	4.4	9.4	3.3	11.7	2.3	460	465	48.4	22/33	1539	8.10/14



## ROAD TEST RESULTS

Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/combined	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE		
<b>NX 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	300h	112	9.7	30.4	9.1	*5.6	2.7	194	na	—	32/38	1905	1.10.14	
<b>RC F 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	RCF	168	4.8	10.7	3.9	12.9	2.9	471	391	39	24/28	1765	18.2.15	
<b>LOTUS</b>														
<b>Elise 2dr roadster</b> ★★★★★	1.6	127	6.7	21.1	7.1	14.3	2.9	134	118	24.7	39/42	900	26.5.10	
Cup 250	154	4.7	11.9	4.5	7.2	2.5	243	184	24.7	27/32	920	29.6.16		
<b>Evora 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	Evora S2+0	172	4.5	11.3	4.0	6.8	2.4	345	295	34.8	21/26	1430	30.3.11	
<b>Exige S 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	Exige S	170	4.1	9.6	3.7	5.5	2.5	345	295	27	21/30	1176	3.4.13	
<b>MASERATI</b>														
<b>GranTurismo 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	4.2GT	177	5.6	13.0	4.9	*2.8	2.8	400	339	32.1	18/27	1975	2.2.08	
<b>GranCabrio 2dr cabriolet</b> ★★★★★	4.7V8	175	5.1	11.9	4.5	11.2	2.4	433	362	32.1	17/22	2085	14.7.10	
<b>Ghibli 4dr saloon</b> ★★★★★	Diesel	155	6.5	17.2	6.0	5.1	2.7	271	443	43.3	31/40	1835	12.3.14	
<b>Levante 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	Diesel	143	6.8	19.9	6.9	4.3	3.4	271	443	46	26/42	2205	30.11.16	
<b>MAZDA</b>														
<b>2 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	1.5 Sky-Y-GSE	114	10.4	38.0	7.0	20.2	3.1	89	109	27.9	51/55	1050	22.4.15	
<b>3 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	2.2SE-L	130	9.0	26.6	9.1	9.9	3.0	148	280	29.7	46/60	1470	4.12.13	
<b>5 5dr MPV</b> ★★★★★	1.6D Sport	111	12.5	—	—	13.4	11.1	2.9	113	199	31.3	35/40	1555	16.2.11
<b>6 4dr saloon/5dr estate</b> ★★★★★	2.2 Sport Nav	139	7.9	21.2	7.1	7.9	2.7	173	309	35	44/56	1480	23.1.13	
<b>MX-5 2dr roadster</b> ★★★★★	1.5SE-L Nav	127	8.4	24.8	7.9	14.7	3.3	129	111	24.5	46/49	1050	2.9.15	
<b>CX-3 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	1.5D SE-L Nav	110	10.3	34.7	10.3	10.3	—	104	199	34.8	59/60	1275	22.7.15	
<b>CX-5 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	2.2 Sport Nav	126	9.4	28.0	9.1	9.7	2.3	148	280	34.9	24/55	1575	13.6.12	
<b>MCLAREN</b>														
<b>570S 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	3.8V8	204	3.1	6.4	2.2	10.2	2.6	562	443	36.5	23/37	1440	30.3.16	
<b>650S 2dr coupé/roadster</b> ★★★★★	3.8V8 Spider	204	3.2	6.3	2.2	5.9	2.5	641	500	35.4	18/24	1468	30.7.13	
<b>P1 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	P1	217	2.8	5.2	2.2	6.0	2.3	903	664	36.0	19.6/-	—	7.5.14	
<b>MERCEDES-AMG</b>														
<b>C63 4dr saloon</b> ★★★★★	C63	155	4.4	9.7	3.4	7.5	2.7	469	479	38.1	19/25	1715	3.6.15	
<b>C63S Vrtble</b> ★★★★★	C63S Vrtble	155	4.6	10.2	3.4	7.1	2.7	503	516	35.6	21/27	1850	8.2.17	
<b>GT 2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	S	193	3.6	7.8	2.8	5.5	2.5	503	479	34.7	20/29	1715	29.7.15	
<b>SLC 2dr convertible</b> ★★★★★	SLC 43	155	5.5	12.3	4.2	12.7	3.0	362	384	40.4	27/33	1595	6.7.16	
<b>MERCEDES-BENZ</b>														
<b>A-Class 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	A200 CDI Sport	130	8.9	28.3	9.0	10.1	2.5	134	221	37.1	48/58	1475	7.11.12	
<b>A45 AMG</b> ★★★★★	A45 AMG	168	4.2	11.5	4.3	4.5	2.8	355	322	38.1	27/37	1555	14.8.13	
<b>B-Class 5dr MPV</b> ★★★★★	B200 CDI Sport	130	9.4	28.8	9.6	11.9	2.7	134	221	37.8	20/52	1495	29.2.12	
<b>C-Class 4dr saloon/5dr estate</b> ★★★★★	C220 BlueTEC	145	8.1	22.9	8.1	11.7	2.8	168	295	42.4	41/51	1700	23.7.14	
<b>CLA 4dr saloon/5dr estate</b> ★★★★★	220 CDI Sport	143	8.3	23.1	8.0	4.8	2.9	168	258	37.3	44/54	1525	26.6.13	
<b>CLS 4dr saloon/5dr estate</b> ★★★★★	200 CDI S1's Brk134	101	29.7	9.6	11.9	3.4	134	221	33.5	53/59	1555	18.11.15		
<b>E-Class 4dr saloon/5dr estate/2dr convertible</b> ★★★★★	E250 CDI auto	149	7.7	20.3	7.4	*4.4	2.9	201	367	34.8	36/42	1780	24.6.09	
<b>CLS 4dr saloon/5dr estate</b> ★★★★★	350 CDI S1 Brake155	7.0	18.5	6.4	*3.8	2.9	261	457	39.6	36/43	1980	9.1.13		
<b>S-Class 4dr saloon/2dr coupé</b> ★★★★★	S350 BlueTEC	155	7.3	19.0	6.8	*3.9	2.7	255	457	45.6	34/44	1975	16.10.13	
<b>S63 AMG coupé</b> ★★★★★	S63 AMG coupé	155	4.5	9.6	3.4	6.8	2.7	577	664	42.8	22/25	2070	3.12.14	
<b>GLA 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	220 CDI SE	134	8.1	23.8	7.8	4.7	2.65	168	258	36.4	40/48	1535	14.5.14	
<b>GLC 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	GLC 250d	143	7.8	23.5	7.8	15.7	3.2	201	369	46.9	39/43	1845	10.2.16	
<b>M-Class 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	ML 250	130	8.8	28.4	9.3	11.0	2.9	201	368	36.2	38/41	2310	2.5.12	
<b>GL 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	GL 350 AMG Spt	137	8.3	24.8	8.2	5.0*	2.6	255	457	37.7	28/33	2455	24.7.13	
<b>SL 2dr convertible</b> ★★★★★	SL 500	155	4.3	9.9	3.6	6.5	2.7	429	516	39.6	10/24	1815	8.8.12	
<b>MG</b>														
<b>3 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	1.53 Form Spt	108	11.4	41.5	11.6	19.6	2.8	105	101	22.2	37/41	1150	25.12.13	
<b>GS 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	1.5TGI Excite	118	8.9	25.5	8.3	12.4	2.8	164	184	29.3	29/38	1395	20.7.16	
<b>MINI</b>														
<b>Mini 3dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	Cooper S	146	6.9	17.1	5.9	6.7	2.5	189	221	26.4	35/54	1235	2.4.14	
<b>Clubman 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	Cooper D	132	8.6	25.9	8.2	10.0	2.9	148	243	34.9	51/52	1320	25.11.15	
<b>Convertible 2dr convertible</b> ★★★★★	Cooper	129	9.2	25.4	8.8	12.4	2.7	134	162	31.0	46/53	1280	6.4.16	
<b>Countryman 5dr hatch</b> ★★★★★	Cooper D	129	9.0	26.4	8.4	11.5	2.8	148	243	36.2	42/48	1480	22.2.17	
<b>MITSUBISHI</b>														
<b>ASX 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	1.8 DID 3	124	10.0	28.8	10.1	8.6	2.8	148	221	29.6	49/57	1490	21.7.10	
<b>Outlander 5dr SUV</b> ★★★★★	2.2 DID GX5	118	10.2	32.9	10.1	11.1	3.07	147	265	34.7	38/45	1675	27.3.13	
<b>PHEV GX4hs</b> ★★★★★	PHEV GX4hs	106	10.0	30.5	9.5	6.2	3.0	200	245	—	44/38	1810	16.4.14	
<b>MORGAN</b>														
<b>Plus 8 2dr roadster</b> ★★★★★	4.8 V8	—	4.9	11.1	4.0	8.3	3.2	390	370	36.0	24/32	1230	22.8.12	
<b>3 Wheeler 2dr roadster</b> ★★★★★	3 Wheeler	115	8.0	29.9	7.7	5.1	3.56	80	103	21.3	30/-	520	6.6.12	

Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/1000rpm	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE		
NISSAN														
Note 5dr hatch	★★★★★	1.2 Acenta Prm	106	12.6	—	13.4	20.3	2.9	79	81	21.8	42/54	1036	9.10.13
Pulsar 5dr hatch	★★★★★	1.5dCi In-tec	118	10.9	35.5	10.8	13.1	2.9	108	192	35.7	50/57	1307	12.11.14
Juke 5dr SUV	★★★★★	Acenta 1.6	111	10.3	41.6	9.9	12.7	3.0	115	117	19.5	36/46	1230	3.11.10
Nismo 1.6	★★★★★	134	6.9	17.2	6.0	7.2	2.5	197	184	23.8	31/39	1295	22.5.13	
Leaf 5dr hatch	★★★★★	Leaf	91	10.9	—	11.4	7.3	2.8	107	207	8.76	320Wh/m	1545	27.4.11
Qashqai 5dr SUV	★★★★★	1.5dCi 2WD	113	10.8	39.2	11.1	12.9	2.9	109	192	35.0	49/56	1365	19.2.14
X-Trail 5dr SUV	★★★★★	1.6dCi 2WD	117	11.2	39.7	11.7	11.2	3.0	128	236	32.8	42/48	1550	13.8.14
GT-R 2dr coupé	★★★★★	Recaro	196	3.4	7.8	2.7	5.3	2.7	562	470	28.0	22/31	1752	16.11.16
NOBLE														
M600 2dr coupé	★★★★★	M600	225	3.5	6.8	2.5	4.7	2.45	650	604	29.9	18/25	1305	14.10.09
PEUGEOT														
208 3/5dr hatch	★★★★★	1.2 VTi Active	109	14.2	—	14.5	9.1	2.9	81	87	21.2	41/45	1080	18.7.12
308 3/5dr hatch	★★★★★	GTi 30th	143	6.5	16.1	5.8	6.7	2.9	205	221	25.6	41/42	1160	11.2.15
508 SW estate	★★★★★	1.6e-Hdi 115	118	10.1	32.6	10.4	13.9	3.0	114	199	38.5	48/59	1395	15.1.14
2.0Hdi163	★★★★★	2.0Hdi163	138	9.6	28.6	9.7	5.8	2.57	161	255	32.3	32/46	1680	25.5.11
2008 5dr SUV	★★★★★	1.6e-Hdi	117	10.7	37.8	11.5	11.8	3.2	114	199	32.7	49/59	1180	19.6.13
3008 5dr SUV	★★★★★	1.6BHD GTLe	117	12.0	44.3	12.1	13.2	3.2	118	221	34.6	42/53	1300	18.1.17
5008 5dr MPV	★★★★★	1.6Hdi 110	114	13.0	22.0	13.2	9.8	3.1	107	192	28.1	20/48	1547	27.1.10
PORSCHE														
Old Cayman 2dr coupé	★★★★★	Gt4	183	4.6	10.0	3.5	6.0	2.5	380	310	25.5	28/-	1340	23.9.15
718 2dr coupé/roadster	★★★★★	Boxster	171	5.4	12.2	4.3	5.2	2.5	296	280	25.8	26/36	1335	8.6.16
Cayman S	★★★★★	177	4.8	10.5	3.9	4.8	2.5	345	310	25.8	28/29	1430	10.8.16	
911 2dr coupé	★★★★★	GTR35	193	3.4	7.8	2.8	6.9	2.4	493	339	24.2	20/28	1495	19.8.15
New 911 2dr coupé	★★★★★	Carrera S	190	4.5	9.4	3.4	7.3	2.9	414	369	36.4	27/31	1535	20.1.16
911 Spyder 2dr coupé	★★★★★	4.6 V8	214	2.6	5.3	1.9	2.2	2.3	874	944	41.2	28/44	1740	22.10.14
Panamera 4dr saloon	★★★★★	4S Diesel	177	4.1	10.3	3.8	—	3.0	416	627	50.7	32/43	2050	1.2.17
Macan 5dr SUV	★★★★★	Turbo	165	4.7	11.8	4.3	7.9	2.4	394	406	35.7	22/31	2000	4.6.14
RADICAL														
SR3 SL 2dr roadster	★★★★★	SR3 SL	161	3.4	8.4	3.7	4.8	2.7	245	265	24.9	14/-	765	30.11.11
RENAULT														
Twingo 5dr hatch	★★★★★	Dynamique	94	17.6	—	19.1	29.4	2.9	69	67	20.8	42/52	865	29.10.14
Zoe 5dr hatch	★★★★★	Dynamique	84	12.3	—	13.9	9.1	2.9	87	162	7.8	250Wh/m	1468	31.7.13
Clio 5dr hatch	★★★★★	9.0TCE	113	13.4	—	13.9	19.1	2.8	89	100	23.8	38/47	1009	6.3.13
RS200 Turbo	★★★★★	143	7.4	20.9	6.9	9.1	2.8	197	177	20.8	32/37	1204	23.10.13	
Mégane 3dr hatch	★★★★★	275 Trophy-R	158	6.4	14.0	5.0	6.4	3.1	271	266	27	26/33	1297	5.11.14
New Mégane 5dr hatch	★★★★★	1.5dCi Dyn SV	116	11.1	35.2	11.1	13.2	2.8	108	192	33.9	47.2	1387	17.8.16
Grand Scenic 5dr MPV	★★★★★	dCi130D Dyn SV	114	35.8	11.3	10.2	3.4	129	236	32.1	47/61	1601	25.11.17	
Kadjar 5dr SUV	★★★★★	dCi115 Dyn S	113	14.5	—	14.6	17.2	2.3	108	192	35.0	52/69	1380	21.10.15
ROLLS-ROYCE														
Phantom 4dr saloon	★★★★★	Phantom	149	6.0	14.7	5.3	*3.0	2.7	453	531	38.7	8/17	2485	2.4.03
2dr Coupé	★★★★★	155	6.1	15.5	5.9	*3.4	2.9	453	531	38.7	7/18	2495	27.8.08	
Ghost 4dr saloon	★★★★★	Ghost	155	4.9	10.6	3.9	*2.3	2.6	563	575	46.0	18/23	2450	7.7.10
Wraith 2dr coupé	★★★★★	Wraith	155	4.6	10.0	4.5	*2.1	2.9	624	590	45.9	15/27	2435	21.5.14
Dawn 2dr convertible	★★★★★	Dawn	155	5.2	11.6	4.2	*2.4	2.9	563	575	47.7	19/25	2560	1.6.16
SEAT														
Ibiza 3/5dr hatch	★★★★★	Lepra 1.4TSi	140	7.0	19.6	6.3	*3.6	2.4	178	184	21.3	31/40	1172	21.10.09
Leon 3/5dr hatch	★★★★★	SC2.0TDI FR	142	8.0	22.1	7.5	9.6	2.9	181	280	35.6	47/54	1350	4.9.13
Supra SC280	★★★★★	155	5.9	13.6	4.4	7.1	2.7	276	258	27.2	28/36	1441	26.3.14	
Alhambra 5dr MPV	★★★★★	2.0TDI 170DSG	127	10.5	38.3	11.2	*7.0	3.0	168	276	35.5	35/40	1935	1.12.10
Ateca 5dr SUV	★★★★★	1.6TDI SE	114	10.5	35.6	9.3	14.0	2.9	114	184	36.4	50/62	1300	19.10.16
SMART														
Fortwo 3dr hatch	★★★★★	Prime	96	11.2	—	11.4	12.3	3.2	89	97	22.3	—/-	880	4.3.15
SKODA														
Fabia 5dr hatch	★★★★★	1.2TSI 90SE-L	113	12.6	4.6	12.5	15.0	3.4	89	118	26.1	45/49	1109	21.1.15
Octavia 4dr saloon/5dr estate	★★★★★	1.6TDI SE	121	11.6	43.0	12.5	13.6	2.7	104	184	32.3	46/56	1230	10.4.13
Rapid 4dr saloon	★★★★★	1.2TSI	114	11.3	43.5	11.5	14.2	2.9	84	118	26.1	40/47	1175	5.12.12
Superb 5dr hatch/estate	★★★★★	2.0TDI SE	135	8.8	24.9	8.2	11.8	2.8	148	251	37.2	47/54	1505	9.9.15
Yeti 5dr SUV	★★★★★	2.0TDI 140	119	10.7	39.1	11.2	12.3	2.7	138	236	34.5	36/46	1545	7.10.09
Kodiahq 5dr SUV	★★★★★	2.0TDI Edition	121	9.5	34.7	10.1	12.2	2.8	148	251	33.5	37/48	1751	23.11.16





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## STAR RATINGS EXPLAINED

- ☆☆☆☆☆ **0-20%** Inherently dangerous/unsafe. Tragically, irredeemably flawed.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **20-35%** Appalling. Massively significant failings.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **35-50%** Very poor. Fails to meet any accepted class boundaries.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **50-60%** Poor. Within acceptable class boundaries in a few areas. Still not recommendable.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **60-65%** Off the pace. Below average in nearly all areas.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **75-70%** Acceptable. About average in key areas, but disappoints.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **70-75%** Competent. Above average in some areas, average in others. Outstanding in none.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **75-80%** Good. Competitive in key areas.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **80-85%** Very good. Very competitive in key areas, competitive in secondary respects.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **85-92%** Excellent. Near class leading in key areas, and in some ways outstanding.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ **>93%** Brilliant, unsurpassed. All but flawless.

### ABARTH

**595 3dr hatch** £15,090-£21,640  
Good value hot hatch and great fun to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 T-Jet Competizione

**595 Convertible 2dr open** £17,090-£23,640  
Open-top hot hatch has a softer ride than the tin-top car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 T-Jet C Competizione

**Biposto 695 3dr hatch** £33,055  
Fastest Abarth has merit as an entry-level track car, but a firm ride spoils its otherwise convincing dynamic ability on public roads ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 T-Jet

**124 Spider 2dr open** £29,565-£31,605  
Only a mildly tuned upgrade of Fiat's standard car but it's a revelation, albeit one that comes with a hefty price tag ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4T Multijet

### ALFA ROMEO

**Mito 3dr hatch** £12,960-£20,500  
Likeable hatch is well-equipped, good looking, cheap to run and practical, but dynamic flaws make it a class also-ran ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 TB Twinair 105 Progression

**Giulietta 5dr hatch** £18,700-£28,735  
Long in the tooth, but styling and dynamic verve still have the power to seduce. Not rounded enough, nor quite expensive enough to the touch ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 TB Multiair 150 Super

**Giulia 4dr saloon** £29,180-£59,000  
Alfa is taking the fight to the Germans with its good-looking saloon. Lacks the finesse of its rivals and is only available as an automatic. However the V6 Quadrifoglio is a compelling car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d Multijet 180 Super

**4C 2dr coupé/spyder** £52,505-£59,505  
Flawed, but the best current Alfa by miles. Rewarding to drive, if not the last word in finesse ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.75T Spider

### ALPINA

**B3 4dr saloon/5dr estate** £57,450-£58,950  
Has fallen behind on the power stakes. Still a niche proposition ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** B3 Biturbo

**B4 2dr saloon/convertible** £58,950-£62,950  
Less well-mannered than an M4. Better on the road than the track ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** B4 Biturbo

**B5 4dr saloon** £81,950  
Huge pace and better suited to the autobahns than B-roads ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** B5 Biturbo

**B6 2dr coupé/convertible** £96,950-£113,613  
A ballistic coupé and convertible, but more at home on the autobahns ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** B6 Biturbo

**B7 4dr saloon** £115,000-£123,782  
A luxury saloon without a huge amount of power – an S-Class AMG challenger ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** B7 Biturbo LWB AWD

**D3 4dr saloon/ 5dr estate** £47,950-£49,950  
An intoxicating mix of performance and fuel economy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** D3 Biturbo

**D4 2dr coupé/convertible** £50,950-£54,950  
Precise dynamics with added Alpina kudos and a great engine ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** D4 Biturbo

**D5 4dr saloon/5dr estate** £56,950-£59,950  
A rapid, usable and cheaper alternative to an M5 ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** D5 Biturbo

**XD3 5dr SUV** £56,450  
Hugely fast, capable and desirable. A triumph ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 XD3

### ARIEL

**Atom Odr open** £30,572  
Superbike-fast lightweight mentalist is as exhilarating as they come. Less usable than some but no less marvellous ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0i-VTEC 310

**Nomad Odr open** £na  
If there were simply a list of our top five favourite cars, the Nomad might just top it. A revelation and a riot ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.4i-VTEC 235

### ASTON MARTIN

**Vantage 2dr coupé** £88,747-£96,244  
What the Vantage lacks in agility it makes up for with pomp, presence and grunty V8 power. V12 S version is very special ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12 S

**Vantage Roadster 2dr open** £97,744-£105,244  
Drop-top suits the Vantage's relaxed nature ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12 S

**DB9 2dr coupé** £140,062-£165,949  
As attractive-looking as ever but also showing its age. V12 is disarming; handling is equally so. A bit unreined ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12 GT

**DB9 Volante 2dr open** £152,942  
Open-top version of the handsome DB9 is just as charming ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12

**DB11 2dr coupé** £154,955-167,070  
The stunning replacement for the attractive, if long in the tooth, DB9 ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.2 V12

**Vanquish 2dr coupé** £196,005-£199,000  
Dazzling exterior beauty and a warm, expressive motive character are the big Aston's selling points. Plays the cruiser very well ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12

**Vanquish Volante 2dr open** £200,050-208,005  
A dazzling cruiser at heart with infinite head room ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12

**Rapide S 4dr saloon** £150,749  
There may not be room in the back for top hats, but the Rapide is the most elegant four-door sports car in the world ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.9 V12 S

### AUDI

**A1 3dr hatch** £14,530-£25,600  
Audi's answer to the Mini. Fun and refined ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 TFSI 150 S Line

**A1 Sportback 5dr hatch** £15,150-£26,335  
Rear doors add convenience to an attractive package ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 TFSI 150 S Line

**A3 3dr hatch** £19,365-£33,840  
Outstanding cabin quality, peppery engines and low costs of ownership make it eerily good for more disinterested drivers ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 2.0 TDI 150 Sport, 2.0 TSI 310 S3 quattro

**A3 Sportback 5dr hatch** £19,985-£35,930  
All of the above but with five doors and a usefully larger boot ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 2.0 TDI 150 Sport, 2.0 TSI 310 S3 quattro

**A3 Saloon 4dr saloon** £24,235-£36,480  
Undercuts the case to own an A4 very effectively indeed. Upmarket interior and unexpectedly good to drive – if a bit shy on space ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 Sport

**A3 Cabriolet 2dr open** £26,875-£40,670  
Compact, affordable, usable and refined, with strong performance and composed handling ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 Sport

**A4 4dr saloon** £26,350-£44,000  
High quality and competent; leaves dynamic finesse to its rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TFSI 252 Sport quattro

**A4 Avant 5dr estate** £27,880-£45,400  
Classy, demure and very tech savvy Audi estate ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 190 Sport

**A4 Allroad 5dr estate** £37,725-£39,630  
The classy and demure estate gets a rugged makeover making it a capable 4x4 A4 ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 190

**New A5 Coupé 2dr coupé** £30,700-£4700  
Refreshed A5 gets a sharper look and a refreshed interior and carries the fight to the 4 Series and C-Class coupé ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 TDI 286 S Line

**A5 Coupé 2dr coupé** £31,910-£44,870  
Good-looking coupé is showing its age now ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 190 S Line

**A5 Sportback 5dr hatch** £30,035-£44,070  
Refined four-door coupé is short on charm and finesse ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 190 S Line

**A5 Cabriolet 2dr open** £35,690-£47,045  
No spring chicken but still appeals for its looks. Little more practical than smaller options. Lower-powered, steel-sprung trim is best ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 TFSI 177 S Line

**A6 4dr saloon** £32,995-£57,215  
Perfect choice for anyone looking for a smart office cubicle on wheels. Supremely constructed but a bit soulless to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 TDI 218 SE

**A6 Avant 5dr estate** £35,095-£86,420  
A capable stress buster; BitDI engine is a giant-killer ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 BitDI 320 SE quattro

**A6 Allroad 5dr estate** £46,505-£56,480  
Rugged 4x4 A6. Even more pricey ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 TDI 218 quattro

**A7 Sportback 5dr hatch** £46,865-£92,060  
Curiously droopy looks don't flatter an otherwise impressive machine. Packed with gadgetry. Excellent engines; a bit remote to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.0 TFSI 560 RS7 quattro

**A8 4dr saloon** £63,520-£99,265  
Doesn't convince across the board, but there's no denying that the brand's strengths make for a convincing limousine ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.2 TDI 385 SE Exec quattro

**Q2 5dr SUV** £22,380-£32,720  
Another small SUV from Audi, with the intention of being the stepping stone between the A3 and the SUV range ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 TFSI 150 S Line

**Q3 5dr SUV** £26,150-£49,185  
Typically refined and competent but feels more A3 than SUV ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 S Line

**Q5 5dr SUV** £33,710-£52,300  
Appealing combination of Audi brand allure with affordable SUV practicality. Nothing special to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TFSI 230 S Line quattro

**Q7 5dr SUV** £48,455-£70,970  
Biggest Audi is typically remote and unengaging to drive but fast and light on its feet. Cabin is both huge and brilliantly classy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 TDI 218 SE

**TT 2dr coupé** £27,585-£41,050  
TT is still doing what it always did well: serving up plenty of pace, style and usability for the money. Now better to drive, too ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TFSI Sport

**TT Roadster 2dr open** £29,215-£42,800  
Plenty of pace and driver reward, as well as Audi-brand prestige and design-icon style ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TFSI S Line



**R8 2dr coupé /spyder** £119,520-£134,520  
Usable but no less involving or dramatic for it. V10 is brutal ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.2 FSI 540 V10

### BAC

**Mono 2dr open** £111,168  
An F-22 Raptor for the road – only better built ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** Mono 2.3

### BENTLEY

**Continental GT 2dr coupé** £140,355-£168,355  
Audi-sourced V8 is so good that it completely reinvigorates the Conti. Cabin is as lavish and sumptuous as you'll find ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.0 V8 S

**Continental GT Convertible 2dr open** £154,455-£185,255  
Lavish and sumptuous convertible ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.0 V8 S

**Mulsanne 4dr saloon** £229,415-£252,055  
If the Phantom is best experienced from the back seat, the Mulsanne is best sampled from the front. Uniquely torquey, laid-back V8 ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.75 V8 Speed

**Flying Spur 4dr saloon** £142,855-£161,580  
Undoubtedly luxurious and with a lovely interior, but misses the class mark on rolling refinement and tech sophistication ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.0 W12

**Bentayga 4dr SUV** £160,255-£229,555  
Bentley's first attempt to crack the luxury SUV market ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.0 W12

### BMW

**1 Series 3dr hatch** £20,875-£31,875  
Strong on performance and economy but not as good as it could be ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** M140i

**1 Series 5dr hatch** £21,460-£32,405  
Still looks clumsy from some angles, and not as fine-handling as the feeder BMW ought to be. Strong on performance and economy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** M140i

**2 Series Coupé 2dr coupé** £23,040-£44,070  
A proper compact coupé now. Could be better equipped ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** M2

**2 Series Convertible 2dr open** £26,730-£38,535  
Better than 1-series forebear, but still lacks truly distinguishing premium-brand qualities ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** M240i

**2 Series Active Tourer 5dr MPV** £23,010-£34,405  
BMW's front-drive hatch is a proper contender ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 220d Sport

**2 Series Gran Tourer 5dr MPV** £25,010-£34,770  
Brings a proper premium brand to the table but appeals for more reasons than that. Third row seats are not adult-sized ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 220d Sport

**3 Series 4dr saloon** £25,160-£59,605  
Beats the rival Jag XE on cabin space and engine range; doesn't quite measure up on handling finesse. Still a talent, mind you ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 320d M Sport, M3

**3 Series Touring 5dr estate** £26,590-£42,355  
There are more practical estates on the market, but the 3 Series Touring's handling and performance make it one of the most enjoyable options ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 320d M Sport

**3 Series GT 5dr hatch** £30,405-£43,415  
Hatchback practicality meets 3 Series talent. Duller but decent ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 320d M Sport

**ALPINA D4**  
'Genuine economy laced with genuine power. A real-world heavyweight'  
MORE AT [AUTOCAR.CO.UK](http://AUTOCAR.CO.UK)





**FORD FIESTA ST**  
'Our reigning hot supermini provides enormous fun for the money'  
MORE AT AUTOCAR.CO.UK

#### 4 Series 2dr coupé £30,260-£60,065

More of a talented GT than brilliant B-road steer ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 420d M Sport, M4

#### 4 Series Convertible 2dr open £35,025-£63,360

Mixes creditable, sporting driving dynamics with fine engines and usable back seats. Balanced and complete ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 420d M Sport, M4

#### 4 Series Gran Coupé 4dr saloon £30,260-£45,745

A prettier 3 Series. Very good – but not better ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 420d M Sport

#### 5 Series 4dr saloon

£33,380-£73,985  
Performance, efficiency, handling, practicality, desirability and value rolled into one. Excellent ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 520d M Sport, M5

#### 5 Series Touring 5dr estate

£35,620-£51,270  
Excellent car made more practical. 520d is the best ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 520d M Sport

#### 5 Series GT 5dr hatch

£49,475-£60,475  
Fine cabin but only seats four. Poor ride and steering ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 520d M Sport

#### 6 Series Coupé 2dr coupé

£59,535-£93,265  
Munich's big GT comes in two-door, four-door and drop-top guises. All feel heavy and just a little bit ordinary to spend time in ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 640i SE

#### 6 Series Gran Coupé 4dr saloon

£59,535-£95,665  
Back doors prove to be a brilliant visual coup ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 640i SE

#### 6 Series Convertible 2dr open

£65,435-£98,215  
Great engines and interior. More GT than sports car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 640i SE

#### 7 Series 4dr saloon

£63,350-£80,330  
Rules on in-car entertainment and diesel powertrain sophistication; otherwise too bland to stand out ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 730d M Sport

#### X1 5dr SUV

£27,440-£36,720  
Pick of the premium brand bunch, but doesn't rule the class as BMWs do elsewhere. A bit unrefined and ordinary-handling ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** xDrive 20d M Sport

#### X3 5dr SUV

£33,945-£46,050  
A close match for the Land Rover Discovery Sport and Jaguar F-Pace on practicality and on-road dynamism, with better engines and better equipment levels ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** xDrive 20d M Sport

#### X4 5dr SUV

£37,545-£50,645  
A downsized X6 is respectable enough, but the cheaper X3 is a better option ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** xDrive 20d M Sport

#### X5 5dr SUV

£44,575-£90,200  
Accomplished and luxurious but no longer the standard-setter on SUV handling. Comfortable and capable; avoid the blingy M50d ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** xDrive 30d SE

#### X6 5dr SUV

£56,515-£93,100  
The world's first off-road coupé, but appearances make it difficult to love ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** X6M

#### i3 5dr hatch

£32,330-£35,480  
Our favourite high-end small car of the moment happens to be an EV. With a generous budget and modest miles in mind, it could revolutionise your motoring ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** i3 94Ah EV Rex

**i8 2dr coupé** £104,540-£112,535  
If BMW's plug-in hybrid is what the future of the sports car looks like, we welcome it. A visual knock-out; not quite mind-blowing to drive – but close ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5

### CADILLAC

#### CT6 4dr saloon

£69,990  
Sharp-looking big saloon is a replacement for the CTS, but still needs a diesel ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0T V6 AWD Platinum

#### CTS-V 4dr saloon

£75,415  
Supercharged Chevy V8 serves up 640bhp; eat your heart out, Germany. Handling lacks distinguishing finesse ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.2 V8

#### Escalade 5dr SUV

£81,380-£94,740  
Cadillac's luxury SUV, but it remains large and ungainly. ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.2 V8 Premium AWD

### CATERHAM

#### Seven 2dr open

£18,995-£49,995  
360R is the sweet spot in the revised range, its remapped Duratec giving just the right hit of performance ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 0.7 160S, 2.0 360

### CHEVROLET

#### Corvette 2dr coupé/convertible

£62,470-£93,240  
LHD only and less usable and deft-handling than the class standard, but disarming and inimitable. Serious engine for the money ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.2 V8 Z06 3LZ

#### Camaro 2dr coupé/convertible

£31,755-£46,480  
An affordable American muscle car, but LHD only and less usable and deft-handling than the class standard. Charming and fierce nonetheless ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.2 V8

### CITROËN

#### C-Zero 5dr hatch

£16,995  
Well-engineered electric city car. Too expensive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 49kW

#### C1 3dr hatch

£8495-£11,925  
Slightly better priced than its Toyota sibling but less visually charming ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 PureTech 82 Feel

#### C1 5dr hatch

£10,555-£12,775  
As above but with rear doors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 PureTech 82 Feel

#### C3 5dr hatch

£11,580-£17,565  
Comfortable and well priced but not much fun ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 PureTech 82 Edition

#### C4 5dr hatch

£15,195-£20,850  
Good looking but lacks the polish of the latest rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 100 Flair

#### C4 Cactus 5dr hatch

£12,990-£20,495  
Interesting and novel but flawed to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 PureTech 82 Flair

#### C3 Picasso 5dr MPV

£16,575-£18,640  
Soft-handling, square, quirky. Not up to Citroën's latest standards on cabin finish or handling ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 100 Edition

#### C4 Picasso 5dr MPV

£19,635-£27,660  
Plushness and an improved dynamic make for a better car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 120 Exclusive S&S

#### Grand C4 Picasso 5dr MPV

£21,935-£29,360  
Alternative approach to MPV design produces something fresh and

unusual, as well as comfy, spacious and quietly upmarket ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 120 Exclusive S&S

#### Berlingo Multispace 5dr MPV

£13,995-£19,325  
Likeable, practical van-based MPV ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 100 Feel Edition S&S

### DACIA

#### Duster 5dr SUV

£9495-£16,795  
The value champion of the crossover world. Basic in entry-level trim, but if cheap family transport is what you need, the Duster provides it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 16v 115 Ambiance Prime 2WD

#### Sandero 5dr hatch

£5995-£10095  
A clever budget prospect, but its limitations are unavoidable ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Ambiance Prime

#### Sandero Stepway 5dr hatch

£8495-£11,395  
More expensive – but still limited ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 TCe Laureate

#### Logan MCV 5dr estate

£6995-£11,095  
Lacks its stablemates' charm but retains their cheapness ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Ambiance Prime

### DS

#### 3 3dr hatch

£14,395-£25,495  
Premium-brand philosophy and adventurous aesthetics appeal, as do strong engines, but those more focused on dynamics will prefer the less expensive Mini Cooper ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 100 Prestige S&S

#### 3 CABRIOLET 2dr open

£18,595-£25,295  
A zesty car that remains fun to drive despite removing its roof. Not as composed as some of its rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 100 Prestige S&S

#### 4 5dr hatch

£20,045-£26,045  
Jack of all trades, master of none. Nice styling ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 120 Prestige

#### 4 Crossback 5dr hatch

£22,295-£27,045  
A more rugged form of the DS 4 doesn't make it any better ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 PureTech 130 S&S

#### 5 5dr hatch

£27,950-£35,970  
Design marvel. Shame it doesn't function so well ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHdi 150 Elegance

### FERRARI

#### California 2dr open

£154,360  
New turbocharged engine brings entry-level Ferrari back to a competitive mark. Heavy but slick and rewarding to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.9 V8 T

#### 488 GTB 2dr coupé

£182,864  
Calm ride mixed with explosive performance ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.5 V8

#### 488 Spider 2dr open

£204,391  
The complete supercar. Minus roof. A world-class head-turner ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.5 V8

#### F12 Berlinetta 2dr coupé

£238,993  
Thrilling like only a front-engined V12 Ferrari could be. Crushing performance and unparalleled drama, albeit highly strung ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.3 V12 tdf

#### GTCLusso 2dr coupé

£230,430  
V12 Prancing Horse with four-wheel drive and four-wheel steer plus room for extra passengers. What's not to like? ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.3 V12

### FIAT

#### 500 3dr hatch

£11,050-£15,350  
Super-desirable, super-cute city car. Pleasant, if not involving, to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Twinair 105 Lounge

#### 500C 2dr open

£13,700-£19,830  
Roll-top cabriolet is a better drive than the hatch ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Twinair Lounge

#### 500L 5dr MPV

£13,665-£22,465  
A costly option but has the style to fill out some of its missing substance ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.3 Multijet Lounge

#### 500L MPV 5dr MPV

£19,205-£21,705  
Loses some of its charm as it gets bigger, but has seven-seats ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.3 Multijet Lounge

#### 500X 5dr hatch

£14,295-£26,315  
Familiar styling works rather well as a crossover. Drives okay, too ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 Multiair 140 Cross

#### Tipo 5dr hatch/estate

£12,995-£19,995  
A 90s reboot, but without the flabby and uninspiring nature. The new Tipo is a decent car to drive and has ample space inside ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Twinair Lounge

#### Panda 5dr hatch

£9510-£18,260  
May not have quite kept pace with its rivals on equipment and value but still sells robust, practical charm better than most ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Twinair Lounge

#### Punto 3dr hatch

£11,485-£13,260  
Spacious and characterful supermini. Still heavily dated, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Pop+

#### Qubo 5dr MPV

£11,695-£15,695  
Fiat's take on a versatile van-based MPV ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 Active

#### Doblo 5dr MPV

£13,775-£19,940  
Outdated MPV kept afloat by new engines ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 95 Easy Air

#### 124 Spider 2dr open

£19,545-£23,295  
The 124 name revived through a shared platform with Mazda ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 Multiair 140

### FORD

#### KA+ 5dr hatch

£8995-£10,295  
Besides the plus added to the name, the Ka gets two extra doors and signals a breath of fresh air for the range ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Zetec

#### Fiesta 3dr hatch

£13,545-£22,895  
No longer a class-beater in every regard, but so far ahead of the curve on ride and handling that it's unassailable ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.0T 100 Ecoboost Zetec, 1.6T Ecoboost ST-3

#### Fiesta 5dr hatch

£14,145-£18,495  
As above, but even more useful with rear doors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.0T 100 Ecoboost Zetec, 1.5 TDCi 75 Titanium

#### Focus 5dr hatch

£16,445-£31,250  
Still appeals for its ride and handling, though not as much as perhaps it should. Spacious, stylish and well-priced. ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.0T 100 Ecoboost Style, 1.5 TDCi 120 Zetec

#### Focus Estate 5dr estate

£17,545-£29,245  
Well-mannered and comfortable, but a Skoda Octavia carries more ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.0T 100 Ecoboost Style, 1.5 TDCi 120 Zetec

#### Mondeo 5dr hatch/saloon

£21,795-£32,745  
Does what great Fords always have: massively over-delivers on practicality, value and handling. Cabin low-rent in places, but otherwise excellent ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0T Ecoboost 240

#### Mondeo Estate 5dr estate

£22,945-£30,360  
A vast and enjoyable estate. Reasonably priced ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi 180 Titanium

#### B-Max 5dr MPV

£15,345-£19,795  
Sliding back doors, responsive handling and keen value give supermini-sized B-Max some convincing selling points ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 105 Titanium X Powershift

## AUTOCAR TOP FIVES SUPER-SALOONS



### Mercedes-AMG C63 S

Mercedes-AMG's best hot four-door of a big bunch. Chassis is uncompromising but engaging with it. ★★★★★

From £66,800



### Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio

Wields its rear-drive platform to captivating effect. Other facets not quite as stellar, but overall a dynamic return to form. ★★★★★

From £61,000



### BMW M3

Sharp, lean and as precise as a surgeon's scalpel. Incredibly well-mannered but a bit reserved at low speeds. ★★★★★

From £56,600



### Jaguar XJR

The Jaguar XJR is an enormously attractive and satisfyingly rapid luxury saloon with chiselled style and performance kudos to burn. ★★★★★

From £92,400



### Audi RS7 Sportback

Mixes the punch of the RS6 and sleek looks of the A7 to offer serious all-weather ground-covering ability with a dash of practicality. ★★★★★

From £86,985



**C-Max 5dr MPV** £19,195-£27,395  
A fun to drive and easy to live with five-seat MPV ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6T 182 E'boost Titanium X SS

**Grand C-Max 5dr MPV** £21,295-£28,865  
Mid-sized Ford handles well, and can be had in five- or seven-seat versions. Good value, good to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi150 Titanium

**S-Max 5dr MPV** £25,895-£37,045  
Better looking and better to drive than most but not quite the class-leader its predecessor was ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi150 Zetec

**Galaxy 5dr MPV** £27,845-£38,045  
Huge seven-seat MPV. Easy to place on the road. Not cheap ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi180 Titanium

**Tourneo Connect 5dr MPV** £16,545-£21,245  
Ford's van-based MPV is practical and spacious ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 TDCi120 Zetec

**Grand Tourneo Connect 5dr MPV** £19,945-£23,495  
Van-based seven-seater offers huge carrying capacity and better dynamic manners than you'd expect ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 TDCi120 Zetec

**Tourneo Custom 5dr MPV** £32,635-£36,950  
A Ford Transit developed to haul people about ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi130 Zetec L2

**Ecosport 5dr hatch** £15,045-£17,995  
Pumped up Fiesta is okay, but developing-world origins show through ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0T Ecoboost 125 Zetec

**Edge 5dr SUV** £29,995-£40,250  
Mid-sized US-developed SUV joins Ford's fleet to take on the crossover market ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi210 Sport AWD

**Kuga 5dr SUV** £20,845-£34,445  
Bigger, bolder and sharper-looking than its predecessor but still in possession of taut, responsive handling. Not brilliant over rougher terrain ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDCi150 Zetec

**Ranger 5dr SUV** £17,876-£27,776  
Ford's UK pick-up gets a US-style facelift. A rugged beast ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2 TDCi160 XL Double Cab

**Mustang 2dr coupé/convertible** £31,745-£40,745  
American muscle built for the UK ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 Fastback

## GINETTA

**G40 2dr coupé** £29,950  
A balanced, affordable and fine-looking thing. Closed cockpit is a nice touch; some of the finish not quite up to snuff ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** G40R

## HONDA

**Jazz 5dr hatch** £13,495-£17,705  
Not the most compact or vivacious car in the segment, but cleverly packaged. Handling decent; engines could be better ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.3i-VTEC SE Navi

**Civic 5dr hatch** £16,470-£32,300  
Gets expensive if you want a high equipment level, but frugal diesel engine merits attention. Quirky but spacious with it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.6i-DTEC Sport Navi, 2.0i-VTEC Turbo Type-R

**Civic Tourer 5dr estate** £18,585-£27,035  
Versatile, comfortable and frugal; only its price marks its scorecard ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6i-DTEC SE Plus Navi

**HR-V 5dr hatch** £18,495-£26,055  
Cleverly packaged and comfortable crossover. Bland performance and forgettable, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6i-DTEC SE Navi

**CR-V 5dr SUV** £22,755-£36,210  
Tardis-like SUV stalwart has lots of space for five and a big boot. Frugal and easy to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0i-VTEC SE Plus 2WD

## HYUNDAI

**i10 5dr hatch** £8995-£13,045  
Prioritises maturity over the liveliness of its forebear, but the resulting car is practical and well-priced ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 SE

**i20 5dr hatch** £10,995-£17,700  
Appealing budget supermini combines decent performance and equipment with good practicality and low running costs ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 84 Premium SE

**i20 COUPE 3dr hatch** £13,025-£16,200  
As above, in sleeper coupé form. Lacking dynamically ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 84 Sport

**i30 5dr hatch** £15,295-£23,105  
As good as we've come to expect but not one inch better ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi110 SE Nav

**i30 Tourer 5dr estate** £16,995-£24,795  
As good as we've come to expect and more practical ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi110 SE Nav

**i40 4dr saloon** £19,695-£27,595  
Useful, inoffensive and well-priced. No fireworks here ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.7 CRDi141 SE Nav

**i40 Tourer 5dr estate** £20,945-£28,945  
A practical estate but still rather dull and ordinary ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.7 CRDi141 SE Nav

**Genesis 4dr saloon** £50,705  
Only available with a petrol V6 and only at close to £50k. Ambitious but quite a long way out of its depth ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V6 GDi RWD

**ix20 5dr hatch** £14,145-£16,845  
Usable high-roofed hatch is short on flair ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi115 SE

**i800 MPV** £24,845-£26,845  
Van-based MPV is surprisingly decent and easy to drive. Lots of seats if you need 'em ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5 CRDi136 SE

**Tucson 5dr SUV** £18,995-£32,700  
Classy, roomy cabin and predictable handling. Very competitive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 CRDi185 SE Nav 4WD

**Santa Fe 5dr SUV** £31,850-£38,295  
Another big Korean with lots of space on offer for not a lot of cash. Slick, comfy and likeable, if a bit expensive to own ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2 CRDi Premium 7st

## INFINITI

**Q30 5dr hatch** £20,550-£32,330  
Infiniti's first hatch uses a lot of the Mercedes A-Class blueprint ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d Premium Tech Auto

**Q50 4dr saloon** £29,320-£47,625  
Credible compact saloon competitor with some novel touches ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d Premium Tech Auto

**Q70 4dr saloon** £33,750-£47,700  
Big Infiniti has a spacious cabin but limited practicality in the broader sense. Daimler diesel engine is quite coarse and slow ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d Premium Tech

**QX30 5dr hatch** £29,490-£33,370  
Infiniti's first hatchback gets a higher-riding, more rugged look ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d 7CT AWD Premium

**QX50 5dr SUV** £34,500-£42,600  
Focused on-road SUV. Drives well; very little interior space ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.7 V6 QX GT

**QX70 5dr SUV** £43,770-£55,270  
Big, powerful SUV. None of the finesse of the X5 or Land Rovers ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.7 V6 GT Premium

## ISUZU

**D-Max 4dr pick-up** £17,942-£32,342  
Impressive towing and payload ability; let down by agricultural engines ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5d 4x4 Single Cab

## JAGUAR

**XE 4dr saloon** £29,775-£44,995  
Baby Jag tops the pile thanks to outstanding driver appeal. Poised and engaging but refined with it. Not as roomy as some ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0i 340 S

**XF 4dr saloon** £32,300-£49,995  
Outstanding ride and handling and a rich, pleasant cabin. Not as roomy as some; four-cylinder engines disappoint ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 V6 380 RWD Auto

**XJ 4dr saloon** £58,690-99,370  
No one else mixes dynamism and refinement like Jaguar. It makes the XJ a rare blend – although not as spacious or cossetting as some ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 XJR

**F-Type 2dr coupé** £51,775-£110,000  
A full-blooded assault on Porsche's backyard, with noise, power and wealth. As characterful as any Jag, ever ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 SVR AWD

**F-Type Convertible 2dr open** £57,260-£115,485  
Serious money, but a serious car with a likeable wild side ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 SVR AWD

**F-Pace 5dr SUV** £35,020-£52,300  
Credible first SUV effort handles like a proper Jaguar. Deserves a better engine; ticks all the boxes for refinement, handling and ease of use ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0d V6 300 S AWD Auto

## JEEP

**Renegade 5dr SUV** £17,495-£28,595  
Middle compact crossover with chunky looks but no obvious charm ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 Multijet II Longitude

**Wrangler 3dr SUV** £31,840-£36,435  
Heavy-duty off-roader lacks on-road manners ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.6 V6 Rubicon

**Wrangler 5dr SUV** £33,510-£34,910  
Heavy-duty and large off-roader is rather cumbersome ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.6 V6 Rubicon

**Cherokee 5dr SUV** £26,345-£40,150  
Hamstrung by poor UK spec. Uninspiring, but roomy and practical ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0d Longitude+

**Grand Cherokee 5dr SUV** £45,050-£69,865  
The best Jeep. Comfortable and well-equipped ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 V6 CRD Overland

## KIA

**Picanto 5dr hatch** £8545-£12,595  
Nice drive and cabin, but overshadowed now by rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 SE

**Rio 5dr hatch** £10,945-£17,445  
Looks great and is well-priced but nowhere near its European rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 CRDi 3



**MERCEDES-BENZ SL500**  
'The luxurious SL at its best. Bags of performance and refinement'  
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**Cee'd 5dr hatch** £15,105-£23,610  
Another looker from Schreyer but dynamically forgettable ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi134 GT-Line ISG

**Cee'd Sportwagon 5dr estate** £17,595-£23,430  
Another looker, this time slightly bigger but also forgettable ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi134 GT-Line ISG

**Procee'd 3dr hatch** £17,495-£23,310  
Slightly smaller and a more dynamic looker, but still not one to remember ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi134 GT-Line ISG

**Soul 5dr hatch** £12,805-£29,995  
Looks divide opinion. Better value now, but still hardly the best option ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi Connect

**Optima 4dr saloon** £21,495-£33,995  
Looks the part but is well off the European saloon pace ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.7 CRDi 21SG

**Optima Sportwagon 5dr estate** £22,295-£29,595  
Looks the part but it's engine and finish are well off the European estate pace ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.7 CRDi 21SG

**Venga 5dr MPV** £11,995-£18,570  
Versatile interior, but firm ride and high price disappoint ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi114 3 ISG

**Carens 5dr MPV** £18,195-£27,150  
Nicely up to scratch now but no class leader. Good value, without feeling at all cheap or austere ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CRDi114 3 ISG

**Niro 5dr SUV** £21,295-£26,995  
Kia's first fully hybrid car launched in the UK is a solid attempt, but lacks the refinement of others on the market ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 GDi 2

**Sportage 5dr SUV** £18,000-£31,650  
Good ride, handling and usability. Looks good and is decent value ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 CRDi134 GT-Line AWD

**Sorento 5dr SUV** £28,795-£40,950  
Kia aims to move upmarket with this smart, nicely appointed seven-seater. Plenty of car for the money ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2 CRDi KX-11SG

## KTM

**X-Bow Odr** £57,345-£70,717  
Eccentric looks, sharp handling Expensive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TFSi RR

## LAMBORGHINI

**Huracán 2dr coupé/spyder** £162,000-205,000  
Junior Lambo mixes usability and drama skillfully. Chassis and steering need work, but two-wheel-drive LP 580-2 is the best one yet ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.2 V10 LP 580-2

**Aventador 2dr coupé/spyder** £260,040-£315,078  
Big, hairy V12 Lambo has astonishing visuals and performance. Handling could be sweeter; oddly, roadster beats coupé in that respect ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.5 V12 LP750-E4

## LAND ROVER

**Range Rover Evoque Coupé 3dr SUV** £33,000-£51,200  
Dripping with desirability; poised and capable on road and off it. Not exactly practical, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 eD4 SE Tech 2WD

**Range Rover Evoque 5dr SUV** £35,000-£51,200  
As above but slightly more practical ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 eD4 SE Tech 2WD

**Range Rover Evoque Convertible 2dr open SUV** £47,500-£52,400  
Loses its roof but retains 4WD ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TD4 HSE Dyn Convertible

**Discovery Sport 5dr SUV** £31,095-£46,510  
Seven seats, lots of space, fine on-road handling and Land Rover's usual off-road ability – plus new found desirability ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TD4 SE

**Discovery 5dr SUV** £47,505-£56,005  
Beginning to look and feel like an outmoded hulk, but the Disco still handles well and could be all the car you'll ever need ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 SDV6 Landmark

**Range Rover Sport 5dr SUV** £59,700-96,900  
Now bigger and better: a cut-price Range Rover rather than a jumped-up Discovery. Expensive to buy and run, but justifies it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 3.0 SDV6 HSE Dynamic, 5.0 V8 SVR

**Range Rover 5dr SUV** £76,500-£166,400  
Whether outside the Dorchester or atop Ben Nevis, the Range envelops you in a lavish, invincible sense of occasion ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 Autobiography

## LEXUS

**CT 5dr hatch** £21,245-£29,745  
Hybrid-only hatchback has a pokey cabin and curiously mismatched motive character traits. Alternative but flawed – and pricey with it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 200h F Sport

**IS 4dr saloon** £28,995-£36,750  
Sleek junior exec, well made and interesting. Still a left-field choice ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 300h F Sport

**GS 4dr saloon** £33,495-£69,995  
Restrictive engine range limits GS's appeal, but outstanding refinement and cabin quality make amends to a point ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8 F

**LS 4dr saloon** £99,995  
Immutably built Lexus flagship is quiet and gadget-packed but not genuinely talented or special. Hybrid model worth relatively little on CO<sub>2</sub> tax ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 460 F-Sport

**NX 5dr hatch** £29,995-£42,995  
Some good ideas but dramatically off the pace to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 300h F Sport

**RX 5dr SUV** £39,995-£57,995  
Low flexibility, but hybrid option makes a degree of economic sense ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 450h F Sport

**RC 2dr coupé** £34,995-£67,995  
An also-ran in the segment, although the V8 RC-F packs plenty of alternative character and handles well enough ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 5.0 V8

## LOTUS

**Elise 2dr open** £29,900-£45,600  
If you want a delicate, vivid and unfettered drive, none does it better; if you want a daily driver, shop elsewhere. More powerful S worth the extra ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 250 Cup

**Exige 2dr coupé** £55,900  
Sharp, uncompromising track car. Unforgiving on the road ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.5 V6 Sport 350

**Evora 2dr coupé** £72,000-£79,900  
The ride and handling put nearly everything else in its shade. Shame the interior quality doesn't match the price ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.5 V6 GT4

**3-Eleven Odr open** £68,750-£97,083  
Hardcore track car has a broad

enough talent to be driven on the road ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.5 V6 410 Road

## MASERATI

**Ghibli 4dr saloon** £49,860-£65,325  
Bologna's attempt at an exotic saloon has a certain allure – but it's pricey, under-powered and poorly finished in places ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 V6 S

**GranTurismo 2dr coupé** £82,910-£119,485  
Not short on richness or desirability, and well capable of stirring the soul. Material quality and fit and finish not what it should be, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.7 V8 Sport

**GranCabrio 2dr open** £98,970-£125,675  
Fantastic looks and soundtrack, average chassis ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.7 V8 Sport

**Quattroporte 4dr saloon** £70,510-£115,980  
Now a full-sized executive limo, with some (but not much) added Maserati-brand flair. Off the pace in several key areas ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8 GTs

**Levante 4dr SUV** £54,335  
Italian flair and good looks applied to an SUV body ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0D V6

## MAZDA

**2 5dr hatch** £12,195-£17,395  
A very grown-up and well-made supermini. Drives with charm and vigour; engines aren't brilliant ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 90 Sport

**3 5dr hatch** £17,095-£23,995  
Uncomplicated handling dynamism teamed with strong practicality and punchy, efficient diesel engines. Too sporty for some tastes ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 165 Sport Nav

**3 Fastback 4dr saloon** £17,395-£22,795  
Refined and dynamically satisfying in saloon body style ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 120 Sport Nav

**6 4dr saloon** £19,795-£27,995  
A compelling mix of size, economy and performance. Interior a let-down ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 165 Sport Nav

**6 Tourer 5dr estate** £22,425-£28,895  
Attractively styled but average to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2D 150 Sport Nav

**CX-3 5dr SUV** £17,595-£24,695  
Another supermini SUV with a sporting bent. Petrol models much better than diesel. Both quite pricey but nicely appointed ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 120 Sport Nav

**CX-5 5dr SUV** £23,195-£30,995  
Offers powerful diesel engines and strong performance mixed with low emissions. Crisp handling ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2D 150 Sport Nav

**CX-5 2dr open** £18,495-£23,695  
Brilliantly packaged, brilliantly priced and even more vibrant and perfectly poised to drive than the original. The 2.0i is worth the extra outlay ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0i Sport Nav

## MCLAREN

**540C 2dr coupé** £126,055  
The affordable end of McLaren's spectrum ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8

**570S 2dr coupé** £143,305  
A supercar-slayer for a new age. Blisteringly fast and exciting, with handling appeal far in advance of its price ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8

**570GT 2dr coupé** £154,000  
A supercar-slayer for a new age with added touring ability. Blisteringly fast and exciting ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8

**650S 2dr coupé** £198,055  
McLaren's mainstay goes from convincing to utterly compelling. Better day to day than a Ferrari 488 but not as special ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8

**650S SPIDER 2dr open** £218,305  
More of the same although noisier



**FORD FOCUS RS**  
'Unmatched by any other hot hatchback on bang for your buck and handling appeal'  
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—and better for it ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 V8

## MERCEDES-BENZ

### A-Class 5dr hatch

£19,990-£40,695

We're warming to it, but the sportier trim levels should be avoided. Desirable and attractive but lacking a distinguishing drive ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** A 200 d SE, A 45 AMG 4MATIC

### B-Class 5dr hatch

£22,170-£32,965

A slightly odd prospect, but practical and classy ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** B 200 d SE

### CLA 4dr saloon

£25,395-£43,515

Facelifted CLA still suffers from divisive styling ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** CLA 200 d Sport

### CLA Shooting Brake 5dr estate

£26,375-£44,365

Facelifted and equally appealing ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** CLA 250 AMG 4Matic

### C-Class 4dr saloon

£29,295-£67,450

Merc ramps up the richness with outstanding interior plushness and curvaceous good looks. Engines and dynamics not quite as refined, though ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** C220 d SE, C63 AMG

### C-Class Estate 5dr estate

£29,495-£68,650

Decent practicality and fantastic interior. Only okay to drive ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** C220 d SE, C63 AMG

### C-Class Coupé 2dr coupé

£31,585-£77,540

Nice balance of style, usability and driver reward ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** C200 d Sport, C63 AMG

### C-Class Cabriolet 2dr open

£36,200-£78,295

Nice balance of style, usability and driver reward ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** C220 d Sport, C63 AMG

### CLS 4dr saloon

£47,000-£87,025

Original added-desirability four-door. Almost as refined to drive as it is to behold. Shooting Brake is a car of rare elegance ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** CLS 63 AMG S

### CLS Shooting Brake 5dr estate

£48,580-£87,525

Handsome and practical estate ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** CLS 63 S AMG

### E-Class 4dr saloon/5dr estate

£34,440-£55,695

A wee bit pricey, and less sporting than key rivals. Four-pot diesels a bit sluggish. Estate version supremely practical ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** E350 d SE, E63 S AMG

### E-Class Coupé 2dr coupé

£38,635-£46,430

Big, laid-back, genuine four-seat cabrios are rare birds, particularly when they're as refined and sophisticated as this one ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** E400 AMG Line Edition

### E-Class Cabriolet 2dr open

£42,045-£49,800

Refined and sophisticated four-seat cabriolet ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** E200 AMG Line Edition

### S-Class 4dr saloon

£72,900-£183,560

So long in the legs that continents flash by mid-stride. Has a business-like opulence. Still the best luxury car in the real world. Calm, advanced, rewarding ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** S500 AMG Line L

### S-Class Coupé 2dr coupé

£98,050-£185,480

Heavyweight contender. Continent-smothering luxury ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** S 63 AMG

### S-Class Cabriolet 2dr open

£110,120-£192,805

As above, with the option to open it up to the elements ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** S 63 AMG

### V-Class 5dr MPV

£45,490-£52,335

Expensively appointed mini bus – with matching price tag ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** V220 d Sport

### GLA 5dr SUV

£25,260-£45,555

Not the most practical crossover but good looking and very decent to drive ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLA200 AMG Line

### GLC 5dr SUV

£35,580-£47,875

Not exactly exciting to drive, but does luxury and refinement better than anything else in the class ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLC250d AMG Line

### GLC Coupé 5dr SUV

£40,580-£43,245

A SUV with coupé looks. Destined to be outrun by the X4 and only available with a diesel engine ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLC250d AMG

### GLE 5dr SUV

£50,075-£95,215

The ML replacement isn't inspiring to drive but it has a classy interior ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLE250d AMG Line

### GLE Coupé 5dr SUV

£61,350-£97,235

A SUV with coupé looks. Destined to be outrun by the X6 ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLE450 AMG

### G-CLASS 5dr SUV

£88,800-£150,975

Massively expensive and compromised, but with character to spare ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** G63 AMG

### GLS 5dr SUV

£69,110-£102,350

The impending replacement for the GL-Class ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** GLS350d AMG Line

### SLC 2dr open

£30,495-£46,360

Another small convertible edition with all the Mercedes charm ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** SLC300 AMG Line

### SL 2dr open

£73,810-£173,315

Big, luxurious drop-top is classier than a royal stud farm. Few cruisers feel more special for the money ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** SL400 AMG Line

### AMG GT 2dr coupé

£98,915-£111,495

Million-dollar looks and a railgun V8, but uncompromisingly firm chassis undermines its every-occasion, any-road usability ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.0 V8

## MG

### 3 5dr hatch

£8399-10,499

Neatly tuned and nice sporty style. Breaks the mould of sub-£9000 superminis ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 3Form

### GS 5dr SUV

£14,995-£19,495

MG's first attempt at a small SUV is an attempt to re-establish the brand ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 TGI Explore

## MINI

### 3DR Hatch 3dr hatch

£14,075-£23,155

Three-pot engines and cleverly redesigned interior make the Mini a superb choice. Pricey to buy but worth the money ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICKS:** 1.5 Cooper, 2.0 John Cooper Works

### 5DR Hatch 5dr hatch

£14,675-£22,575

Mini charm in a more usable package, but still not as practical as rivals ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 Cooper

### Convertible 2dr open

£18,615-£26,635

Open-top fun but compromised on practicality and dynamics ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 Cooper

### Clubman 5dr hatchback

£21,375-£29,345

Cheery and alternative Mini 'six-door' takes the brand into mainstream territory. Not as rounded as some, but usable and likeable nonetheless ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 Cooper

### Countryman 5dr SUV

£17,125-£29,010

Big, but still more funky than useful ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 JCW

### Paceman 3dr coupé

£19,125-£29,600

Two-door Countryman is a Mini too far for us. Tough to like ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 Cooper S

## MITSUBISHI

### Mirage 5dr hatch

£11,499-£13,499

Straightforward hatchback. Not for the likes of us ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 MIVEC Juro

### ASX 5dr hatch

£15,249-£28,399

Decent engine, but otherwise an unexceptional crossover ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 MIVEC ZC-M 2WD Leather

### Shogun 5DR 4x4

£29,634-£40,299

Has its appeal. Needs more chassis finesse, but still charming ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.2 Di-DC SG2 SWB Barbarian

### Outlander 5dr SUV

£24,799-£45,499

Credible effort from Japan's SUV specialists offers a lot for the money. Still feels cheap in places: PHEV a boon for fleet users ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 PHEV GX3h+ £35249

### L200 5dr 4x4

£20,998-£30,238

L200 pick-up is a practical, efficient and muscular workhorse ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5D Series 4 4Life Single

## MORGAN

### 3-Wheeler 0dr open

£31,140-£34,955

The eccentric, characterful and deftly brilliant Morgan is a three-wheeled testament to English creativity ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.9 115 Sport

### 4-4 2dr open

£29,995

Has its appeal, but not as rewarding to drive as it could be ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6

### Plus 4 2dr open

£38,100-£43,200

Needs more chassis finesse, but the Plus 4 charms nonetheless ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 2 Seater

### Roadster 2dr open

£48,000-£55,140

More advanced, but pricey and needs better brakes ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.0 V6

### Plus 8 2dr open

£73,494

Old V8 charm lives on, but there's no ignoring the high price ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.8 V8

## NISSAN

### Micra 5dr hatch

£7995-£13,455

Running costs are low, but it's below average overall ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 n-tec

### Note 5dr hatch

£10,995-£17,895

It lacks a bit of verve, but objectively the Note is entirely fit for purpose ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 DIG-S Acenta

### Pulsar 5dr hatch

£13,995-£23,015

Undeniably fit for purpose, but its appeal goes no deeper than that ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 DIG-S Acenta

### Leaf 5dr hatch

£26,180-£31,880

Comfortable and still the cheapest way into the EV world ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 24kW Acenta

### Juke 5dr hatch

£14,320-£24,610

High-riding, funky hatch is a compelling package. High CO<sub>2</sub> figures ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 DIG-T 190 Tekna

### Qashqai 5dr hatch

£18,545-£27,310

The defining crossover. Second-gen model better all round, notably efficiency, space and refinement ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 dCi 130 N-Connecta

### X-Trail 5dr SUV

£21,995-£32,110

There aren't many cheaper routes into a seven-seat SUV. Bit of a lightweight on power and 4x4 capability, though ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 dCi n-tec 2WD

### NV200 Combi MPV

£20,297-£21,067

Van-based multi-seat vehicle is flexible and economical ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 dCi 90 Acenta 7st

### E-NV200 Evalia MPV

£28,527-31,869

Battery-powered people-mover is world's first seven-seat EV MPV ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 80kW Tekna Rapid

### Navara NP300 5dr 4x4

£23,635-£31,845

A tough pick-up happy both on the road and off it ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.3 dCi 160 Acenta King Cab

### 370Z 2dr coupé

£27,860-£38,050

Old-school, profoundly mechanical and quite hairy-chested. An Austin Healey 3000 for our age – but meaner ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.7 V6 Nismo

### GT-R 2dr coupé

£79,995-91,995

The monstrously fast Nissan has been tweaked and sharpened to close the gap on charismatic rival in the market ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.8 Track Edition

## NOBLE

### M600 2dr coupé

£248,184-£277,309



## AUTOCAR TOP FIVES HARDCORE SPORTS



**Porsche 911 GT3 RS** From £131,000  
Proof that Porsche hasn't forgotten how to do on-limit nuttiness when the occasion demands it. ★★★★★



**Ferrari 458 Speciale** From £208,000  
Huge premium means it can't overcome the GT3, but that doesn't stand between it and greatness. Fabulous. ★★★★★



**McLaren 675 LT** From £260,000  
Limited-run supercar brings out the very best in the Sports Series and has the punch to match its price. Magic. ★★★★★



**Lamborghini Aventador Superveloce** From £315,000  
It's taken 740bhp to do it, but the four-wheel-drive Aventador is now a proper Lamborghini in the old-school mould. ★★★★★



**Lotus Evija** From £53,000  
Only fantasy machines of a rare and expensive calibre are capable of seeing off the Lotus. It's that good. ★★★★★

facelift. Good value ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHDi 120 Allure

**5008 5dr MPV** £23,130-£27,030  
Another mid-sized five-plus-two-seater. The 5008 feels its age but still offers a slicker and more engaging drive than many ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHDi 120 Allure

**Partner Teepee 5dr MPV** £15,645-£20,030  
Likeable, practical van-based MPV ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 BlueHDi 100 Active

**RCZ 2dr coupé** £24,200-£27,500  
Classy, interesting, fun coupé. Peugeot has got its mojo back ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 HDi 163 GT

### PORSCHE

**718 Boxster 2dr open** £41,739-£52,617  
Our idea of drop-top perfection is also an outstanding sporting two-seater. Exceptional to drive, whether cruising or hurrying ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 718

**718 Cayman 2dr coupé** £39,878-£50,756  
Scalpel-blade incisiveness, supreme balance and outstanding driver involvement. Very practical too – for a two-seater ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 718

**911 2dr coupé** £76,412-£145,773  
Delivered on the eve of a sixth decade, the 911 is as brilliant and distinctive as any before it. Still more than worthy of its iconic status ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** Carrera S

**911 Cabriolet 2dr open** £85,253-£154,614  
The best Porsche doesn't lose any of its charm without its roof ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** Carrera S

**Panamera 5dr hatch** £79,715-£113,075  
Technically brilliant but lacking a bit of soul and visual allure. V6 diesel is an outstanding long-distance car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.8 V8 Turbo PDK

**Macan 5dr SUV** £43,553-£68,073  
Spookily good handling. A sports utility vehicle in the purest sense ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.6 V6 Turbo PDK

**Cayenne 5dr SUV** £52,689-£119,720  
Agile, capable, desirable. V8 diesel makes the line-up more varied. Not as practical as some, but a classy cabin and mostly good fun ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 4.2 V8 S Diesel Tiptronic S

### PROTON

**Savvy 5dr hatch** £7995  
Compromise in quality isn't worth the saving ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Style

**Satria Neo 3dr hatch** £8495-£9495  
Best Proton yet but still unjustifiable ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 GSX

**Gen-2 5dr hatch** £1995-£11,195  
Hugely disappointing ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.3 GLS

### RADICAL

**SR3 2dr open** £58,200-£66,958  
Spectacular on the track; not so good on the way home ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** RSX

**RXC 2dr coupé** £94,500-£117,500  
Designed for pounding around a track. Not for the open road ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.7 V6

### RENAULT

**Twizy 2dr hatch** £6895-7795  
Zany solution to personal mobility. Suitably irreverent and impractical ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** EV Dynamique

**Zoe 5dr hatch** £17,795-£20,245  
Far more practical zero-emission solution. Attractive price ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** Dynamique Nav  
**Twingo 5dr hatch** £9545-£13,595  
Handsome, unusual rear-engined city car – but not the class leader ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 TCe 90 Dynamique Energy



**LOTUS EVORA 400**  
'An enhanced and more likeable Evora. Crucially, it's easier to live with, too'  
MORE AT AUTOCAR.CO.UK

**Clio 5dr hatch** £11,815-£22,425  
An attractive, stylish and fairly practical proposition that does the French tradition credit. Fluent handling; cabin cheap in places ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** Renault Sport 220 Trophy

**Captur 5dr hatch** £14,745-£21,885  
Jacked-up Clio is among the better downsized options. Cabin space and value better than the class norm. Stylish and fluent-riding ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.5 dCi 110 Signature Nav

**Megane 5dr hatch** £16,950-£25,850  
Stylish and refined but bland. Nothing exceptional ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TCe 115 GT Line Nav

**Kadjar 5dr SUV** £18,795-£28,495  
Fine value, good cabin space, decent to drive and fine-looking. Not quite as classy as its Nissan sibling, but not far away ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 dCi 130 Signature Nav 2WD

### ROLLS-ROYCE

**Wraith 2dr coupé** £237,471-£278,223  
An intimate, involving Rolls-Royce. Less grand than its rangemates, but often in the measures that make it great in other ways ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.6 V12

**Dawn 2dr open** £264,055  
Essentially as above, but de-tuned and in an elegant convertible form. ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.6 V12

**Ghost 4dr saloon** £224,943-£260,823  
'Affordable' Rolls is a more modern, driver-focused car than its bigger brother. Still hugely special. Ride just a little bit unsettled at times ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.6 V12

**Phantom 4dr saloon** £320,175-£373,743  
BMW built a sublime Rolls-Royce when it took over in 1998. Still the greatest and most aristocratic limo money can buy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.8 V12

**Phantom Coupé 2dr coupé** £349,311  
Luxury in abundance, but in a sportier form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.8 V12

**Phantom Drophead Coupé 2dr open** £369,687  
Extreme luxury with a removable roof ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.8 V12

### SEAT

**Mii 3dr hatch** £8440-£11,265  
Not as desirable or plush inside as the Up, but damn near as good to drive – and well-priced with it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 SE Technology

**Mii 5dr hatch** £8795-£11,995  
As above, but in more usable five-door form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 SE Technology

**Ibiza SC 3dr hatch** £10,000-£18,900  
A sharp-looking coupé that handles well. Cupra version is a riot. ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 FR

**Ibiza 5dr hatch** £12,210-£15,735  
Sharp-looking five-door hatch lacks the verve of the Ford Fiesta ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 FR

**Ibiza ST 5dr estate** £12,910-£18,035  
Rivals are more practical, but that doesn't impact on its fun nature ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 TDI 105 FR

**Leon SC 3dr hatch** £17,400-£31,485  
As ever, a Golf in cut-price Spanish clothing – except slightly crisper-looking and better-handling. Worth considering ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 290 Cupra

**Leon 5dr hatch** £18,230-£31,790  
Ditto above, but here in five-door form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 290 Cupra

**Leon ST 5dr estate** £19,225-£32,785  
Good-looking and responsive hatchback-turned-estate ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 290 Cupra

**Toledo 5dr hatch** £17,195-£19,995  
Makes practical sense but leaves no other lasting impression ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 TDI 115 Style

**Alhambra 5dr MPV** £24,885-£36,130  
A cheaper, plainer and less desirable sister for the VW Sharan. Spacious, versatile and decent to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE Ecomotive

**Ateca 5dr SUV** £17,990-£29,990  
Seat's first attempt to take on the SUV market – and it's good ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 TDI 115 SE Ecomotive

### SKODA

**Citigo 3dr hatch** £8275-£10,770  
Czech take on the city car is more plain than some but well finished and strong to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 SE

**Citigo 5dr hatch** £8625-£11,120  
As above, with added rear-door practicality ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 SE

**Fabia 5dr hatch** £10,750-£18,025  
A touch derivative design-wise, and no class-leader on handling or cabin space, but strong claims everywhere else ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 SE

**Fabia 5dr estate** £12,630-£18,910  
A touch derivative design-wise, and no class-leader on handling or cabin space, but strong claims everywhere else ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 SE

**Rapid 5dr saloon** £16,505-£19,110  
Essentially a Fabia in saloon form, so likeable if slightly dull ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 SE

**Rapid Spaceback 5dr estate** £13,675-£18,520  
Estate shape makes most sense of Rapid's skinny body ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 TSI 110 SE Sport

**Octavia 5dr hatch** £16,660-£27,990  
Almost too big to qualify as a hatchback, the Octavia does comfort and practicality like no other. Good engines, too ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE L, 2.0 TSI 230 vRS

**Octavia Estate 5dr estate** £17,880-£29,410  
Class-leading amount of space and practicality. Comfortable, too ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICKS:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE L, 2.0 TSI 230 vRS

**Superb 4dr saloon** £19,060-£34,305  
Another commendable Czech value option big on quality and space, small on price ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 220 SE L DSG

**Superb Estate 5dr estate** £20,260-£35,505  
Even more commendable than above thanks to huge estate boot ★★★★★

**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 220 SE L DSG

**Yeti 5dr SUV** £17,210-£27,545  
One of the first to successfully miniaturise the crossover formula. Spacious, useful, unpretentious and genuinely cheery ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 110 SE

### SMART

**Fortwo 3dr hatch** £11,125-£13,810  
Pricy two-seater has lots of urban appeal but out of town performance and handling isn't as rounded as others ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Proxy

**Fortwo Convertible 2dr open** £13,265-£15,950  
A similar story in open-top form as for the hatch ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Proxy

**Forfour 5dr hatch** £11,620-£14,930  
Four doors gives the Smart more mainstream practicality. Still expensive, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 0.9 Proxy

### SSANGYONG

**Tivoli 5dr hatch** £12,950-£19,500  
Trails the Duster as the best-value small crossover – but not by much ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6d EX

**Tivoli XLV 5dr hatch** £18,250-£20,500  
Tivoli on steroids – grown in size for more practicality and is joined by a range of personalisation options ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6d 4x4

**Korando 5dr hatch** £15,995-£22,495  
Good for a Ssangyong, poor by class standards ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d EX 2WD

**Korando Sports 4dr pick-up** £17,337-£22,977  
A rugged-looking pick-up, but lacks all of the finesse shown by its nearest rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0d EX 4WD

**Rexton W 5dr SUV** £22,995-£28,995  
Rugged seven-seater makes short work of mud. Asphalt more tricky ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d EX

**Turismo 5dr MPV** £18,995-£24,995  
Incredibly ungainly but offers huge real estate for the money ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.2d EX

### SUBARU

**Impreza 4dr hatchback** £17,495  
Appealing hatchback, but feels a tad old-fashioned ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6i RC

**WRX STI 4dr saloon** £28,995  
Appealing and behind the times all at once ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5 STI

**XV 5dr SUV** £21,995-£26,995  
No-nonsense crossover doesn't quite make enough sense ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0D SE

**Levorg 5dr estate** £27,495  
Impressively practical but only available with an auto 'box and one trim ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6i GT Auto AWD

**Forester 5dr SUV** £25,495-£30,995  
Solid, spacious and wilfully unsexy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0i XE

**Outback 5dr estate** £27,995-£31,495  
Acceptable in isolation but no benchmark ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5i SE Lineartronic

**BRZ 2dr coupé** £22,495-£25,495  
The GT-86's half brother looks just as good in Subaru blue. Cheaper, too ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0i SE

### SUZUKI

**Celerio 5dr hatch** £6999-9799  
Pleasing to drive, cheap to buy and decent to sit in, the Celerio is a no-nonsense option – and very likeable for it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 Dualjet S23

**Swift 3dr hatch** £8999-£14,149  
Cute looks and rewarding handling. Sport is excellent fun ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 Sport

**Swift 5dr hatch** £9499-£14,649  
Cute looks and rewarding handling, even in this more practical form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 Sport

**Baleno 5dr hatch** £13,249-£15,599  
Suzuki's family-sized hatchback makes use of clever little engines ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2 Dualjet S25  
**Jimny 3dr 4x4** £12,499-£15,279  
The smallest four-wheel-drive Suzuki is looking dated ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.3 SZ4

**Vitara 5dr SUV** £14,499-£22,849  
Utterly worthy addition to the class; drives better than most ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 B'jet S Allgrip



**SX4 S-Cross 5dr SUV**  
£14,999-£24,349

Not a class leader, but a very worthy crossover. Refreshed look gives it a new lease of life ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 SZ-T Allrip

**TESLA****Model S 5dr hatch**  
£53,880-£114,580

Genuine 300-mile range doesn't just make the Model S a standout electric car; it feels like the future of luxury motoring ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** P90D AWD

**Model X 5dr SUV**  
£64,480-£117,580

Genuine 300-mile range doesn't just make the Model X a standout electric car; it's a luxury seven-seater with falcon doors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 90D AWD

**TOYOTA****Aygo 3dr hatch** £9135-£13,245

Impactful styling does a lot to recommend it. Strong on infotainment but not as refined or practical as some ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 x-pression

**Aygo 5dr hatch** £9535-£14,345

As above, but with rear doors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 x-pression

**Yaris 3dr hatch** £11,750-£13,920

Good space and value but not a class leader ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 VVT-i Icon

**Yaris 5dr hatch** £12,350-£18,095

Stylish interior but ultimately a scaled-down version of bigger Toyotas ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.33 VVT-i Icon £14265

**Auris 5dr hatch** £16,390-£25,140

Disappointingly average. There are many better rivals ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2T VVT-i Design

**Auris Touring Sports 5dr estate**  
£17,490-£26,240

Nothing wrong, but nothing exceptional ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.2T VVT-i Design

**Prius 5dr hatch** £23,600-£27,355

Better all-round compared to its predecessors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 VVT-i Business Edition

**Prius Plug-In 5dr hatch** £33,450

Plug-in hybrid Prius is clever and appealing in its own right ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 VVT-i Plug-In

**Prius+ 5dr MPV** £27,050-£31,300

Expensive and ugly. Bigger though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 VVT-i Excel

**Avensis 4dr saloon** £19,300-£27,085

Nothing wrong, but nothing exceptional. Good spec ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 V-matic Business Edition

**Avensis Tourer 5dr estate**  
£20,480-£28,890

Good spec but an unexceptional estate otherwise ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 V-matic Business Edition

**Verso 5dr MPV** £18,925-£26,095

One of Toyota's better niche models is unburdened by a hybrid powertrain and offers decent space, a respectable drive and a keen price ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 V-matic Icon 7seats

**Proace Verso 5dr MPV**  
£26,050-£35,400

One of Toyota's niche models is unburdened by a hybrid powertrain and provides decent competition to the Vivaro and Transit equivalents ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0D 180 Family Compact

**C-HR 5dr SUV** £20,995-£27,995

Coupe-shaped crossover aims to bring the fight to Nissan and the Juke. Thus far it seems to hit the right notes ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.8 Hybrid Excel

**RAV4 5dr SUV** £23,755-£32,975

A solid option, but ultimately outgunned by Korean competition ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 D-4D Icon

**Land Cruiser 5dr 4x4**  
£36,465-£55,465

A real go-anywhere vehicle. Available with seven-seats ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.8 D-4D Active

**Hilux 5dr 4x4** £22,955-£35,265

A real go-anywhere vehicle with the added practicality of being a pick-up ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.5 D-4D Active Double Cab

**GT86 2dr coupé** £22,705-£28,695

Who knew Toyota had another dynamic masterstroke in it after the Lexus LFA? Almost as much fun as a limited budget can buy. Splendid ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 Aero

**VAUXHALL**

**Viva 5dr hatch** £8745-10,145  
Plenty of space for the money but lacking equipment and youthful joie de vivre ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 75 Ecoflex SE

**Adam 3dr hatch** £12,110-£19,045

Certainly looks the part, but there are better superminis ahead of it ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4 150 Rocks S

**Corsa 3dr hatch** £9745-£18,630

Very refined, stylish and practical, but its engines aren't so good ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0T 90 Ecoflex SE

**Corsa 5dr hatch** £13,250-£19,200

A more practical version of the Corsa, which is refined and practical ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0T 90 Ecoflex SE

**Astra 5dr hatch** £15,445-£22,965

Good handling and nice engines but its working-class roots still show through ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0T 105 Ecoflex Tech Line

**Astra Sports Tourer**  
5dr estate £16,735-£24,255

More composed and practical than the hatchback ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 CDTi 160 Biturbo SRI

**Insignia 5dr hatch**  
£17,439-£32,404

Nearly as good as a Mondeo. Inert steering ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 CDTi 170 Ecoflex SRI

**Insignia Sports Tourer**  
5dr estate £19,669-£33,704

Hugely spacious but no fun to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 CDTi 170 Ecoflex SRI

**Meriva 5dr MPV** £13,410-£22,395

Clever Flexdoors make sense for young families. Nice to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4T 140 Exclusiv

**Zafira Tourer 5dr MPV**  
£18,615-£29,580

Looks upmarket but feels less so on the inside. Some clever packaging features make good use of what space there is. Ordinary to drive ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4T 140 Exclusiv

**Vivaro Combi MPV**  
£23,623-£25,216

Vauxhall people-mover based on its popular van ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 CDTi 90 Ecoflex SWB

**Mokka X 5dr hatch** £19,655-£26,765

Compact and competent but short on persuasive quality just like the Mokka ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.4T 140 Design Nav

**VXR8 4dr saloon** £55,550-£56,220

Charismatic Vauxhall is more brutish and unsophisticated than some. Unbeatable on horsepower-per-pound, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 6.2 V8 Maloo LSA



**VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R**  
'Blends sophistication with immense driver appeal'  
MORE AT AUTOCAR.CO.UK

**VOLKSWAGEN****Up 3dr hatch** £8995-£11,350

VW's city car is no revolution – just a trademark effort to beat its rivals on finish, refinement, desirability and economy ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 Look Up

**Up 5dr hatch** £9395-£25,280

Ditto above, with added five-door convenience ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 60 Look Up

**Polo 3dr hatch** £11,525-£20,370

Still the sensible choice in a lot of ways: usable, refined, easy-going, desirable and very solidly built ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 TSI 110 SE L

**Polo 5dr hatch** £12,155-£21,000

And even more useful with five doors ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.0 TSI 110 SE L

**Golf 3dr hatch** £17,625-£33,100

A little expensive it may be, but there's enough quality here to justify the expense. Classiness democratised ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 220 GTI

**Golf 5dr hatch** £18,280-£35,820

As above but in the five-door form most buyers are likely to opt for ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 220 GTI

**Golf Estate 5dr estate**  
£18,980-£34,455

And even more practical in load-lugging body style ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 300 R 4Motion DSG

**Golf SV 5dr MPV** £19,255-£27,610

MQB platform gives the Golf proper MPV proportions. Still no C-Max, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE

**Jetta 4dr saloon** £19,155-£25,055

Big boot, pleasant dynamics and good pricing. A bit dull ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE

**Beetle 3dr hatch** £16,820-£25,390

Huge improvement, but the Golf hiding underneath is a superior car ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 Sport

**Beetle Cabriolet 2dr open**  
£19,775-£28,545

Huge improvement and quite chic in open-top form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 110

**Scirocco 2dr coupé**  
£21,040-£34,390

A complete coupé. Entertaining, practical and stylish ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TSI 280 R

**Passat 4dr saloon**  
£22,680-£40,180

Lands convincing blows with quality, usability, smart looks and civilised manners. A touch too conservative to be entertaining, though ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE

**Passat Estate 5dr estate**  
£24,230-£41,730

Smart-looking and civilised estate ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 190 SCR GT

**CC 4dr saloon** £25,475-£33,515

Loses a name and adds some flair but never compels ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 184 GT

**Touran 5dr MPV** £22,270-£31,535

The medium-sized people-carrier done conservatively – but done very well. Refined and wieldy, with excellent infotainment options ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI SCR 150 SE

**Sharan 5dr MPV** £26,680-£36,660

Full-sized seven-seater offers outstanding versatility and space with tidy handling and VW-brand desirability ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150 SE

**Caddy Life 5dr MPV**  
£19,759-£26,316

Rugged workhorse built to supplement the Touran and Sharan ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150

**Caravelle 5dr MPV**  
£37,686-£55,362

Rugged workhorse built to carry people ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 204 SE

**California 5dr MPV**  
£38,214-£55,790

Rugged workhorse built to carry people and put them up for the night ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI 150

**Tiguan 5dr SUV**  
£22,510-£36,375

An improvement on the previous generation, but is it a winner? ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 TDI SCR 150 SE Nav

**Touareg 5dr SUV** £43,935-£49,895

An unusually straightforward sort: comfy, capable, refined and obedient-handling. Five seats only ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 3.0 V6 TDI 262 SE

**Amarok 5dr 4x4** £25,419-£35,931

Volkswagen quality of build and interior matched to a rugged exterior ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 BITDI 180 Trendline

**VOLVO****V40 5dr hatch** £21,950-33,775

Not perfect, but a handsome, well-packaged, pragmatic and likeable car: rare commodities in the class ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 T3 R-Design

**S60 4dr saloon** £22,395-31,625

New frugal four-pot diesel has given Volvo's middleweight a new lease of life. Determinedly understated, mature and laid back ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 D4 SE Lux Nav

**V60 5dr estate** £23,075-£52,270

Mature and appealing cabin, nice looks and smooth drive. Too small ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 D4 Cross Country Lux Nav

**S90 4dr saloon** £32,555-£42,055

The new mid-size executive car ready to take on the Germans ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** D4 Inscription

**V90 5dr estate** £34,555-£44,055

The new luxury Swedish saloon in a more practical estate form ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** D4 Inscription

**XC60 5dr SUV** £32,685-39,890

Refreshing car design from Volvo, made more competitive by its engine revolution. Not quite as spacious as some but has useful features ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 D4 R-Design Nav

**XC90 5dr SUV** £46,850-£64,555

Cleverly packaged, smartly styled, competitively priced and pleasing to drive. As close a thing to a class-leader as Volvo has had in a long time ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.0 D5 Inscription AWD

**VUHL**

**05 2dr open** £59,995-£89,995  
Mexican track day special has a pleasingly pragmatic and forgiving chassis. Turbo engine isn't the most characterful ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** RR 2.3 Ecoboost

**WESTFIELD**

**SPORT 2dr open** £20,588-£28,745  
Entry-level Westfield. Sport Turbo is very quick and fun but no Caterham ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 1.6 Sigma 155 Sport

**ZENOS**

**E10 Odr open** £26,995-£39,995  
The latest in a long line of English mid-engined marvels. Earns its stripes immediately; expect a dedicated following ★★★★★  
**TESTERS' PICK:** 2.3 R

**WHAT'S COMING WHEN****VOLKSWAGEN T-ROC | DECEMBER**

Previously referred to as 'the Golf SUV', the T-Roc is expected to make its debut at this month's Geneva motor show. The high-riding five-seater has chunky styling and will offer petrol or diesel engines with manual or auto gearboxes. Inside, it gets Volkswagen's Active Info Display digital instrument panel and a 9.2in infotainment screen. **Price £19,000 (est)**

**MARCH**

AC Cobra 378, Atalanta sports car, BMW 670Li xDrive update,

Ferrari 812 Superfast, GTC4 Lusso T,

Honda Civic, Hyundai i30, Jaguar F-Type

update, F-Type 400 Sport, Nissan Micra,

Renault Captur update, Seat Leon Cupra

R, Skoda Octavia update, Volkswagen

e-Golf, Golf Hybrid, Zenvo TS1 GT (right)

**APRIL/MAY**

Alpina B3S, B4S, D5, Audi A5 Cabriolet, Q5, S05, Avatar Roadster, BMW 4 Series update, Kia Picanto, Lamborghini Aventador S, Huracán RWD, Lotus Exige Race 380, Exige Sport 380, Mercedes-AMG E63 Estate, GT Roadster, GT C Roadster, Mercedes-Benz E-Class Coupé, GLA, V-Class Camper, Noble M600 Speedster, Piecha AMG GT-RSR, Porsche Panamera, Renault Scenic Hybrid Assist, Grand Scenic Hybrid Assist, Skoda Octavia vRS 245, Kodiaq, Subaru BRZ update, Levorg update, Volkswagen Golf update

**JUNE**

BMW 5 Series Touring, Seat Ibiza, Skoda Citigo update, Rapid update, Suzuki Swift, Vauxhall Insignia Grand Sport, Insignia Sport Tourer

**JULY**

Alfa Romeo Stelvio, Alpine A120, BMW M4, Bristol Bullet, Citroën C3 Picasso, Fiat 500L update, Jaguar XF Sportbrake, Kia Soul EV, Maserati Ghibli update, Mazda CX-5, Mercedes-AMG E63 Estate, GT R coupé, Mercedes-Benz E-Class All Terrain, Range Rover Velar, Renault Koleos, Mégane Hybrid Assist, Vauxhall Crossland X, Volkswagen Arteon

**AUGUST**

Lexus LC, Ferrari F12 M, Kia Niro PHEV, Volvo XC40 (left), XC60, S90 T8, V90 T8

**SEPTEMBER**

Alpina B5 Touring, D5 Touring, Ford Fiesta, Honda Civic Type R, Mercedes-AMG GLC63, Mercedes-Benz E-Class Cabriolet, S-Class, X-Class, Smart Fortwo Electric Drive, Fortwo Cabriolet Electric Drive, Forfour Electric Drive, Ssangyong Rexton, Subaru XV, Toyota Yaris update

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER**

Abarth 500X, Audi RS3 Saloon, RS3 Sportback, TT RS, BMW 2 Series update, M2 update, 6 Series, X3, Hyundai i30N, Kia Stinger, Mercedes-Maybach G650 Landulet, Mitsubishi Eclipse, Nissan Qashqai, X-Trail

**DECEMBER**

Aston Martin V8 Vantage, Audi A8, Bentley Continental (right), Faraday Future FF 91, Fiat 124 hard-top, GLM G4, Honda CR-V, Jaguar I-Pace, Jeep Compass, Kia Sorento, SUV, Lotus Evora 400 Roadster, Nio NP9, Seat Arona, Arona X-Perience, Ateca X-Perience, Vauxhall Grandland X, Volkswagen T-Roc, Touareg



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**PEUGEOT 308 GTI**  
'Vivacious hot hatch runs the Golf GTI close'  
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P25 ABS	£595	BCZ 29	£795	CE8 CEE	£800
P28 ABS	£895	CI BDC	£995	PR61 CES	£1100
R29 ABY	£595	WI BDS	£1400	CEZ 3332	£290
F17 ACC	£790	CS BDS	£890	N333 CFC	£595
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P121 ACK	£595	587 BEA	£895	R91 CHD	£795
7 ACN	£4500	3 BEC	£13274	CHE 8M	£995
P10 ACT	£595	R24 BED	£595	W10 CHR	£595
G501 AD	£2200	BEL 5K	£1600	P5 CHS	£795
K6 ADA	£695	BEL 26Y	£695	C10 383	£695
P21 ADE	£795	AL55 BEL	£690	P400 CJB	£695
R25 ADE	£695	P477 BEN	£590	R121 CJH	£595
ADE 413A	£990	P27 BEN	£1300	P123 CJS	£695
B7 ADF	£595	L10 BEB	£1900	J80 CKA	£190
P24 ADM	£695	R2 BEB	£895	P45 CKE	£695
P123 ADM	£595	BES 615	£1200	D154 CKY	£190
R25 ADY	£595	CI BEI	£595	P24 CLB	£595
X403 ADY	£290	P3 BEV	£1700	LE52 CLK	£390
400 AE	£1400	D13 BEV	£1200	683 CLN	£1300
T65 AFC	£595	R27 BEV	£595	N5 CLS	£895
P25 AGE	£595	T10 BEV	£895	G10 CLW	£595
R29 AGE	£595	P200 BEV	£790	CLZ 1790	£290
J77 AGF	£250	B878 BEV	£595	I995 CM	£2500
R9 AGM	£595	P23 BEY	£895	AR CMC	£995
R9 AGR	£795	BEZ 38	£795	P1 CMC	£595
AIG 5018	£290	BEZ 838	£595	M400 CME	£190
NI AJA	£1200	BF 5870	£995	L3 CMR	£695
X121 AIB	£695	BF 6960	£1800	R2 CMB	£390
P321 AIB	£595	A4 BFH	£590	293 CNK	£595
R29 AIG	£595	AI BGO	£690	CS CNM	£390
P29 AJH	£695	RI BGS	£990	P23 COB	£595
H111 AJH	£1700	BH2 24	£895	R27 COB	£595
R31 AJL	£595	BI 6908	£695	J70 COB	£695
L500 AJP	£595	W30 BJC	£290	662 COE	£1700
P23 AJP	£695	333 BJC	£695	M50 COG	£590
R600 AJP	£595	B1J 27	£995	K70 COL	£1400
Y6 AJP	£995	67 BL	£4400	R25 CON	£695
K50 AJR	£490	442 BLG	£1200	J29 CON	£795
A400 AUS	£695	T2 BLW	£390	P555 CON	£595
GR AKH	£595	D2 BMB	£595	K4 COC	£1200
J44 AKY	£2100	877 BME	£990	Y444 COG	£595
P21 ALB	£695	N003 BMW	£490	M400 CPJ	£190
W99 ALB	£490	AL07 BMW	£290	21 CPW	£1400
Y008 ALD	£390	P19 BMW	£895	R27 CCR	£595
V9 ALD	£695	W26 BMW	£795	W9 CRR	£595
V29 ALF	£795	BW57 BMW	£490	T9 CRL	£695
L6 ALL	£1090	222 BMW	£3200	R25 CRS	£695
P26 ALS	£695	63 BN	£2900	R121 CRS	£595
ALW I11Y	£1200	BI BNF	£790	403 CRV	£595
P23 ALX	£795	750 BNP	£1930	65 CRW	£695
J111 ALX	£695	BNS 25	£390	I54 CS	£4400
N900 ALX	£595	P24 BOB	£1400	BI CSD	£695
P24 ALY	£595	1000 BOB	£1200	CSU GIB	£695
MB06 AMB	£390	612 BON	£1300	N3 CTB	£595
N25 AMB	£695	P23 BOB	£595	19 CWS	£595
P321 AMB	£695	83 BOW	£695	299 DA	£3400
P24 AMC	£695	X3 BOB	£1400	UT04 DAD	£290
W555 AMG	£595	W18 BOX	£895	K7 DAF	£695
AMW 659V	£390	P26 BOX	£795	M70 DAL	£595
R23 AND	£595	M66 BOX	£795	P002 DAN	£595
P25 AND	£795	S107 BOY	£290	P321 DAN	£595
P31 AND	£695	SC08 BOY	£290	P24 DUN	£595
BD14 ANE	£590	R26 BOY	£595	R24 DUN	£595
P24 ANG	£595	255 BP	£2800	B888 DAS	£595
W6 ANH	£595	I686 BP	£1880	XV02 DAV	£290
A109 ANN	£695	89 BR	£7055	63 DAS	£795
ANN I3Y	£3900	J66 BRH	£290	D89 DAV	£895
H80 ANN	£995	V88 BRV	£995	S002 DAY	£290
J70 ANO	£490	R123 BRY	£795	A18 DAY	£1300
NS ANP	£590	673 BRY	£1900	DAY 76M	£1400
I222 AP	£2500	B5 8072	£1700	P2 D8M	£595
W9 APL	£595	T1 BSC	£890	CJ05 DCJ	£190
TT APT	£1300	BSK I53	£890	W9 DCL	£595
ES APW	£595	C2 BTY	£390	A4 DCN	£595
P28 ARB	£695	S600 BUD	£490	W6 DCR	£595
B14 ARC	£595	M4 BUD	£595	65 DCR	£595
ARF I4S	£390	C8 BUG	£595	4155 DD	£1900
X100 ARJ	£390	C20 BUG	£695	SH02 DDY	£590
D6 ART	£1300	K55 BUG	£890	65 DE	£4700
R21 ART	£695	R21 BUL	£595	P26 DEB	£1400
C55 ART	£795	I27 BUL	£1300	0056 DEB	£990
E14 ARY	£1500	F1 BUN	£2420	B12 DEE	£1100
S31 ASA	£595	R23 BUN	£595	P23 DEE	£1100
P31 ASH	£1300	P24 BUR	£595	P4 DEK	£595
J505 ASH	£795	R23 BUR	£1400	P26 DEL	£595
B600 ASH	£895	853 BUT	£595	207 DEL	£1600
AT ASK	£795	S900 BUT	£590	R21 DEN	£595
M222 ASM	£390	S9 BVC	£290	P24 DEN	£1400
D18 ASP	£595	BI BWG	£590	R130 DEN	£1090
K5 ATB	£595	P3 BWS	£390	W200 DEN	£695
K155 ATH	£490	T6 BWS	£390	S222 DEN	£795
J1 ATP	£595	BXG 862	£695	P900 DEN	£595
X13 AUD	£695	2192 BY	£1400	Y31 DER	£595
F14 AUD	£895	1984 C	£3900	548 DER	£1400
AUD I6J	£1400	1985 CA	£3100	K9 DES	£595
K800 AUD	£595	R24 CAB	£595	L66 DES	£795
J7 AWB	£695	P29 CAB	£595	516 DES	£1500
H10 AWD	£290	S53 CAB	£1800	P23 DEV	£595
VI AWJ	£790	F1 CAD	£995	N55 DEV	£690
AXI 812	£590	J32 CAD	£995	DEW I2F	£695
S86 AYD	£995	D10 CAL	£695	BLO4 DEX	£190
800 BAZ	£3200	ABU CAL	£290	DEZ 250	£795
BAB 42S	£890	CAM I2A	£2500	T9 DFT	£190
R29 BAB	£695	P123 CAM	£795	DFV IY	£590
W9 BAG	£595	S19 CAN	£595	3468 DG	£1300
Y9 BAL	£595	G97 CAR	£595	N6 DGB	£695
BAL 55E	£1300	CAR I21S	£895	V4 DGB	£695
R21 BAM	£595	P29 CAS	£595	C10 DHA	£1500
P23 BAR	£595	T25 CAS	£390	CI DHA	£490
R25 BAR	£595	P26 CAT	£595	L33 DHR	£290
R21 BAS	£595	F801 CAT	£595	M4 DHT	£390
C20 BAT	£695	D19 CAW	£595	M77 DHT	£290
W9 BAW	£390	M6 CAW	£595	DE6 G520	£490
R21 BAX	£595	CAD 8233	£690	V53 DIB	£795
BAZ 494	£595	CAZ 8901	£595	L700 DIB	£695
BAZ 3561	£595	500 CBM	£1900	T90 DIC	£695
BAZ 9321	£690	D10 CCY	£390	P321 DIC	£595

R21 DJG	£695	479 EPB	£695	R28 GEO	£695	444 HXY	£695	JTS 929	£2420	LK 8	£4800	L8 MPY	£790	L065 OUT	£490	V20 RAI	£895	L10 SAL	£1300	783 TMP	£795
R23 DJJ	£695	92 ER	£4900	GER I48	£1800	IBZ 2654	£390	GTJ JTW	£695	LTJ LIL	£490	MR 6646	£2500	99 OYR	£895	R23 RAI	£795	R23 SAL	£595	777 TMT	£190
82 DJJ	£595	ER 342	£440	C8 GES	£695	IDZ 85	£695	JUN 3N	£1600	L1UJ	£7950	MC59 MRC	£390	09Y 750	£895	RAJ 798X	£890	JH04 SAM	£795	277 TNY	£1100
S44 DJM	£595	H454 ERA	£190	GF I46	£3700	ITD 750	£595	J77 JVB	£290	P7 LLA	£590	W23 MRK	£695	N4 PAB	£595	DR54 RAL	£290	K009 SAM	£895	207 TNY	£1100
P700 DJM	£595	Y9 ERC	£595	TI GFH	£695	T30 JAC	£1400	364 JVB	£595	B5 LLB	£490	J80 MRY	£290	P26 PAD	£595	M99 RAM	£695	P21 SAM	£2200	LI TOG	£1100
R29 DJP	£695	ERG 224	£1200	R79 GFR	£595	E999 JAC	£1200	68 JWB	£695	K55 LLS	£390	MI MSD	£1300	CI PAE	£1380	NK13 RAN	£990	SAM 50Y	£3300	JW05 TOM	£590
W10 DJP	£595	CI ERH	£695	M8 GGS	£5900	R33 JAE	£590	RI JXT	£590	JI LMB	£595	C2 MSN	£290	L2 PAM	£1500	DW04 RAO	£190	P21 SAM	£1300	R13 TOM	£1400
R26 DJR	£595	A9 ERJ	£390	R7 GHC	£580	K8 JAF	£695	555 JXY	£595	MI LMG	£490	YI MSL	£595	T05 PAM	£490	B16 RAO	£290	SP65 SAN	£290	P26 TOM	£1300
D21 DJJ	£595	N4 ERN	£795	GIL I449	£890	Y7 JAG	£1600	PI JYC	£590	50 LOD	£2500	J2 MTC	£695	92 PAM	£3900	V5 RAP	£790	Y11 SAN	£795	TOM 21Y	£595
728 DKG	£595	421 ES	£2700	GIL 8659	£595	T55 JAG	£1000	NI KAB	£595	N18 LOH	£290	7426 MU	£1300	V333 PAM	£795	U02 RAS	£190	S12 SAN	£995	TOM 270Y	£1400
I92 DKH	£595	ESB 462	£1580	R70 GJG	£290	JAG 654	£4000	H2 KAP	£695	K155 LOH	£590	T2 MUI	£795	T800 PAM	£695	RAS IIF	£3550	SW07 SAR	£290	W64 TOM	£695
CLZ 1790	£290	ESK 937	£595	S60 GJS	£390	JAH I2D	£895	W10 KAR	£695	470 LOO	£595	P21 MUI	£795	S6 PAM	£595	B10 RAV	£695	P24 SAR	£695	J7 TOP	£695
531 DLT	£595	ESS 8Y	£695	333 GK	£3100	G6 JAK	£1880	P25 KAT	£695	R21 LOR	£795	TS02 MUM	£390	S6 PAM	£595	RAS IIF	£3550	SW07 SAR	£290	W64 TOM	£695
R7 DLV	£290	ESS 8Y	£695	V400 GLE	£290	JAK I92	£7500	JB54 KAT	£290	GI LOR	£795	D11 MUI	£795	S5 PAR	£1300	ER RAY	£1400	SAW 689	£1800	1692 TOY	£490
CI DMC	£1200	I7 ESS	£2400	JI GLY	£1400	P222 JAK	£895	L14 KAT	£290	880 LUJ	£795	MUM 77V	£695	R29 PAR	£695	P6 RAY	£1400	SBU 823	£795	7 TPR	£5880
CI DMC	£1200	N99 ESS	£795	424 GLY	£795	S26 JAM	£795	P23 KAY	£895	880 LUJ	£795	R7 MUR	£895	P24 PAS	£695	R29 RAY	£1300	K100 SCL	£190	J8 TRA	£1400
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140 DMR	£1500	G10 GMA	£12000	I GMA	£12000	E549 JAN	£795	KAZ 565	£595	V444 LRE	£595	1759 MW	£1900	A98 PAT	£1200	P600 RAY	£590	P24 SCL	£895	TRT 87	£2300
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P4 DMO	£710	A9 GME	£390	JO9 JAP	£595	75 KE	£3600	S19 KAT	£595	L666 LSB	£390	7002 MY	£1200	847 PAT	£2500	RAB 243	£1200	CS SCR	£695	K155 TRV	£695
D10 GME	£390	D10 GME	£390	A16 JAR	£1200	1066 LSB	£390	T5 KEN	£1700	PAV 3T	£1200	H68 REY	£695	Y8 REY	£695	RC 8420	£2300	SDN 332	£1300	4025 TV	£1400
G7 GNL	£490	W0 JAR	£595	M07 JAR	£595	404 KEN	£595	147 I77	£100	222 MYX	£795	81 PAB	£595	EL P8B	£795	RC 8043	£2300	C14 SDN	£390	24 TS	£4200
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# Matt Prior

TESTER'S NOTES



The 812 Superfast's 789bhp is shocking, but only for now

**A**h, welcome, 812 Superfast. You'll be the new Ferrari, won't you? Your CV suggests you're super, and I have no doubt believing you're almost certainly fast.

Sit down, make yourself comfortable, and answer me this: how much, exactly, is too much? Power, I mean. I always thought your predecessor, the F12, had a more than ample 730bhp. Then the F12 tdf turned up with 770bhp. And now you sit here, placing 789bhp on the table, while reassuring me that this unending power growth is absolutely fine. So, where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Honestly, dear reader, where does it all stop? Sometimes in the media we confidently predict that a certain power output will be the end of things. The pinnacle. The ultimate. The McLaren F1. The Bugatti Veyron. And then what happens?

An everyday McLaren rocks up with more power than an F1, and there's about to be a new Bugatti with



Model S's 603bhp doesn't offend anyone

## Thirty years ago a middling family car had 74bhp. Today's has double that

1492bhp – almost 50% more than the first Veyron. It's time to admit that we were wrong and that there won't be an end to it. Don't get too used to the 812's 789bhp. Not because it represents an apogee from which we'll sensibly return, but because 800bhp is right around the corner.

It turns out that cars, you see, just mirror life, where unending growth, power and complexity are the overriding trends. With due apologies to any creationists, once we were amoeba, yet now many of us stand over six feet tall. The first computers used to crack wartime codes were the size of rooms, but add all the computing power of every wartime computer together and you'd barely have enough oomph to play a video of a cat falling off a shelf.

Power growth is all around us, and it has been since the dawn of times. How many calories do you – dear reader, not Ferrari – consume a day? I wouldn't like to guess (you're looking well), but I'll bet it will be more than the average of, say, 100 years ago. The thrust of an Airbus A380 knocks aside anything Louis Blériot would likely have imagined. More power. More force. More *life* is as inevitable as the arrival of the morning sun.

The average family car? Thirty years ago a middling Ford Escort

would have had 74bhp from a 1.4-litre engine. Today you could comfortably double that. As recent as 1991, a luxury car like a Mercedes-Benz S-Class with a 5.0-litre engine made around 250bhp and 288lb ft. Today you can buy an S-Class with almost as much power as a McLaren F1 – enough to make a Vauxhall Lotus Carlton feel like a pram. The Carlton once offended the world; today nobody is outraged that a Tesla Model S can give you, silently, 603bhp and 713lb ft.

I once asked a Lamborghini engineer how much was too much. There is no figure, he said. Acceleration at low speed is already limited by traction; more power gives you better acceleration at high speed. And if that much speed all sounds a bit hairy? Well, there's more computing power to deal with it and more efficiency and complexity to mean it doesn't consume the planet at an any greater rate.

So, frankly, we had better get used to it. And look forward, I suppose, to the day when your average family hatchback will have 500bhp.

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✉ [matt.prior@haymarket.com](mailto:matt.prior@haymarket.com)  
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