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'Alf turned off his headlights and drove only by the light of the moon to improve his vision'

AUTOCAR

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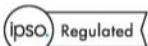
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THIS WEEK

COMMENT

TALKING A GOOD GAME IS NO LONGER ENOUGH



CAR FIRMS LIKE to talk about 'brand values'. It's about creating a point of difference in a crowded market – and while it sounds like marketing bumph, it only really works when underpinned by engineering.

Polestar prides itself on an alternative take on premium performance, so set out to make its new 3 (p22) feel different from other big SUVs. Aston Martin sees itself as a British Ferrari, and has doubled down on performance with its DBX facelift (p26). And Mini continues to push 'go-kart' handling with its new Cooper (p28) – even if the results aren't entirely convincing.

In recent years, Jaguar's brand values were built around driving dynamism. As Matt Prior reflects on p36 in his farewell to its current saloons, the XE and XF might never have rivalled their BMW and Mercedes counterparts in terms of sales, but they sure could when it came to handling. That focus earned Jaguar its place in a crowded market.

We continue to await official details of its coming reinvention as a luxury, EV-only brand, two years after breaking the story, but such a shift will doubtless mean new brand values. Let's hope that, as with its newly retired line-up, those values are reflected in engineering as well as marketing.

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“LIKE THE SMELL OF HIS CIGARS, THE SPIRIT OF ARTHUR DALEY HAS LONG SINCE DISSIPATED”

MATT PRIOR TAKES THE ERA-ENDING XF ON A TOUR OF JAG'S POP-CULTURE HERITAGE **36**

COVER STORY



SCOOP: BMW'S NEW ENTRY-LEVEL EV, THE i1 **4**

NEWS

GOT A STORY?

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AUTOCAR
IMAGE



BMW targets younger buyers with new 1 and 2 Series EVs

German maker commits to cheaper EVs and smaller cars as main rival quits sector

BMW has given the green light to new electric i1 and i2 models, according to sources close to the German car maker.

Already in development at the company's R&D centre in Munich, the two new models will be sold alongside updated versions of today's combustion-powered

1 Series and 2 Series when they arrive later this decade. The intention is to provide prospective customers with more affordable alternatives in BMW's EV line-up, which currently opens with the £46,205 iX1.

The new i1 is expected to be sold as either a hatchback or a saloon, while the i2 will be a

compact crossover with the option of a coupé bodystyle. Insiders describe the i2 as a spiritual successor to BMW's debut electric car, the i3 hatchback, launched in 2013 and discontinued in 2022.

BMW remains committed to the 1 Series and its derivatives and sees its future operating in all major segments – a stark

contrast to rival Mercedes-Benz, which will retire the A-Class for good in 2026.

BMW product boss Bernd Körber told Autocar recently that the brand wants to grow in all markets and “connect with the younger generation”, and having entry-level models like the 1 Series and 2 Series is essential to do that.

Körber added: “Of course they have lower profitability but they also fulfil a different purpose in getting younger customers and developing [BMW] in certain markets.

“So yes, they are still part of our strategy and it's good that we have two brands in the segment, with of course Mini playing a big role.”

“
The new i1 and i2 are set
to become the first BMWs
based on the NBx platform
”



The i1 will be BMW's
new entry-level EV
when it arrives in 2027

Körber agreed with the notion that the A-Class bowing out presented an opportunity for BMW to grow market share with the 1 Series.

The company plans to launch the electric i1 in 2027, with the i2 set to follow in 2028.

But while the updated 1 Series and 2 Series remain on the existing FAAR platform, the two new compact EVs have been conceived around the new dedicated Neue Klasse electric car architecture.

As previewed by the Neue Klasse saloon and Neue Klasse X concepts, the new structure supports an 800V electric architecture designed to accommodate single-, dual- and quad-motor electric drivetrains. Our BMW sources confirm there are two distinct variants of the Neue Klasse

platform: the NBx, denoting front- and four-wheel drive; and NAx, for rear- and four-wheel drive.

NAx also forms the basis of a larger NDx platform for luxury-class models, as well as a weight-optimised ZAx platform reserved exclusively for future electric sports cars from BMW's M division.

Initial models will use NAx – including the second-gen iX3 SUV and i3 saloon based on the Neue Klasse concepts – and give the choice of rear- or four-wheel drive.

However, the new i1 and i2 are set to become the first BMW models to be based on the NBx platform, with either standard front- or optional four-wheel drive. Plans exist for the electric iX1 and its Mini Countryman sibling to also →

ICE AGE NOT OVER FOR BMW



While there will be an electric BMW 3 Series based on the Neue Klasse platform in 2025, combustion-engined and hybrid versions with the same look will remain – but they will be built on an updated version of the current mixed-energy rear-wheel-drive platform.

Product boss Bernd Körber said BMW will retain its natively front-wheel-drive and rear-wheel-drive platforms – and all powertrain options – in addition to the Neue Klasse architecture underpinning its new pure-electric cars.

The situation is similar at BMW-owned Mini, where the petrol and electric Cooper models are identically styled, yet one is built in China on a bespoke electric architecture and the other in Oxford on a traditional combustion-engined structure.

This strategy allows BMW to be adaptable to fluctuating global market conditions around the uptake of electric cars.

“What plays out at the moment is our own strategy,” said Körber. “For us, it was always clear that development will be very volatile because it’s dependent on regulation and customer needs.”

“For the foreseeable future, we’re into a technology-flexible approach, which is why we planned to build all drivetrains on one production line.”

“If a market shifts in one direction, we don’t have to close a plant or reduce a shift. We just shift to another drivetrain.”

BMW sales boss Jochen Goller added that “two years ago, estimates on electric cars were too optimistic and now they’re too pessimistic” and the prevailing trend ahead is still “growth coming from electric cars”.

He said: “I think with more models coming with a longer range and a shorter charging time, some of the purchase barriers will be removed.”



A-Class (left) bows out in 2026; 1 Series may be a beneficiary

Compact i2 will share its tech with the i1 and be launched in 2028



“
The first Neue Klasse models are now in their final stages of development
”

Radical EVs to still feel like BMWs



BMW's traditional driving dynamics will be a feature of its EVs

Mihir Ayoubi is leading the driving dynamics of all BMWs, including those from the Neue Klasse family. He said it will be a step change in the way EVs drive but will be able to deliver linear driving performance instantly recognisable as a BMW. He added that the days of EVs simply being known for delivering huge surges of torque before becoming anonymous to drive at higher speeds are long gone.

“We have mechanical systems and electronic systems that deliver uncountable possibilities to put characteristics into the car,” he said. “When you drive Neue Klasse, you will be amazed. The past was driving fast. Now it’s continuous

driving characteristics from zero to 220kph.”

Ayoubi said he is heartened that China increasingly values driving dynamics and “this is exactly our advantage”.

He said: “We were concerned that a market flooded with driver assistance systems might nullify driving dynamics. We were relieved to hear that [Chinese buyers want the dynamics]. The car is 90% driving dynamics.”



BMW dynamics boss Ayoubi



Insiders call the i2 the spiritual successor to the i3 hatch (above)



AUTOCAR
IMAGE

← switch from the 400V FAAR platform to the 800V NBx platform as part of efforts to achieve greater economies of scale, Autocar has been told.

The Neue Klasse architectures are set to introduce new cylindrical battery cells. With a standard diameter of 46mm and two different lengths - either 95mm or 120mm - the sixth-generation battery has been developed with revised cell chemistry that is said to provide future models with much-improved performance.

The Neue Klasse range of models remains on track for launch in 2025 and BMW plans to build six new cars on this electric architecture within the following 24 months.

Körber confirmed that Neue Klasse will not be a

consumer-facing brand or name and the models launched off the architecture will take regular model names like 3 Series and X3.

He added that BMW will "not change its naming logic" for its models, as Audi has done in making electric cars even-numbered and combustion ones odd-numbered.



New i1 and i2 will join ICE equivalents as the i4 and i5 (right) have

CABIN CONTROLS: A PRESSING ISSUE



BMW interiors will continue to offer physical controls in addition to touchscreens.

Product boss Bernd Körber said the brand has "a good mix" at the moment but there is an opportunity to still "clean up the interior and reduce the number of buttons without having to press something in a lower menu for something like indicators".

Voice control is still expected to play an important role in the future despite a generally bumpy rollout across the industry to date, according to Körber.

"At the moment, we effectively have voice assistants, where you give a command and there's a metric in the background trying to trigger what you said. It's awkward as it

sometimes doesn't give you the right answer as it's only checking against what we encoded," he said.

Instead, the tech will move towards far more natural conversation and use "much larger language models" to intercept what a user wants and respond "sensibly", added Körber, "even if you have a strong accent or leave words out of sentences".

Neue Klasse concepts show design, tech and (above) interior future



The first Neue Klasse models are now in their "final stages" of development, said Körber, and being readied for production. "We have built the first pre-series cars and have driven them," said Körber.

While Neue Klasse includes an all-new bespoke electric architecture, it also encompasses next-generation software and connectivity

functionality that will be rolled out across all future BMW models regardless of their underpinnings, said Körber.

It also refers to a new styling theme that will be applied to all future BMW models and the electric cars will not be differentiated, as with the likes of the 4 Series and 5 Series sharing the same basic look as their related i4 and i5 models.

"We will change the entire portfolio within a relatively short period of time, so that it has one look and feel and also the same capabilities," said Körber. "Our ambition is that we unify that in a way that ideally one push of the button and your entire portfolio gets updated."

GREG KABLE AND MARK TISSHAW



Fiat turns 500e into a hybrid

Electric city car will be the basis for a new petrol hybrid sold alongside it from 2026



How we covered 500's rebirth in March 2007

Fiat will launch a new hybrid 500 in 2026, securing a long-term future for its big-selling petrol-engined city car.

The new 500 Ibrida will arrive by early 2026, Fiat said in a statement, meaning it will arrive 18 years after the current petrol 500 made its debut.

Production will move from Tychy in Poland to the Mirafiori plant in Italy that currently builds the electric Fiat 500e.

The 500 Ibrida will be

powered by the same Firefly 1.0-litre three-cylinder mild-hybrid petrol engine as the existing 500 and the related Fiat Panda. However, it is expected to switch from the current petrol 500's platform, which dates back to the 2003 Panda, onto the 500e's bespoke architecture.

The move to retrofit an EV with an internal combustion powertrain is unprecedented in the European car industry.

It is thought that the bold

measure was born out of two key challenges.

One was the need to increase production rates at Mirafiori amid slow sales of the 500e and its Abarth 500e hot hatch sibling.

The other was the challenge of keeping the petrol 500 on sale, because the existing model falls foul of new EU cybersecurity standards. Making it compliant with these new regulations would involve an expensive

rehomologation effort.

Even at 17 years old, the petrol 500 remains a linchpin for the Italian brand: of the 173,187 Fiat and Abarth 500s sold across Europe last year, 108,943 were petrol-powered.

Fiat CEO Olivier François hailed the hybrid 500 as a commitment to the Italian car industry, calling the brand's home nation "our driving force and our future".

He said: "The new 500 Ibrida has an Italian name, will

be developed and designed in Turin and [will be] proudly made in Mirafiori. It's clear that Mirafiori plays a strategic role for the brand and that we're also continuing investing in Italy, the 500 and Mirafiori."

To that end, the 500 Ibrida will use engines made in Termoli, on the Adriatic coast, exhausts fabricated in Napoli and gearboxes assembled at Mirafiori.

The repatriation of the 500 marks the extension of an



Positive reaction to ID 2all concept gave VW designers leverage

Final VW ID 2all 'even better' than concept

DESIGN WORK ON the production version of the Volkswagen ID 2all hatch has been finished - and design boss Andreas Mindt claims it looks "even better" than the concept.

The sub-€25,000 EV (roughly sub-£21,300) will be shown for the first time later this year, with sales starting in early 2025. The ID 2all concept was designed in only around

six weeks, but Mindt said his team fought hard to make sure the production model closely followed its styling and dimensions.

He said: "It's even better [than the concept]. I really like it and it's one of the reasons I'm so optimistic for our future."

According to Mindt, the positive reaction to the concept gave them "a lot of tailwind for



François said the 500 Ibrida will be built with the 500e at Mirafiori



olive branch from Stellantis to the Italian government, which has recently struck out at Stellantis's practice of marketing foreign-built cars as being from Italy. It recently seized a shipment of Moroccan-built Fiat Topolino quadricycles because they were emblazoned with the Italian flag and previously lobbied for the Polish-built Alfa Romeo Milano to be renamed. It is now called the Junior.

CHARLIE MARTIN

the production version".

He added: "I could almost force everybody around me by saying: 'Look at the feedback. We have to turn this into reality. Whatever you say - money-saving or whatever - I want this design.'"



VW's Mindt: "I really like it"

Sander is leaving Ford to become VW's sales and marketing chief



Sander quits top Ford of Europe job for VW

Ford of Europe boss Martin Sander has left the company to become sales and marketing boss at Volkswagen.

Sander joined Ford of Europe as general manager for passenger vehicles in January 2022, having spent 25 years at the Volkswagen Group, most recently in senior roles for Audi including UK managing director.

He will now return to the German giant, this time as board member for sales, marketing and aftersales at Volkswagen Passenger Cars.

Imelda Labbé, who currently holds the position, is leaving for personal reasons.

In his role as chairman of Ford's Model E electrification division in Europe, Sander has been instrumental in shaping the American brand's transition towards an all-electric line-up.

His departure was announced just days after Ford began producing its crucial new Explorer EV at the former Fiesta factory in Cologne and shortly before it is due to reveal a closely related 'sports crossover' to be built on the same line (see box, right).

Sander has also overseen development of the upcoming Puma Gen-E, an electric version of Ford's best-selling compact crossover, and the new E-Transit Custom van, the crucial electric variant of one of Europe's most popular vehicles.

As well as directing Ford's transition to an EV line-up, Sander was a driving force in its shift away from mass-market, value-focused models like the Fiesta and Focus to

higher-margin premium models like the Explorer, which is around twice the price of the ICE supermini.

In a wide-reaching interview with Autocar shortly after he took the top job at Ford, Sander explained the rationale behind not replacing the 50-year-old Fiesta: "We aren't going to enter a segment just to be there, just because of competitors who have a totally different industrial footprint and totally different structures."

"We're going to be much more picky when it comes to deciding where we're going to play and where we want to be in order to build a profitable business. Because at the end of the day, we're a business. We have to make sure that we make money."



Sander was a driving force in the shift to cars like the Explorer

REBORN CAPRI ABOUT TO BREAK COVER

The long-mooted reborn Capri is about to finally become reality - but it won't look anything like the original one. Ford's new 'sports crossover' - a coupé-roofed, style-oriented twin to the Explorer - will be revealed "shortly" before production starts later this year, though the firm has yet to say if it will take the cult-classic coupé's storied moniker, as has been widely reported. The car will offer around 375 miles of range in its longest-legged form and pack up to 335bhp, but there's no word yet on the potential for a resurrected Brooklands trim.



AUTOCAR IMAGE

New Twingo EV is set to make its debut in late 2025



AUTOCAR
IMAGE

China keeps Twingo on track

Renault has found a new partner to develop a city car after the VW deal fell through

Renault has partnered with a Chinese engineering firm to develop its sub-£17,000 Twingo city car after talks with Volkswagen about a potential collaboration proved fruitless.

The two firms had been evaluating the prospect of co-developing their respective entry-level city EVs. But Volkswagen will now work independently to bring its similarly conceived 'ID 1' to production in 2027. Renault will instead be assisted by the unnamed Chinese outfit, which is understood to be a supplier rather than a car maker.

"I wanted to show that European industry could work together as a team, so I think this is a lost opportunity," Renault Group CEO Luca de Meo told Reuters after the talks ended, but work on the Twingo has continued.

The retro supermini is

scheduled to be revealed in late 2025 and in showrooms in the first months of 2026 on current timings. The concept freeze took place at the start of this year and Renault is committed to a 24-month development cycle.

De Meo has told Autocar that partnering with the unnamed Chinese firm is crucial to achieving this ambitious development timeframe and identifying efficiencies that the firm can employ to reduce costs.



De Meo is Renault Group's CEO

"A new Twingo will have 75% less impact on the environment than an average European car now"

Asked how Renault will make the Twingo profitable, he said: "We'll do it by radically changing our production engineering and our component sourcing.

"Normally, we specify big components like HVAC systems from big tier-one suppliers. We send them a 1000-page holy book about how a Renault HVAC system should be, and they create a new one. But maybe these things are already there in our other cars. If they are, we'll use them in future. We will be able to do a car on a cycle below 24 months."

Slashing development lead times is important because it will allow Renault to be "more agile, more virtuous and more competitive", de Meo has said previously. But another benefit of making the development and production process more efficient is that it could drastically reduce its cars' environmental impact.

"We have research that proves that from cradle to grave, a new Twingo will have 75% less impact on the environment than an average European car now," said de Meo. "If all of the cars in Paris were as small and economical

as a Twingo, it would free up road space equivalent to the area of 60 football fields! And Paris is quite a small city..."

Accelerating the development of small EVs like the Twingo is especially important in this context, suggested de Meo, because "authorities are going to close cities to cars with engines".

Speaking separately to Autocar, product boss Bruno Vanel said collaborating with a Chinese firm means Renault has better oversight of "the technology that is coming, and we can better adapt the new technologies, take less risk and spend less in terms of development".

Renault has yet to decide which plant will build the Twingo, but Vanel said the company's ElectriCity industrial complex, centred in the north of France, gives "a footprint which is

ALFA JUNIOR PRICES TO START AT £34K

The electric Alfa Romeo Junior will be available to order in the UK later this month, priced from £33,895. That buys the 155bhp, 250-mile entry-level car, while the 238bhp Veloce bumps the price up to £42,295. A 134bhp mild-hybrid comes later.



WRAPS OFF V16 BUGATTI THIS MONTH

Bugatti's long-awaited Chiron successor, which swaps the quad-turbo W16 for a screaming, naturally aspirated, hybridised V16, will be revealed on 20 June. The new hypercar is tipped to produce almost 2000bhp.





Chinese-built Spring misses French incentives

very concentrated" and allows it to build locally at competitive rates.

Vanel said: "We've got the batteries produced and assembled close to the plants. The electric motor is built not too far away [at Cléon]. The plant that produces the Scenic and Mégane will build Renault 5 - so all electric cars in quite big volumes, reducing the cost."

As evidence of the viability of building small cars in Europe, Vanel pointed to the €25,000 (roughly £21,275) starting price of the 5. "This car is produced in France, and this car is profitable," he said.

He even suggested that cheaper versions of the 5 could be added to the line-up if new battery technology allows - and they too would have a profit margin built in.

The question of localising EV production has become particularly poignant for

Renault as the French government has begun offering substantial EV purchase incentives that favour European-built cars. Subsidies of €5000-€7000 (£4255-£5955) are available on cars with a carbon footprint of below 14.75 tonnes, which inherently favours local production.

The hugely popular Dacia Spring, for example, is imported from China and the resulting increase in carbon footprint makes it ineligible for the grants. This pushes its entry price from just over €17,000 (£14,465) to more than €22,000 (£18,720) in France.

Vanel acknowledged that it is "difficult" to compete at that price, emphasising the need to ensure the similarly sized Twingo is engineered, assembled and shipped as cost-effectively as possible.

FELIX PAGE

The 5 proves there is profit in small EVs, says Renault



Caterham to build 50% more cars a year thanks to new HQ

CATERHAM WILL NO longer need to "turn customers away", CEO Bob Laishley has told Autocar, after opening a multimillion-pound new base that will boost the British car maker's production capacity by 50%.

Labelled as a "game-changer" that has "transformed the business in every way", the HQ is just down the road from the firm's former Dartford factory.

Caterham can now build up to 750 Sevens annually thanks to 33 new build stations at the facility, which is located at the Dartford X industrial centre, up from 22 at its predecessor.

Laishley said: "Before, we would have orders for 600 cars, but only be able to build 500, so we would have to turn customers away."

"Increasing production to 750 has also allowed us to explore markets we have always suppressed because of capacity, such as the US."

The new facility's close proximity to the former site has been key to retaining the firm's 130 staff, especially its mechanics and engineers.

As well as a new factory floor, the 54,000sq ft site - which was funded by Caterham's Japan-based owner, VT Holdings, and took nine months to fit

out - houses the brand's motorsport and commercial operations.

Bringing all of those under one roof means Caterham "feels more connected than ever", said Laishley. "It makes us a more efficient, streamlined business."

The difference in quality of the new site was summed up by Laishley as he recalled visiting the former factory for the final time: "Were we really working here?"

The production version of the electric Project V concept will not be built there, though. Instead, the new three-seat coupé will be handled by a third party.

Q&A BOB LAISHLEY, CEO, CATERHAM

Can you push beyond 750 new Sevens per year?

"As all our cars are hand-built, when one person builds one car, you can't really expand that as it means that person is just working more. Expanding to more than 1000 cars a year also brings homologation issues [regarding type approval laws]."

Have you decided where you will build Project V?

"It has always been our preference to build in the UK. But I have always said the UK's economic circumstances need to be right, which is why we are also looking abroad. I do not want that to be perceived as a threat [to the UK], but

when you are looking to make 2000 cars a year, only a few firms can do that, and only a few of those are in the UK."

Does the higher output mean you have funding for future projects?

"It does, but firstly we need that additional revenue to back the significant investment in the factory. After that, we can start to look at the future."



WRX POISED TO HIT COVENTRY STREETS

The World Rallycross Championship could stage an event on the Coventry ring road in 2025. It would be the UK's first international-level street race since the Birmingham Superprix in 1990. "Advanced talks" are under way.



NEW MG HS TO BE A LONG-RANGE PHEV

MG will unveil the new HS at the Festival of Speed next month, commercial director Guy Pigounakis told Automotive News Europe. The Skoda Karoq rival will be a PHEV with an electric range said to be longer than that of any similarly priced rival.



AUTOCAR IMAGE



Motability popularity 'explodes'

Charity will buy 20% of UK's new cars this year, giving a big boost to manufacturers

As car makers navigate a sluggish new car market, one enthusiastic bulk buyer is proving very helpful indeed.

"The Motability market has just exploded," Guy Pigounakis, commercial director at MG Motor UK, told Autocar. "None of us have seen anything like it for decades."

Motability is a charity that provides cars for disabled people. It has been a major player in the UK car market since its 1977 foundation, but this year it has taken on a whole new level of importance.

In the first quarter of 2024,

Motability received a record 112,734 applications from people looking to put the £75.75-per-week mobility portion of their Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance into a new car.

In the six months from the start of October 2023, Motability received a massive 48% increase in applications to almost 200,000.

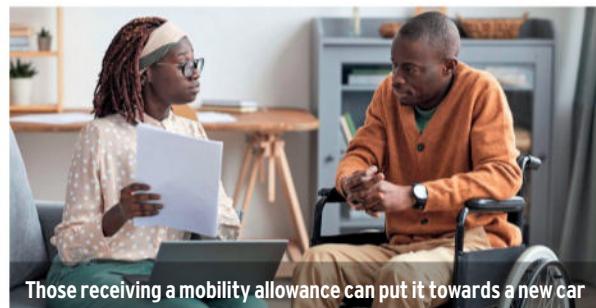
That means for the calendar year of 2024, the charity is on track to buy more than 400,000 new cars, which means it should account for a little more than a fifth of the

1.98 million cars that UK trade body the SMMT expects the market to reach overall.

As of the end of March, Motability, which buys the cars itself, owned 763,500 of them, worth around £10 billion.

There are a few reasons for Motability's soaring popularity. The first is that car makers are targeting it again as supply returns, following a period when parts shortages made production very difficult. Faced with high prices to change during that period, many customers simply extended their existing lease. So Motability estimates that 57% of the applications during its record half-year are from customers who extended their normal three-year lease.

However, the other 43% are new: a record 86,300 people joined the scheme in the six months to the end of March. That might be because the number of people in Britain entitled to receive a disability benefit has risen sharply, from 3.9 million in May 2002 to



Those receiving a mobility allowance can put it towards a new car

6.3 million in February 2023, according to official figures.

They don't have to use their benefit money to buy a car, but prices have proved very tempting this year.

Motability customers can upgrade their car by paying an advance payment up front, but this quarter, 115 models out of 857 were available with no advance payment, including a range of electric cars.

Versions of the Renault Mégane E-Tech Electric, Jeep Avenger Electric, MG 4 EV, Cupra Born, Fiat 500e, MG ZS EV and Skoda Enyaq are all available with nothing up front.

Motability calculates that its customers can get into a car 48% cheaper than by going to a dealer.

To achieve its low prices, Motability invests any profit it makes on leasing and then reselling its cars. That has been substantial in previous quarters, when residual values shot up, although not in the last half-year, when used car prices slid downward again. And this year, the charity is also getting help from the manufacturers themselves.

"It costs us a lot to be competitive [on Motability]. Everyone is cutting each



Motability is able to offer special deals on EVs such as the Mégane and MG 4

other's throats, wanting a share of that 400,000 market," said Pigounakis. "But it's not as expensive as rental and a lot less distressful."

By 'distressful' he means that discounting through Motability harms residual values much less, because the cars come back three years later, instead of after just six months with daily rental deals.

In areas with higher numbers of people receiving disability benefits - for example, South Wales, central-eastern Scotland and north-west England - "60-70% of a dealer's business is Motability", according to Pigounakis.

MG has recently changed its policy to include Motability sales in dealers' volume-related bonuses, which Pigounakis said "has gone down extremely well".

We hear the phrase 'freedom of mobility' in the wider context of new car sales, but Motability provides exactly that to people for whom a car is a lifeline. This year, that lifeline has been extended to the car industry itself, providing a useful outlet in a sluggish market.

NICK GIBBS

A DRIVING FORCE OF ELECTRIFICATION

Motability's boom is also good news for those car makers that are struggling to hit the EV sales targets of the UK's new zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) mandate.

The charity has been very proactive in promoting EVs - for example, giving free home chargers to customers. By the end of March 2024, it had installed 46,679 of them as part of a £300 million spend on boosting EV sales.

Motability noted that EV applications had increased by more than 300% in the six months to the end of

March over the same period a year earlier. It currently has around 50,000 EVs on its customer fleet.

It's working hard to figure out how to make EVs more compatible with the lives of its customers. As well as installing free chargers for those with driveways, from March all EV customers have been given a free app and card to tap into the Motability Go Charge network, which links 20 charging providers across 45,000 chargers and fixes competitive tariffs.

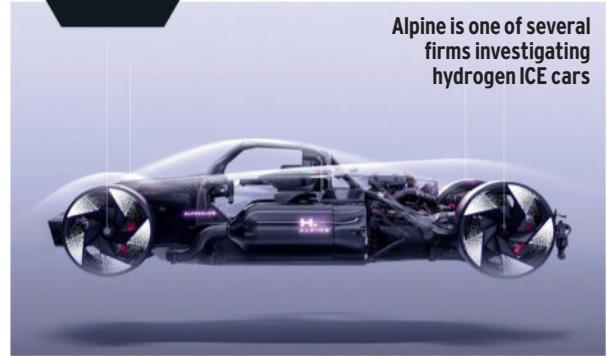


Free card makes public EV charging less complicated

UNDER THE SKIN
JESSE CROSSE

A BATTERY-ONLY FUTURE? DON'T BET ON IT JUST YET

Alpine is one of several firms investigating hydrogen ICE cars



ALPINE'S EXHIBITION OF its Alpenglow prototype at the Spa 6 Hours endurance race in May demonstrated that the jury is far from out on the subject of alternative propulsion - as did the announcement a week later from Mazda, Subaru and Toyota that they had together committed to designing new compact combustion engines with integrated electric drive units and compatible with carbon-neutral fuels and hydrogen.

However gripped the world is by BEV technology, we're still in the early stages of a transition away from fossil fuels, around which the entire global economy has been based for well over 100 years. The chances of it settling in any particular direction any time soon are slim, and ultimately it's the viability, affordability, appeal and effectiveness of individual technologies, rather than any political decisions, that will decide how things fall. And while randomly selected dates like 2050 may seem a long way off, we might as well be talking about next week, considering the scale of change the world is facing.

The only thing we can count on is that the transport sector as a whole - land, air and sea - is moving towards sustainable energy. On the automotive side, manufacturers including BMW, Stellantis, Toyota and Honda have all worked on or are working on hydrogen combustion engines, if only to keep on top of the game.

The commercial vehicle industry is investing too, with players including JCB, MAN and Volvo Trucks.

Likewise, hydrogen fuel cells that convert hydrogen and oxygen into electricity are still in play.

The technologies neatly overlap: fuel cell vehicles share their hydrogen storage systems (high-pressure tanks) with hydrogen combustion engines and their electric drivetrain with BEVs.

Engineers and scientists argue the toss over which way is best, depending on their specialities, and opinions vary considerably.

FCEV proponents argue that the problem with BEVs is the need for a long stop to recharge the battery, whereas a hydrogen tank can be refilled pretty much as fast as the fuel tank in a petrol or diesel car.

BEV proponents argue that making electricity, converting it to hydrogen and then using energy to compress and decompress it for distribution and retailing makes no sense compared with making electricity and storing it directly in a battery.

The FCEV camp may then argue that it doesn't matter if the outcome is zero CO2 emissions, sustainability and affordability.

Making hydrogen is also a way to store off-peak-generated green electricity, as a sort of 'gas battery'.

Using green electricity to make hydrogen and from that liquid synthetic fuel adds to the range of possibilities, so it looks like manufacturers in all sectors will keep their options open.

Although the days of undiluted ICE power may be coming to an end, the outlook isn't as bleak as it sounds for car lovers. The way future cars will be powered and by what isn't a done deal yet. It could be more complex and interesting than ever before, with more options to choose from.

Fleets offset fall in private sales

Bulk buyers like Motability are underpinning a sustained period of growth for the UK new car market, the latest SMMT figures have shown.

Fleet sales were up 14% last month to just under 87,000, while deliveries to business buyers rose 9.5% to 3355. This made up for a 12.9% year-on-year drop in private sales, contributing to a 1.7% increase for the overall new car market - the 22nd consecutive month of growth.



OTHER MARKET TRENDS TO WATCH

DEATH OF DIESEL

Just 9220 new diesel cars were sold in May, less than half the number of hybrids sold and around a ninth of petrols sold. In May 2019, Brits bought nearly 51,000 diesels.



RISE OF KIA

The Kia Sportage was the UK's best-selling car in May, outpacing the Ford Puma by nearly 400 units. The Korean brand took a record 6.1% market share last month.



ZEV MANDATE DEFICITS

EVs accounted for 17.6% of May's market, a 6.2% yearly rise but still well short of the mandated 22% for 2024. The SMMT said the next government should provide "meaningful" EV incentives.



New five-door Mini marks end of era

Five-door Cooper is the last petrol-only model that Mini will ever make

Mini has unveiled the five-door version of the new Cooper hatchback – the last car the firm is set to offer exclusively with combustion powertrains.

It is effectively a stretched version of the three-door Cooper (driven, p28) and swaps that car's four-seat interior for a more conventional five-seat set-up with a rear bench. At 4036mm overall, it is 160mm longer than the three-door and 31mm longer than the old five-door. This brings an extra 38mm of rear leg room compared with the three-door and 65 litres more boot space, at 275 litres.

As with the three-door Cooper, two petrol versions

will be available. The entry-level Cooper C has a turbocharged 1.5-litre three-pot that sends 152bhp and 170lb ft through the front wheels and dispatches 0-62mph in 8.0sec.

The Cooper S gets a 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine, with outputs boosted to 201bhp and 221lb ft. That enables a 0-62mph time of 6.8sec, which is 0.3sec slower than the three-door Cooper S.

The new Cooper is available exclusively with an automatic gearbox, Mini having dropped the manual version from the line-up last year.

Unlike the three-door, the bigger Cooper will not be offered with a battery-electric



New 201bhp five-door Cooper S is priced from £28,450



powertrain. The role of five-door EV has effectively been taken by the Chinese-built Aceman crossover, which is based on the same platform as the electric three-door Cooper.

Prices for the new five-door start at £24,050, which is £555 more than the previous version. This puts it in competition with larger family hatchbacks such as the Hyundai i30 (£22,710), Mazda

3 (£23,955) and Seat Leon (£23,905). The Cooper S starts at £28,450 – almost £2000 more than you would have paid for the now-discontinued Hyundai i20 N, but also undercutting the Volkswagen Polo GTI (£30,195). UK deliveries will begin in August.

The five-door will be built alongside the petrol-engined three-door at Mini's Oxford plant, which is being gradually



Livery nods to MP4/2 McLaren; F1 engine is a 1.5 twin-turbo V6

Chief among the engine upgrades is a new set of internals: pistons, conrods, valves, valve springs and camshafts. The turbochargers are also bespoke and are made from titanium, bringing an 8kg saving.

Classic 911 gets Tag-McLaren makeover

PETERSFIELD-BASED engineering firm Lanzante has transplanted a 625bhp Formula 1 engine into a classic Porsche 911 Turbo, creating a fearsome – and strictly limited-edition – racer for the road.

Based on the 930-gen 911, it swaps that car's original flat six for the Porsche-developed and Tag-branded powerplant that propelled McLaren's F1 cars to three consecutive drivers' titles from 1984 to 1986.

The 1.5-litre twin-turbo V6 ex-F1 engine has been upgraded by Cosworth for durability

and tractability, resulting in an output of 625bhp and a screaming 10,250rpm rev limit.

The powerplant is linked to a reworked version of the six-speed gearbox from the later 993-gen 911, with bespoke ratios that are claimed to enable a top speed of 200mph.

As well as the exotic engine, the Lanzante 911 – called the Tag Championship – receives a chassis overhaul and many of its body panels have been replaced by panels made from "Formula 1-grade" carbonfibre.

The interior has been



SECRET SOURCE

OUR INDUSTRY INSIDER

CAR SALES STAFF love a target. In addition to giving them the chance to tot up the commission, they can get big bonus cheques if they manage to hit other goals.

One car maker set a series of these challenges for sales staff across the network and the top scorer was in line to win a tropical holiday as well as a trophy handed over at a boozy awards dinner.

The final task was to shift a car that had been sitting at the docks for nearly two years. This large, petrol-engined saloon had proved to be unsaleable even with huge discounts.

The front-running salesman reckoned he could sell it to a customer who seemed to like this type of car, but there was an issue: the customer needed a towbar for his caravan, and no one had bothered to engineer one for this niche model.

Desperate to seal the deal, the salesman had one airfreighted over from the US and paid to have a Euro-spec hitch welded on it. The customer bought the car, and the salesman got his trophy.

Unfortunately, a truck drove into the back of the saloon when it was a week old, writing it off before the towbar had ever been used.



Five-door's hatch gives access to a load bay of 275-925 litres

retooled to begin production of the electric Cooper and the Aceman in 2026. The upcoming Mini Convertible – the final model still to come amid the renewal of the brand's line-up – will also be built at Oxford.

The five-door is the last car to be unveiled by Mini CEO Stefanie Wurst, who is being replaced by Stefan Richmann, BMW's corporate strategy boss.

CHARLIE MARTIN



Front cabin has the same layout as the three-door Cooper

stripped of almost all its fripperies, including electric operation of the mirrors and windows, and a roll-cage has been fitted to boost rigidity and crash protection. Recaro bucket seats replace the leather items originally fitted to the 911 and a Personal steering wheel, similar to that used in McLaren's MP4/2 F1 car, completes the package.

The result of these changes is a weight saving of more than 400kg, with the Tag car tipping the scales at just 920kg (dry).

Three Tag Championship 911s will be built, referencing the MP4/2's three drivers' titles. The first car, set to be unveiled at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, will sport a livery referencing Alain Prost's 1985 helmet design.



Carbonfibre and stripped-out cabin pare dry weight to 920kg

THE PORSCHE 911-MCLAREN F1 LINK

In 1981, McLaren chief Ron Dennis used sponsorship cash from Luxembourg's Techniques d'Avant Garde (Tag) to convince Porsche to build a turbocharged engine for McLaren.

By 1982, a prototype was ready and mounted inside a Porsche 911 Turbo for testing. Niki Lauda forced its early introduction in the previously Ford-Cosworth DFV-powered MP4/1 for the final four rounds of the 1983 season, but the car was plagued with mechanical issues.

The MP4/2 was introduced the season



after and won 12 of the year's 16 grands prix. That proved sufficient for Lauda to take the drivers' title and McLaren the constructors' title.

Tag-McLarens took both honours again in 1985, and Alain Prost won his second consecutive drivers' title in a Tag-McLaren in 1986.

Lexus primes 'LFR' V8 supercar

All-new Aston Vantage rival will be made to homologate 2026 Toyota GT3 racer

AUTOCAR
IMAGE



Toyota GR GT3 concept provides basis



Lexus is set to launch a new V8-engined supercar as a rival to the likes of the Aston Martin Vantage and Mercedes-AMG GT and as a spiritual successor to the legendary LFA.

Parent company Toyota's hardcore GT3 GR concept car, revealed in 2022, has now evolved into a prototype that has been spotted running at Spa-Francorchamps, and its Gazoo Racing motorsport division is expected to have it ready for top-flight competition - including the Le Mans 24 Hours - in 2026.

FIA homologation rules dictate that any GT3 racer shares its basic body design with a related road car, so a toned-down version of the GT3 GR is expected in showrooms within the next two years.

Toyota has previously said that it would continue "commercialising motorsports cars rather than simply adapting production vehicles for use in motorsports", as it did with the rally-honed GR Yaris hot hatch.

The road-going GT3 GR is

likely to wear a Lexus badge, rather than a Toyota one, in keeping with the premium brand's history of large-engined sports cars, including the LFA, LC 500 and RC F.

The prototype's soundtrack is unmistakably that of a highly strung V8 (which reportedly breathes through two turbos) and the road car - possibly called LFR - is expected to share that unit but with the addition of hybrid assistance.

No specifications of the racer have yet been released, but the GT3 regulations are relatively flexible, with cars producing roughly 500-600bhp and weighing no more than 1300kg.

Aston Martin, BMW, Ferrari, Ford, Lamborghini, Lexus, McLaren, Mercedes-AMG and Porsche all currently sell GT3 customer cars.

Toyota recently announced - alongside allies Mazda and Subaru - plans to "revolutionise" the packaging of the internal combustion engine, doubling down on its belief that ICE technology will continue to play a role for cars



Gazoo Racing has been seen testing new GT3 sports racer at Spa

in the future, despite the wider global shift to BEVs (see p13).

Toyota has long been vocal about the potential for sports cars in particular to benefit from continued ICE development, investing heavily in sustainable fuels and even partnering with Yamaha to create a hydrogen-compatible 5.0-litre V8 - which could be deployed in the new sports car.

Gazoo Racing boss Masahito Watanabe recently told Autocar that Toyota is pursuing a "multi-pathway" approach for sports cars, rather than investing in all-out electrification.

"We still think the internal combustion engine has some potential, and as we do so, we will of course be trying to comply with all the applicable rules according to the regions in each country," he said. "But we don't want to give up. It's not over just yet, because if you look at the internal combustion engine, there's still hydrogen combustion that can be a part of that zero-emission line-up. So I think that's going to continue."

Lexus has retired its RC

its continued commitment to performance cars.

That concept - which is due to reach production by the end of the decade - is electric rather than V8-powered but has been confirmed to share its carbonfibre monocoque underpinnings with Toyota's GR GT3 concept and has a similar cab-rearward silhouette. This suggests the possibility for Lexus to offer two closely related supercars - based on the same chassis but using totally different powertrains - within the next five years.

FELIX PAGE

Alpina signs off with three hardcore GTs



OFFICIAL PICTURES



ALPINA HAS REVEALED hardcore GT versions of the B3 saloon, B3 Touring estate and B4 Gran Coupé, tipped to be the German firm's final cars before BMW takes full ownership next year.

The new range-toppers eke an additional 33bhp out of BMW's B58 petrol straight six to take total output to 522bhp, netting a 0-62mph time of 3.4sec and a top speed of 191mph in the B3 GT - the fastest of the three.

The GTs are priced from €102k (£87k) in Germany. UK deliveries are expected to begin in early 2025.

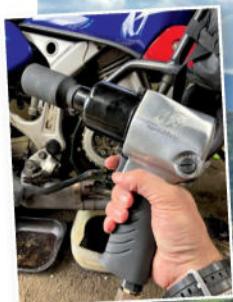
Electrified Sport concept previewed EV sibling of new V8





Matt Prior

TESTER'S NOTES



Sorting the clutch on this is roughly a two-hour job for a garage

On the ride home from a job in Devon, my motorcycle's clutch slips.

This is annoying. I am busy and its MOT is soon due.

But "if you can't change the situation, change your mind", my friend Fletcher used to say, so I decide to be positive. It's a chance to learn a new skill. I've written 'clutch' in a thousand car reviews without ever taking one apart. Today, that changes.

A garage would want a couple of hours to do this. Owners' forums say it is relatively simple, except for undoing one big nut, for which I'll need an impact driver. I have one. So I give myself a day to do it.

First I need to remove the bash plate, which being aluminium is simple, and the exhaust, which containing 24-year-old iron is not.

I immediately shear two bolts and disintegrate a bracket around a crumbling intersection. Regardless of my mindset, this is definitely annoying.

The clutch cover is removed easily and I find what's meant to be the hard bit: the nut.



Don't try this at home, kids: replacing a clutch

“
Per hour of operation,
the air gun is currently
costing £180,000
”

This is 'staked': part of a flange around the nut is bashed into a notch on the shaft. It's a crude and rudimentary method of preventing it working loose but, given it hasn't budged in 75,000 miles, clearly works.

I'm told to prise out the stake with a screwdriver but can't. I could chisel it off, I'm told, or grind it, but either may leave metal shards in the engine.

Simply, the impact driver may do the job, I read. But my battery-powered one isn't up to it.

I once vowed that if I didn't have the right tool for a job, I would either buy it or get a mechanic to do the work instead. The bike is already in pieces, so I go shopping. The day passes.

I like my new air impact driver, which arrives a day or two later. The thread on the bottom looks big, though, and my UK-spec air hose connectors won't quite fit its American-spec threads.

I'm sure I or a nearby shop have something to convert one to the other. I don't. The shops don't. So I go online.

A few days pass. Then everything connects. Within three seconds the nut is undone. Per hour of operation, the air gun is currently costing £180,000.

The clutch pack itself comes apart and goes back together relatively easily, although I don't remember thinking so at the time.

And so to reassemble everything, I have apparently neglected to realise that something so difficult to undo will also want re-tightening, to a hefty 94lb ft.

I read that I should have left the bike in top gear (I didn't and it now won't leave first), so no matter how hard I wedge the rear brake, the back wheel turns instead of the nut torquing. If I use the air gun, I won't know if I've torqued the nut correctly. If I block the back wheel, I risk bending a spoke. And a wedged-on back brake isn't holding it. The day passes.

The next morning, I'm scratching my head when a friend arrives. I ask them to sit on the bike. I wedge the brake on and have lodged a piece of wood in the wheel. I apply the wrench and... click. As with the undoing, after several days of annoyance, within three seconds the job is done.

Now just to fit a new gasket, then sort the exhaust, then adjust the clutch.

I inspect the edges of the engine case and clutch cover. There is a lot of original gasket applied to both, a baffling substance with the relative hardness of granite and yet the clingy qualities of brie, gecko's foot and wet shower curtain. It will have to be scraped off, a millimetre at a time.

A day passes. My bike still doesn't work. The exhaust still looms. Soon, though, I'll know how to replace a clutch, a skill I'll have clean forgotten when it next needs changing, in 12 years' time.

GET IN TOUCH

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“PLAY ABSOLUTE RADIO”



Steve Cropley

MY WEEK IN CARS



Engineer Hall adds Meon buggy to a long CV that also includes Vertige

MONDAY

Summer's coming. A friend, Robin Hall, has just unveiled the perfect piece of seasonal transport: a potent and capable buggy called the Mika Meon that does the full Steve McQueen, looks-wise. But it doesn't have a single VW component. Instead, it bristles with modern design that includes a 215bhp EV powertrain, a super-rigid chassis and double-wishbone suspension. Its weight is staggeringly low, at 675kg. The price is pretty solid at £75k, but the Meon can deliver a 3.5sec 0-60mph time. The car is on sale now.

Hall is well known as the engineer behind the deeply impressive Wells Vertige sports car, plus lots of vehicles that he can't discuss. What impresses me is his strongly held and growing conviction that electrification will move low-volume manufacture in Britain into "a new golden era". He says good small car makers will be able to deliver more original, radical, versatile and great-to-drive cars than ever. And it isn't just talk: Hall has already proven it by building a Beetle-powered Meon alongside the EV and then ditching it because the EV was better.

TUESDAY

A fascinating offer has arrived from the Bugatti Owners Club, to which I belong because it runs my local track, Prescott Hillclimb near Cheltenham. As the world knows, Bugatti is about to unveil a Veyron-Chiron successor, so the company has invited 10 club members to the official launch at Molsheim, France, on 22 June. The hope must be that prospective owners will grab the opportunity, but in reality it's open to anyone who can pay. I think it's a nice gesture that speaks loudly of the age-old cordiality between Bugatti and its British supporters.

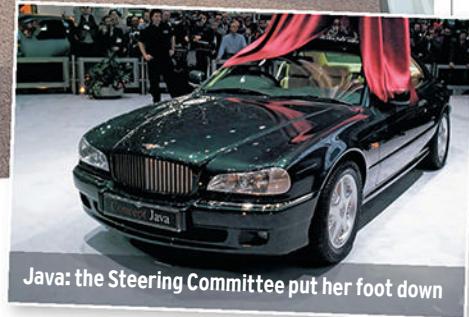
“
Now it's gone, I have no time
for sentimental hindsight
”

WEDNESDAY

So the Geneva show's a goner. We've known for ages that it would be, whatever gloss hopefuls (like me) have been putting on its prospects. Now it's gone, I find I don't have time for sentimental hindsight except to remember the smile on the face of the Steering Committee (who accompanied me to some of the 40-odd salons I attended) when she tried the cabin of the 1994 Bentley Java, a pre-Conti GT concept they showed. She was feeling for the first time the full effect of lambswool floor mats on tired feet. I've never seen her happier.

THURSDAY

I called in at the Royal Automobile Club's HQ in Pall Mall, London, to discuss arrangements for the Autocar Awards in a few weeks' time. A



Java: the Steering Committee put her foot down

regular club discussion was just getting going (they have lots) on a subject I could have debated for hours: if you had to commit to just one car marque, which would it be? I'd opt for Renault or Ford because they're full-line makers, hence lots of model choice. And though both are affordable, their images are distinct (in contrast, at least in my head, to some like Stellantis, where Peugeot equals Citroën equals Opel). But don't make me decide between the pair just yet. No idea.

FRIDAY

Quick trip up the Fosse Way to raise a glass with graduates, students and lecturers at Coventry University's famous automotive and transport design course, celebrating 50 years. It was amazing to see so many familiar faces and chew the fat with friends. Carl Gotham, MG's design chief, was there chatting with friends, and so were Aston Martin's Miles Nurnberger and Geoff Upex, former head of Land Rover design. Other famous graduates include ex-Jaguar design boss Ian Callum, JLR's Gerry McGovern, Bentley's Robin Page and VW's Andreas Mindt, among dozens. The Ariel Atom was born in 'Cov' as the LSC (Lightweight Sports Car) while Ariel founder Simon Saunders was a lecturer there. Autocar has regularly backed student design competitions and helped launch young designers by publishing their work. In fact, while I was there, a new competition was born: details tba.

AND ANOTHER THING...

A friend with a used EV itch has £15k to spend, thinking (correctly) that now's a good time to buy. I'm recommending an old favourite, the previous-gen 'tiger nose' Kia e-Niro, the first car that took me 300 miles on one charge. They are plentiful, and for £16k-£17k you get a 21-plate example with 35,000 miles, still under warranty.



GET IN TOUCH
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Damien Smith

RACING LINES



Kent-based team Jota made history at Spa with its two British drivers

In the eye of a head-spinning motorsport storm, I catch up with Callum Iloft during a brief and much needed moment of calm. He's on a breather in Croatia between appearances in the two biggest races of the year: the Indianapolis 500 and the Le Mans 24 Hours, which will play out for the 92nd time this weekend.

As you can read on p42, 25-year-old Iloft is among a clutch of British drivers heading to La Sarthe with a genuine shot at overall victory, as part of the squad leading plucky Kent-based privateer Jota Sport into battle in one of two Hertz-backed Porsche 963 hypercars.

What a time it has been for the former Ferrari junior. Dropped unexpectedly from his IndyCar Series ride last autumn, Iloft was snapped up by Jota as it expanded its World Endurance Championship campaign from one customer 963 to two for 2024. It has gone rather well. Iloft steered the car he shared with Will Stevens and Norman Nato to an inherited second place at the Qatar 1812km season opener, then last time out with Stevens at the Spa 6 Hours he scored a famous win – the first for a customer team in this modern hypercar era. Since then, he has also made a second (and for now last) IndyCar cameo for McLaren, enduring a frustrating yet entertaining run to 11th at the Brickyard. It's all go.

A DOUBLE COMEBACK

"It was a bit more excitable than I had imagined," Iloft says of a race in which he twice found himself relegated to the back. "I was hoping for quite a boring, work-my-way-up, steady race [from 15th on the grid], but that was not the case."

A problem with his Dallara-Chevrolet's weight jacker (which enables drivers to tweak their vital corner weights to improve handling) demoted him to the back right at the start. He was plagued by chronic understeer and all his crew could do was make wing adjustments at pit stops.

"By mid-race, it was a pretty okay race car," says Iloft. "I got up to about 13th on the same strategy as everyone else before the pit lane issue."

By that he means an awkward but unintentional collision with Kyle Kirkwood, after which he again found himself back of the pack.

“It catches you off guard at first, how much you have to push an endurance-style car”

”



To charge up to 11th in such trying circumstances offered the IndyCar teams a glimpse of what they are missing now that Iloft has been forced to shift his main focus to sports car racing.

PLAYING THE LONG GAME

Le Mans is the big one for all concerned. Arriving off the back of that historic win at Spa, Jota's tail is up – and Iloft is relishing what his racing life has now thrown him.

"The team is just so strong and they've been so welcoming," he says. "I feel like a sports car driver. I've adapted and integrated."

He cites ex-Formula 1 driver Stevens as having made "a massive difference" to how he and Nato have made themselves at home and adds that Jota's customer status hasn't left anyone at the team feeling "inferior" to the Penske-run works Porsche squad, or any of the massed ranks of factory entries.

So what's it like to race hypercars over long distances? "Obviously I'm used to endurance from the GT side," answers Iloft (he has one Le Mans start to his name, having finished third in the old GTE Am class in a Ferrari 488 in 2021). "The 963 is actually pretty tough to drive. It kind of catches you a bit off guard at first, how much you have to push an endurance-style car. There are some tracks where it comes alive, others where it's more difficult to get everything out. The racing is tough, aggressive and also fair. There's a lot of strategy, of course, and then on things like out laps, there's a lot to gain but also a hell of a lot to lose. Risk versus reward."

Jota has scored three LMP2 class wins at Le Mans and briefly led on its Hypercar class debut last year.

"Expectations are high but not unrealistic," says Iloft.

The last time he raced at Le Mans, the pandemic restricted the crowd. It will be different this weekend.

"There were 350,000 in Indy, now 250,000 at Le Mans, and I've been in a very strong car for both," he says. "It's not often you get those opportunities. IndyCar has been a bonus this year because I wasn't expecting it, but Le Mans is looking super-special after the couple of races we've had. I don't want to get carried away. We have a big job to do. You've just got to make sure you don't put a foot wrong."

FIRST DRIVES

NEW CARS TESTED AND RATED

TESTED 14.5.24, MADRID, SPAIN ON SALE SEPTEMBER PRICE £81,500

POLESTAR 3 DUAL MOTOR

Here comes yet another very large, very expensive electric SUV – but it's one that makes an unusual and bold promise...





Yes, it's an SUV. And it drives like a sports car." This is the slogan that greets you on Polestar's website. Hmm. Bold words, Polestar. Bold words...

Can it possibly live up to that? We will soon find out. But for a start, the Polestar 3 is quite a good trick of the eye. Here's an SUV that's 4.9m long and 2.1m wide yet doesn't look massive on the road. Even when it's creeping, like an alien on a scouting party, through a beautiful old village of narrow roads and stone in the mountains outside of Madrid, it doesn't shout 'look at me, I'm a big SUV' in the way that rivals like the Porsche Cayenne, BMW iX and Range Rover Sport do.

Maybe that's just the cleverness of the Polestar design language that wraps around the new SPA2

platform and 107kWh lithium ion battery (supplied by CATL). Or maybe it's the low, 1614mm roofline (that's only 5cm taller than the Volkswagen ID 3's, for some context). Probably both of those aspects, I suppose. Either way, while I'd say that the 3 is some way off beautiful, it's also a bit different to everything else in this class. And it's unmistakably a Polestar, with all of the sleek minimalism and Scandinavian glossiness that entails.

The SPA2 platform is shared with Volvo, and underpins its new EX90 electric SUV, which means the 3 gets a heat pump as standard and offers you the option of a single- or dual-motor layout. More than that, for the sports car drive that Polestar is promising, there's mechanical torque vectoring at the rear. →



TESTER'S NOTE

The climate settings are all accessed via the touchscreen, but the vent angles are adjusted manually. That's great, but it feels peculiarly old-school in an otherwise brashly digital car. **VP**

“
It's keen and quite fun –
more dialled in and rewarding
than most rivals, for sure
”



Unique mechanical diff tangibly pulls the rear through corners

◀ Yup, none of that namby-pamby vectoring-by-brake. This is, after all, the manufacturer that offers 22-way adjustable Öhlins dampers on an electric hatchback. So the 3 gets a proper dual-clutch affair that can send 100% of the torque to either rear wheel.

As for the electric car stuff, that 107kWh battery gives the 3 a WLTP range of up to 390 miles, or 348 miles if you add the £5600 Performance Pack. A single-motor 3 with a longer range is expected later this year. Charging is at speeds of up to 250kW, which is good for a 10-80% rapid charge in 30 minutes.

Slide into the 3's cabin and you're greeted by a double-decker dash design, complete with a recessed vent line that runs the full width, pale recycled textiles, a wood insert and some subtle chrome touches. It's straightforward but also oozes that classically understated, airy, Scandinavian feel.

A compact digital readout behind the steering wheel gives you speed and range, and there's a head-up display as part of the £5000 Plus Pack, if you want it. Then, of course, there's a huge touchscreen as well, which is your window to the climate control, inbuilt sat-nav (with Google Maps), wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto and more. More on that in the separate story on p25.

The driving position is great, barring the steering wheel needing to drop a touch lower, and space isn't likely to be an issue either. Rear passenger room is properly impressive, even by the high standards of this class. The clever roofline design means that even tall passengers have loads of head room despite the comparably low roofline and standard glass roof, and it's all seriously cushy and lovely.

Boot space is good too. The sloping roofline does make it a bit shallow towards the back of the car, but the 484-litre space (accessed through a usefully large hatch

aperture) is decent, with a nifty boot floor that folds up to split the load space and gives you something to strap your groceries securely to (as we have seen in various Volvos). Meanwhile, the small 'frunk' is good for storing a single charging cable.

The finish and functionality inside the 3 are big selling points. And, actually, so is the way it drives: it's one of those cars that gels really well from the moment you set off.

I spent most of my time driving a car fitted with the Performance Pack, which ups power by 27bhp to 510bhp and brings a firmer set-up for the air suspension. The 0-62mph

time of 4.7sec says enough, and the 3 does feel incongruously fast for such a big car. While throttle response isn't the sharpest, that may be a good thing: it makes for smooth progress, even in more challenging driving.

Mind you, I also had a go in a standard Dual Motor 3 and, honestly, it's the better car. It still has 483bhp, so it's only 0.3sec behind the upgraded car when it comes to the 0-62mph time, and I prefer the slightly softer suspension.

The 3's regenerative braking has three modes, but it's fairly basic, ranging from completely off to medium-level on and finally very heavy for one-pedal driving. Steering wheel paddle control would be better than having to use the touchscreen, but at least the medium regen mode is easy to get used to and isn't grabby (the one-pedal mode is harder to judge). I was happiest just leaving it in that mode and forgetting about it, and most drivers will probably feel the same.

As you would expect, the dual-chamber air suspension, steering weight and power delivery are all independently adjustable, and a potter through Madrid's hectic centre and out onto a motorway showed that, with everything in its most relaxed mode, the 3 is smooth and intuitive.



Air suspension provides a generally supple ride

SO DOES IT PASS THE SCREEN TEST?

The 3's infotainment software is ultimately the same as that in the Volvo EX30, which drove our Matt Prior to distraction last year. Polestar has made the icons bigger and added shortcut buttons from the home page to key features (which change depending on whether you are parked or driving).

There are still frustrations, though. The adaptive driving features are a total faff to adjust and having the headlight, seat and steering wheel adjustments buried back there is annoying. Peculiarly, the icon for the hazard warning lights (there is a physical button on the ceiling) on the home screen is immediately next to the button you want for all of this, so it's fairly easy to turn your hazards on when all you wanted was to change your suspension from Firm to Nimble...

Ho hum. It's better than in the EX30 and the inbuilt Google stuff is great - but there are still plenty of aspects that will be properly teeth-grinding on a daily basis.



It feels luxurious in its simplicity; driver's readout is complemented by optional head-up display

Even on the big 22in wheels and the firmer suspension, the ride is well controlled, with initial bump absorption nicely smoothed out. There's noticeable patter on scruffy surfaces, though, so again the regular Dual Motor is the one to go for, as it's a touch more easygoing.

My only grumble in terms of the 3's comfort actually concerns refinement, as wind and road noise are more noticeable than in a lot of rivals, especially at higher speeds.

Now, to return to my initial point: whether the 3 feels like a sports car, as Polestar promises. Did it do so at any point on the

more mundane stretches of my test route? No. How about on the fast-flowing mountain switchbacks, with the suspension and steering both dialled up to Firm? Still no.

What I did find, though, was one of the sweeter-driving electric SUVs. The steering isn't overflowing with texture and feedback, but it gives you plenty of confidence in the grip levels available, and there's a more light-footed feel than you would expect of a car weighing 2.6 tonnes. It's keen and even quite fun - more dialled in and rewarding than most rivals, for sure. And yes, you can feel that dual-clutch torque-

vectoring system driving the 3 out of corners cleanly. There's even a touch of playfulness from the rear axle if you really push hard for it.

This is one of the more driver-oriented cars in this class, but even in spirited progress it feels chiefly like a fast, luxury car with rather decent steering weight and impressive body control. Porsche needn't panic: the Taycan saloon/estate remains a clear benchmark if you want anything like sports car thrills in an EV.

Overall, I really like the 3 - principally because it looks and feels like nothing else in a class of

cars that can seem rather samey, and also because it's comparably decent value for money, given the long range and huge standard kit list. More than that, it strikes a very happy blend of comfort, pace and modest handling zing.

It isn't a sports car, though. Basically, it's a charming, very competent, really recommendable car. Just don't judge it on the over-optimistic marketing spiel.

VICKY PARROTT

POLESTAR 3 LONG RANGE DUAL MOTOR PERFORMANCE PACK

Not the sports car it's cracked up to be but nevertheless more enjoyable to drive than most cars of its type

★★★★☆

Price	£81,500
Engine	Two permanent magnet synchronous motors
Power	510bhp
Torque	671lb ft
Gearbox	1-spd reduction gear, 4WD
Kerb weight	2584kg
0-62mph	4.7sec
Top speed	130mph
Battery	111/107kWh (total/usable)
Range, economy	348 miles, 3.7mpkWh
CO₂, tax band	0g/km, 2%
RIVALS	BMW iX, Mercedes-Benz EQE SUV, Tesla Model Y



Bigger wheels and gold brake calipers signify Performance Pack





TESTER'S NOTE

You can have either 22in or 23in wheels, and there are some spectacularly open-worked designs. I'd choose a smaller set for that touch more tyre sidewall. **RL**



TESTED 4.6.24, WARWICKSHIRE ON SALE NOW

ASTON MARTIN DBX 707

Magical V8 sports SUV gets interior and tech upgrades to keep it spinning money

The security guards at Aston Martin's Gaydon headquarters have it all right. They patrol the campus from the confines of an understated but quite fetching white DBX of 2020 vintage (silver wheels, too). Aside from the fact that their counterparts in Maranello are unlikely ever to find themselves luxuriating behind the wheel of a £313k Ferrari Purosangue, there's nothing unusual about this. I mention it only because, for a moment, I almost didn't recognise this old DBX, so demure did it look parked next to the extroverted mass of the facelifted DBX 707 that I had been driving.

It's fair to say that since it was launched in 2019, the DBX has been on a journey. As a driver's car, it has always represented an unusually sweet blend of comfort and handling in the super-SUV sphere, but its ultimate raison d'être has always been to sell, sell, sell – to support the firm's bottom line by successfully competing in what is a profitable but brutally fierce class.

That's why, just a few years into the DBX's existence, we got the

flashy 707 version. More power, less weight, more grip, louder colours, a louder exhaust and more visual aggression, including a diffuser that wouldn't have looked amiss on one of Aston's GT3 racers. All of this in order to better appeal to anybody cross-shopping the DBX with the Bentley Bentayga, Lamborghini Urus or Purosangue. It proved so popular that Aston elected to drop the subtler original from its range.

And now there's another evolution. However, where the initial 707 recipe was formulated for speed, noise and on-demand oversteer, this one mostly addresses the interior. It's a critical update, not least for the tech-focused Chinese market, where the DBX had traditionally sold well but has recently slipped back a touch. Compare the original DBX's chunky, hand-me-down

Mercedes-Benz infotainment system with, say, the array in the BMW XM and you can see why an upgrade was desperately required for the model that accounts for more than half of Aston's sales.

If the V-shaped deck of switchgear and slimline central touchscreen look familiar, it's because this is the same in-house set-up that recently made its debut in the DB12 and Vantage coupés.



Performance is outstanding – as it should be with a total of 697bhp for both axles



Handling is always tidy, no matter how much you ask of the chassis



Infotainment has been updated in line with the DB12 and Vantage

“ Out on the open road it behaves much like a super-saloon – a bloody well-sorted one ”

At 12.3in, the display inside the instrument binnacle is fractionally larger in the DBX than it is in those cars, but elsewhere you have the same plethora of useful physical controls on the transmission tunnel and new but not quite responsive enough touch panels on the restyled – and very comfy – steering wheel.

Connectivity is considerably improved, too. The DBX now offers Android Auto and Apple CarPlay and has USB-C ports.

In the context of a 697bhp car, this all sounds a bit prosaic, but if owners are just about willing to forgive the absence of these digital amenities in low-slung supercars, they certainly aren't in more daily-usable options like the DBX.

The rest of the interior hasn't been overlooked: there are new materials and details all around.

Equally, the tenets of the DBX's cabin – opulent upholstery, a class-leading atmosphere rich in its sense of light and space, and rear leg room fit for an NBA star – haven't changed.

This remains an easy car to rub along with day to day, with only the lack of the rear-axle steering counting against the big Aston when it comes to manoeuvrability.

Out on the open road, the DBX continues to defy what anyone might reasonably expect of a 2.2-tonne family car with a high centre of gravity. It behaves much like a super-saloon – a bloody well-sorted one set up by a company whose engineers understand that good road manners are non-negotiable but also have a sense of humour.

The Mercedes-AMG-built twin-turbocharged 4.0-litre V8 engine

is carried over from before and offers what amounts to bottomless, breathy performance, put cleanly to the road via an electronic differential and gargantuan Pirellis at the back.

The chassis – with air suspension and active anti-roll bars – is also largely unchanged.

Bring up Sport+ mode and the DBX is a snorting brute yet not at all ragged to drive, with a deliberateness about the driving controls and body movements that inspires confidence. It handles beautifully – not simply for an SUV but in absolute terms – and has playfulness to match its speed.

And what speed. On a good B-road, a V8 Bentayga wouldn't see which way this car went. A V12 Purosangue might, but that's in another league of expense.

Then you can dial the DBX back into GT mode and have a silken tourer on your hands, notwithstanding road roar that's just a little too present.

Even those who aren't exactly enamoured with overbearing performance SUVs will have to admit that the DBX remains an immensely broad and capable

all-round package. And for those who do want such a car, the Aston's appeal is only heightened now that it has an infotainment system that's up to date and usable, if not as slick as the best in the class.

What I'd really like to see is it all wrapped up in a body with the restraint of security's trusty steed.

RICHARD LANE

[X @_rlane_](#)

ASTON MARTIN DBX 707

Aston has addressed its SUV's only notable weakness while retaining its engaging mechanical package



Price	£205,000
Engine	V8, 3982cc, twin-turbocharged, petrol
Power	697bhp at 6000rpm
Torque	663lb ft at 4500rpm
Gearbox	9-spd automatic, 4WD
Kerb weight	2245kg
0-62mph	3.3sec
Top speed	193mph
Economy	19.9mpg
CO₂, tax band	323g/km, 37%
RIVALS	Range Rover Sport SV, Lamborghini Urus



TESTER'S NOTE

For the sake of accuracy: there is a kind of hidden manual gearbox mode. If you hold the drive selector down for about 30 seconds, the gear indicator changes to 'M1' and you can then change gear using the cruise control switch. But as soon as you touch the brake, it reverts to D because it's clearly meant as a temporary diagnostic tool. **IV**



TESTED 3.6.24. OXFORDSHIRE ON SALE NOW

MINI COOPER C

Entry-level petrol hatch promises driver fun at a competitive price. Does it deliver?

With all the hubbub around the new electric Mini, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that there is still a normal, petrol-powered one that's being built in Oxford as before.

At a glance, you will struggle to tell it apart from the electric Mini, even though underneath it is a completely different car. While the EV sits on a brand-new electric-only platform, the petrol cars are a thorough revamp of the existing model, using the same architecture as the BMW 1 Series. But they look remarkably similar. The easiest way to tell them apart from the EV is that they retain the black plastic wheel-arch trims. They also keep the more traditional door handles and clamshell bonnet.

Despite the different technical make-up between the EV and the piston car, it's clearly a deliberate strategy: it's a Mini first, and the powertrain is just another choice. That's reflected in the naming, too: all hatchbacks are now called

Cooper. E or SE is added for the electric versions, and C (the 1.5-litre three-cylinder reviewed here) or S (the 2.0-litre four-cylinder) for the petrol variants.

There has been somewhat of a rationalisation of the model range. A more hardcore John Cooper Works is coming later this year, but the entry-level One version has

gone, as have manual gearboxes.

Which is where you start to wonder if the core Mini has now fully transitioned from pint-sized driver's car to fashion accessory.

Thankfully, the 'go-kart feeling' Mini's marketers like to go on about still shines brightly, although you do need to wade through a load of faddish nonsense to find it.

Once you've tapped and swiped your way through the big screen to find the correct settings (more on that in a minute), you'll find about as good a front-wheel-drive chassis as anything on sale today.

Obviously, no go-kart has front-wheel drive and weighs 1335kg, but with a bit of imagination you can see what they are on about. This Cooper C base model's sprint time of 7.7sec to 62mph isn't too far off a Cooper S from 2002, so it's nippy. The suspension is very firm but well damped, and bumpy roads don't actually faze it. There's pronounced torque steer, but that somehow helps the puppyish feeling and it grips tenaciously on its Nexen tyres (yes, really, Nexens, but they are BMW-specific and it's well known that OE-specific tyres often share little with their off-the-shelf counterparts).

The chassis responds to the steering very aggressively and really wants to rotate on a trailing throttle once you have found the DSC Sport setting. That takes some



Strong grip, responsive steering and a firm but well-damped ride are all very Mini



Central touchscreen looks fine but the interface needs work



Head-up display is part of £2000 'Level 1' pack

You'll find about as good a front-wheel-drive chassis as anything on sale today

finding, however, being buried in the customisation menu of 'Go-kart mode' (Mini's name for sport mode).

That's not what hacked me off the most about this car, though. Not only is there no Mini with a manual gearbox any more, but unless you opt for the expensive Sport trim (which comes with fairly naff faux John Cooper Works styling), there are no paddles, no gear selector you can push forwards and backwards, just no manual mode.

The result is that the engine is often either bogging or redlining, and neither of those is its comfort zone. The 1.5-litre triple is a typical modern turbo engine that has a fairly meaty mid-range but feels a bit thin and strained at either end of

the rev range. The automatic mode works fine when you are pootling around. Not brilliantly, just fine. But to offer no manual mode on something that is supposed to be fun to drive is just baffling.

Then we get to the user interface. It has promise. I personally love the new look of the interior, because the fabric on the dash and doors is so much more interesting than the usual textured rubber, and with the big round central screen and small button console below it does look like a modern interpretation of the original Mini. Unlike some of my colleagues, I just don't miss having the speedo in front of me either.

But while there are some genuinely delightful touches,

there are also too many buggy and poorly designed features for it to be a smooth experience. There's some input lag, pulling up the trip computer requires many swipes, and if you want to see a proper tachometer, you have to open the speedometer app from the infotainment. 'Speedometer app' is not a collection of words that should be required in a car review, but here we are.

The back-to-basics design changes for this new generation of Mini have resolved some of its predecessor's awkwardness, the car is still relatively small and just a three-door, and the handling is brilliant. By current standards, the basic Cooper isn't even absurdly expensive. At £22,300, it's cheaper than a similarly powerful Skoda Fabia, and MPG settles in the mid-40s, which is fine.

But it feels as if the engineers were overruled by the hip and trendy marketing people on a few too many counts. The screen could be improved with a software update. Adding a manual gearbox

would be doable since the platform allows it, while adding at least the option of paddles on all versions would be exceedingly simple. It's close to being everything a modern Mini should be, but also somehow very far away.

ILLYA VERPRAET

MINI COOPER G

Weirdly faddish design choices keep you at arm's length from what could be a really entertaining drive



Price	£22,300
Engine	3 cyls in line, 1499cc, turbocharged, petrol
Power	154bhp
Torque	170lb ft
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch automatic, FWD
Kerb weight	1335kg
0-62mph	7.7sec
Top speed	140mph
Economy	47.1mpg
CO₂, tax band	135g/km, 31%
RIVALS	Fiat 500 Hybrid, Mazda 2

RENAULT RAFALE

Brand's seventh SUV is a coupé flagship that's spoiling for a fight with the Germans

There's immediately a slight psychological hurdle to clear in positioning the new Renault Rafale. What role does it play for the brand? And who is it for? Well, Renault has lofty ambitions for its all-new flagship to upset the German stalwarts in the SUV-coupé segment (with the likes of the Audi Q3 Sportback and BMW X2 mentioned as benchmarks) and bosses are confident that while it takes the French brand into new territory, there is substantial market demand for such a car.

It comes from launch with Renault's unusual E-Tech Full Hybrid powertrain, which combines a 1.2-litre three-cylinder petrol engine with a pair of electric motors – one to provide supplementary traction power and the other serving as an integrated starter-generator – for a combined 197bhp and 302lb ft of torque, while a small (1.7kWh) battery under the driver's seat allows for engine-off running over short distances.

The Rafale bears one of those paradoxical silhouettes

that attempts to be both high-rise family hauler and rakish riviera cruiser. It mostly pulls it off to good effect: the rear seats are spacious in all dimensions (I was comfortable sitting behind a 6ft driver) and the boot, while naturally incurred upon by the sloping tailgate, is flat-floored, square-sided and still usefully capacious, at 535 litres – a mere pint of milk less than in the Peugeot 408.

Renault has successfully added

a touch of upmarket appeal to an environment that's broadly familiar from its more affordable models, introducing a slick slate-effect dash-topper and lashings of Alcantara (60% recycled, natch) and leather. But it's a fairly dark and drab affair, all told, cheapened by the liberal use of gloss black plastic and hardly enlivened by the subtle tricolore stitching on the door panels.

Physical switchgear comes in relative abundance, happily,

and is all of pleasing tactility and accessibility. The thick-rimmed steering wheel, gratuitously squared off though it is, hosts familiar audio and cruise control toggles and a panel on each side of satisfyingly responsive haptic buttons, which are all right about where you would expect them to be.

Continuing a recent run of "getting things right" when it comes to active safety and infotainment, Renault hasn't given the Rafale's touchscreen too much to do. The climate control is adjusted easily using a row of toggle switches and there's a button to the side of the steering wheel that activates your stored ADAS settings, doing away with the ever-distracting process of deactivating all the legally mandated 'assistance' features on the move.

But for all its Esprit Alpine badging and sporting pretensions, the Rafale is not a fast car. Its hybrid system output of just 197bhp is no great shakes in the context of the 1.7 tonnes it's charged with propelling. The 0-62mph sprint as a result takes



Fashionable sloping rear doesn't greatly hinder space inside

“
It's agreeably pliant and predictable
but never rewarding or engaging
”



a pretty uncompetitive 8.9sec. It would be quicker if both power sources worked together at all times. As it is, the Rafale launches with the engine off, meaning there's just 67bhp from the electric motor to haul it off the mark, and you can feel the deficit.

When the petrol unit does wake up, it's mostly as refined and perky as any other triple on the market, although the soundtrack is relatively characterless and verges on thrashiness under full load.

The closely related Austral has been criticised for the languidity of its clutchless, unsynchronised gearbox, which has five ratios for the engine and two for the motor. Software updates have gone some way to rectifying that, and the Rafale shifts much more intuitively, but there's still a tangible pause between ratios and a little kick when the drive is reconnected, and it's difficult to guess when it's coming.

The Rafale's bespoke chassis hardware extends to a 20mm-wider track than the Austral and seven-seat Espace, along with 10mm-wider wheels and a bespoke steering and suspension tune that Renault says boosts steering response times by 30% and reduces body roll by 10%.

All cars except the entry-level Techno have a rear axle that can turn up to 5deg at low speeds to reduce the turning circle and improve agility – giving a 10.4m



Interior looks better than it feels; infotainment is logical and highly functional



It's fairly enjoyable to drive but doesn't quite deserve those Alpine badges



TESTER'S NOTE

The standard full-length Solarbay roof electrochromically opacifies at the touch of a button, doing away with the need for a curtain and thereby reclaiming some head room for rear passengers. **FP**

turning circle to match the Clio – or follow the direction of the front axle at speeds of above 31mph for improved stability in fast manoeuvres. Sure enough, the Rafale is commendably unflappable when pushing on, holding its line even with the throttle applied mid-corner, with a pleasing sensation of rotating around its mid-point that you could just about compare to torque-vectoring hot hatches like the Mégane RS, if you were feeling generous.

It falls some way short of truly satisfying the keener driver, though. The steering rack is quick and the chassis agreeably pliant and predictable, which facilitates brisk and steady progress along sweeping roads, but it's never rewarding or engaging, the steering being rather too numb to ever really encourage exuberance.

It took me a while to get used to the brake pedal, too, which lacks modulation at low speeds and can feel a bit like an on-off switch.

The forthcoming Alpine-fettled plug-in hybrid should go some way to rectifying some of the Rafale's most obvious performance and handling shortcomings, with an additional motor on the rear axle giving four-wheel drive and taking power up to 296bhp. But the extra

weight of that and a much bigger battery is unlikely to improve the Rafale's rolling refinement, which is one of its weaker points.

Body roll is kept in check remarkably well and I quite enjoyed the relaxed, lolling gait into which the Rafale settles over undulating terrain, but the fussy and fidgety secondary ride goes some way to denting its premium appeal. It's improved over the Austral, no doubt, but coarser road surfaces and imperfections set the seat base and steering column juddering and there's rather too much clonking and thumping over potholes for my liking at this price point.

The road roar and wind noise at a fast cruise are fairly pervasive, too.

I can't help wondering whether the Espace's softer spring rates and some thicker tyres might have helped to cement the Rafale's positioning as a hassle-free mile-muncher.

For all the rebellious, game-changing potential of Luca de Meo's Renault plan, the fact remains that Renault is a business that has to make money. So we can lament its decision to launch an SUV as its new flagship rather than a saloon as much as we like: ain't nobody buying a reborn Laguna.

Happily, the Rafale feels different

and interesting enough to stand out in an increasingly crowded – if slightly confused – market segment, holding potentially broad appeal across various demographics, and does so at a price point that could divert some deposits away from Germany.

FELIX PAGE
@felix_page_

RENAULT RAFALE E-TECH FULL HYBRID TECHNO ESPRIT ALPINE

Likeable, good value and pleasant to drive, but rivals are punchier and more refined overall



Price	£44,495
Engine	3 cyls in line, 1197cc, turbocharged, petrol, plus electric motor and ISG
Power	197bhp
Torque	302lb ft
Gearbox	5-spd automatic (engine), 2-spd reduction gear (motor), FWD
Kerb weight	1714kg
0-62mph	8.9sec
Top speed	111mph
Economy	60.1mpg
CO₂, tax band	107g/km, 27%
RIVALS	Audi Q3 Sportback, BMW X2, DS 7 E-Tense



TESTER'S NOTE

The optional Performance Pack now includes GPS functionality for more accurate lap timing. **JD**



TESTED 9.5.24, LAUSITZRING, GERMANY ON SALE AUTUMN

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R

Golf's usability-focused facelift gives go-faster division a chance to enhance hot hatch

Engineers at Volkswagen's R division must be tired of wrestling with the law of diminishing returns. So composed and complete was their high-performance reworking of the seventh-generation Golf that they have struggled to make any big gains since, either through that model's facelift or its subsequent transformation into the current eighth-generation Golf.

Now there's another mid-life refresh for the Wolfsburg wonder and once again Volkswagen has elected to not really mess with a winning formula. There's a little more power (at 328bhp, this is the most powerful series production Golf yet) and some tweaks to the driving modes. Plus there's the option of a new Performance Pack (price as yet undecided) that adds some lightweight forged alloy wheels, an angrier Akrapovic titanium exhaust and a raising of the speed limiter to 167mph.

There are also some subtle visual tweaks, but as you can

see, these were hidden under my pre-production test car's disguise. It isn't hard to get a fair idea of what has been updated, mind. For starters, most of the major changes, such as the slimmer headlights, are shared with the standard 'Mk8.5' Golf, which was unveiled in April.

Look closer and you will spot the R's reprofiled front bumper, complete with new 'air blades'

that Volkswagen tacitly admits are as much about aesthetics as aerodynamics, and at the rear 3D-effect tail-lights that offer the option of three different strobing and flashing 'welcome signatures' when you lock and unlock the car.

Our test car was also fitted with the new 19in Warmenau forged alloy wheels (named after R division's hometown), which

weigh 8kg a corner, saving the same amount overall in unsprung mass compared with the similarly large cast alloy option. Thinly spoked and slim-rimmed, they are also claimed to provide increased airflow to the brakes for enhanced cooling.

It also featured that lightweight exhaust that is promised to give the R greater voice, especially if you press the start button for at least 1.5 seconds without touching the brake pedal to initiate a theatrical flare of revs to 2500rpm once the engine churns into life. One for those neighbours you can't abide, perhaps?

Even so, when fired up in this manner, the Golf R still lacks the instant aural drama of the Audi RS3 Sportback or even the (admittedly much pricier) Mercedes-AMG A45 S. There's a greater baritone than before, but the Golf R remains a fast hatch that would rather let others play the peacocking game.

That said, the sound actuator that pumps synthetic engine noise into the cabin has been given a more



Ride still isn't quite as comfortable as it might be



Styling revisions appear to be slight, mostly concerning bumpers and lights



Four-wheel drive and trick dampers make it very hard to unstick

“
This isn't some humourless shuttle: there is the opportunity to get expressive if you want
”

gravely delivery. Thankfully, it can be switched off through the enhanced drive mode set-up, which offers greater customisation and even a new Eco mode that softens the throttle response and provokes earlier shifts from the seven-speed dual-clutch automatic gearbox.

Despite the 12bhp uplift in power (torque is unchanged, at 310lb ft), Volkswagen's venerable EA888 turbocharged 2.0-litre four feels much as it did before. Almost lag-free, it doles out satisfyingly elastic performance as it pulls hard and smoothly from idle all the way through to the 6800rpm cut-out.

Few cars deliver such easily accessible performance, and if anything the R responds a little too alertly to initial throttle

applications, meaning a sensitive right foot is needed to avoid neck-snapping getaways even when you are trying to go gently.

Once you are moving, the powertrain remains a highlight, the eager engine matched to a DSG 'box that shuffles cogs quickly and decisively. Better still, in the raciest drive modes, the transmission now holds gears when in manual mode, refusing to shift up when you hit the limiter.

This sense of alertness extends to the chassis, which even on my limited test drive appeared to offer the familiar mix of entertainment and control. That's no real surprise, because it's carried over largely unchanged from the old car, although adaptive dampers are now

standard (they still don't offer quite the cushioned ride you would expect in their softest setting, however).

The quick steering is precise and naturally weighted, while the strong front-end grip allows you to place the Golf R with pinpoint accuracy. Regardless of speed, it clings on with Gorilla Glue tenacity, those trick dampers offering cast-iron control that breeds supreme confidence.

Yet this isn't some humourless point-to-point shuttle: there is the opportunity to get expressive if you want. And with the car in its revised R mode, the four-wheel drive system serves up a smidge more rear-drive throttle adjustability. It certainly feels lighter on its feet than the Mercedes-AMG A35, even if it can't match the front-wheel-drive Honda Civic Type R for gritty driver involvement.

With the automotive industry at a crossroads on the journey to decarbonisation, it's no surprise that Volkswagen has invested only the bare minimum in updates for the Golf R, but so well rounded was the old car that there wasn't too

much that really needed doing.

We will have to wait until we can sample a production-ready version to deliver our full verdict, but our early taster suggests this high-velocity Volkswagen's appeal remains undiminished.

JAMES DISDALE

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R PROTOTYPE

Subtle updates seem to keep this fast and understated hatchback at the top of its game

Price	£45,000 (est)
Engine	4 cyls in line, 1984cc, turbocharged, petrol
Power	328bhp at 5600-6500rpm
Torque	310lb ft at 2100-5500rpm
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch automatic, 4WD
Kerb weight	1475kg (est)
0-62mph	4.6sec
Top speed	155mph
Economy	na
CO₂, tax band	na
RIVALS	Audi RS3 Sportback, Honda Civic Type R, Mercedes-AMG A35



TESTER'S NOTE

Aerodynamics played a key role in the development of the new Superb. Its drag coefficient of 0.23 represents a 15% improvement. **SP**



TESTED 30.5.24, KARLOVY VARY, CZECH REPUBLIC ON SALE NOW

SKODA SUPERB

New-generation hatchback follows estate with goal of replacing fleets' old Insignias

What do airport taxi drivers, sales executives and Tour de France officials have in common? Most of them drive a Skoda Superb hatchback – and now there's a new fourth-generation model that's claimed to offer more space, comfort and technology than ever before.

Skoda is clear that the hatchback still has a place in its line-up, with fleets being the main customer base, accounting for 85% of sales.

The Czech brand is hoping to draw in former lovers of the Ford Mondeo, Vauxhall Insignia and Volvo S90 now that all of those are no longer sold in Europe. Even Volkswagen has ditched the Passat saloon, a model once viewed as the king of the business park.

Riding on the same MQB Evo platform as the new Superb Estate and indeed the new Passat Estate, this all-new Superb hatchback is 43mm longer than its predecessor. That means its boot capacity has grown from 625 to 645 litres – much bigger than the 487 litres offered by the rival Peugeot 508 saloon.

Indeed, the boot is cavernous, with enough room for large

suitcases, golf clubs and more. There are nets to secure belongings in place, storage compartments and, in higher-trim Superbs, even a multipurpose storage pocket.

It's a shame the loading lip is so big, and there's no height-adjustable floor like you get in the estate. Still, the wide aperture of the boot makes lifting luggage inside a bit easier.

There's credibility to Skoda's claims of more rear cabin space, too, which will be important to potential buyers who will regularly be carrying passengers. I am just over 6ft tall and had no trouble getting comfortable in the back of the Superb: there was miles of leg room, even with the driver's seat set to my preferred position, and lots of head room. Rivals are nowhere near as accommodating in the back.

Move to the front of the cabin and there's a new 10in digital instrument cluster, and either 10in or 13in of infotainment touchscreen, depending on your chosen trim level. Thankfully, the software is easy to navigate and it responds well to inputs.

Praise must go to Skoda's new Smart Dials, which sit below

the screen. They feel brilliantly conventional, especially when most car brands now force you to use the screen to control different functions. You push them to change their function and rotate them to change the relevant settings. Adjusting the cabin temperature or driving mode is therefore a doddle.

There are various petrol and diesel engines available, but if you want a plug-in hybrid, you will have to buy the estate. I sampled the 148bhp 1.5-litre mild-hybrid turbo petrol, the 148bhp 2.0-litre turbo diesel and the 262bhp four-wheel-drive 2.0-litre turbo petrol, although the last of those three won't be available until later in the year.

They are all fitted with the same seven-speed dual-clutch automatic gearbox (there's no manual option) and all are smooth and refined. The diesel is very economical but a little noisy at lower speeds. The 1.5-litre MHEV is quiet and relaxing, and while it's a bit lacking in power, there's still enough accessible torque for overtaking.

The 262bhp petrol feels quick, with the 4WD layout adding another layer of handling

composure to the Superb's agreeable ride and handling.

The steering is generally light, and while there's not an abundance of feedback, there's some weight to it at higher speeds.

Even with 19in wheels fitted, the Superb is pliant and composed over lumps and bumps, with only repeated surface imperfections unsettling the ride.

Regardless of engine and specification, the new Superb makes an excellent saloon-type hatchback that's refreshingly simple and straightforward. The estate will most likely be the big seller in the UK, but with excellent space and comfort, this variant should strike a chord with those looking for a well-priced conventional executive option.

SAM PHILLIPS

[@sam__phillips__](#)

SKODA SUPERB 1.5 TSI SE L

Brings simplicity, comfort and space at a competitive price, not to mention a vast boot



Price	£38,230
Engine	4 cyls in line, 1498cc, turbocharged, petrol
Power	148bhp at 5000-6000rpm
Torque	184lb ft at 1500-3500rpm
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch automatic, FWD
Kerb weight	1500kg
0-62mph	9.2sec
Top speed	139mph
Economy	50.9-52.1mpg
CO₂, tax band	124-126g/km, 29-30%
RIVALS	BMW 3 Series, Peugeot 508



Comfort and refinement are strong suits; interior is enormous and dash easy to use

TESTED 6.6.24, FARO, PORTUGAL. ON SALE NOW

NISSAN QASHQAI

Targeted revisions give the latest version a welcome lift where it's needed

The Nissan Qashqai has been popular with UK car buyers for many years – it was Britain's best-selling car in 2022 and runner-up last year – and it has now been given a new exterior look and revised interior technology.

In fact, the Qashqai's appearance has changed significantly from its predecessor's. The new version adopts a sharper, more aggressive look courtesy of a new front grille design, which was inspired by samurai helmets, apparently. The headlights and daytime-running lights have also been redesigned to exude greater road presence.

Nissan has carried over the same engines for the new version: buyers can choose from two mild-hybrid petrol engines and the full-hybrid e-Power, which uses a 1.5-litre turbocharged petrol engine to power a 187bhp electric motor. Manual and CVT automatic gearboxes are available and you can also opt for four-wheel drive.

The e-Power set-up is smooth and quiet and has enough performance for overtaking and getting up to speed on a slip road. The Qashqai handles well, despite its light, uncommunicative steering, and it rides lumps and bumps confidently, with only a slight jostle at town speeds when the dampers struggle to iron out small imperfections.

Nissan has tweaked its trim levels for 2024, too. Entry-level Visia has been dropped and N-Design joins the line-up to sit alongside upper mid-level Tekna. It gets body-coloured wheel arches, 20in wheels and Alcantara interior elements for a sportier feel.



New styling, improved isolation and updated tech, including new infotainment, are all wins



Our N-Design test car felt well assembled inside and the Alcantara-upholstered dashboard, door cappings, centre console storage lid and seat bolsters deliver a more upmarket ambience. Some materials feel less premium, though, such as the synthetic leather on the seats and the new patterned trim between the dash and glovebox. There are some scratchy plastics low down, too.

Aside from visual and material changes, a major focus for the updated Qashqai has been on technology. The software that underpins the car's digital interfaces has gained significant upgrades to improve the graphics and response times.

Nissan's new infotainment system comes with Google built in, so the navigation system is Google Maps and the voice assistant is the Google assistant you might know from your phone. You can activate it by saying "Hey, Google".

The infotainment screen is impressively responsive, with no latency issues. Adjusting the view

through pinch-to-zoom is quick and easy. The screen is also well laid out, so finding the function you're after is straightforward.

Pleasingly, Nissan has retained conventional buttons and rotary dials for the climate controls, which makes adjusting the temperature or fan speed a seamless process.

To meet the latest EU safety regs, the Qashqai now features speed limit recognition and driver monitoring systems. The speed limit monitoring can be a little overzealous at times but it's easy to disable. Once you've customised your preferences for the overspeed warning, lane keeping assist and others in a menu, you can simply load that configuration with two clicks of a steering wheel button.

Reducing wind and road noise was another priority for Nissan's engineers and their work has paid off. The car is hushed in most conditions but with a bit of wind whistle at motorway speeds.

The sales figures suggest Qashqai buyers had few complaints with the previous model, but these welcome

updates appear to have moved the model forward. The economical powertrain options coupled with the stylish looks and upgraded tech should appeal to those after a well-priced family crossover.

SAM PHILLIPS

[@sam__phillips__](#)

NISSAN QASHQAI E-POWER N-DESIGN

Refreshed exterior look and interior tweaks makes the Qashqai a compelling option

★★★★☆

Price £39,620

Engine 3 cyls in line, 1497cc, turbocharged, petrol, plus electric motor

Power 187bhp at 4500-7500rpm

Torque 243lb ft at 0-3000rpm

Gearbox 1-spd reduction gear, FWD

Kerb weight 1625kg

0-62mph 7.9sec

Top speed 105mph

Economy 40.9-55.4mpg

CO₂, tax band 117-120g/km, 28-29%

RIVALS Seat Ateca, Hyundai Tucson



TESTER'S NOTE

They may not look particularly special, but the Qashqai's seats are impressive.

They have good lumbar and lateral support and offer a wide range of adjustment. **SP**



LAST-CHANGE SALOON

The Jaguar XF is bowing out, having never quite made the mark its character and performance suggested it should. In search of the executive four-door's redemption, Matt Prior traces the pop-culture heritage of its predecessors

PHOTOGRAPHY MAX EDLESTON

Who buys a Jaguar saloon? From about now, nobody will – at least for a while, because this is one of the last of the current four-door Jaguars that will be built, prior to a hiatus for this so-traditional style of car whose replacement still lingers some time off in the future.

But who has been driving them up to this point? And what's the appeal? We know that a four-door Jaguar is coming down the line, but the next one will be electric and, word is, far more expensive than any previous one. Will former customers still want such a thing?

To investigate, I've got into one of the last of the current breed. The XF is a car we've liked very much since the first version was launched in 2007, when we said it was a "job done" and the "world-class" car Jaguar needed and just at the right time, with both manufacturer and model achieving their goals. The XF was Jaguar making a sleek and good-looking, fine-riding and great-handling, well-priced and seemingly well-assembled saloon car. Just like it needed to.

We still like it 17 years and a second generation of XFs later. It remains one of the best-handling cars in its class, and the XF's consistency with that has given its drivers something to smile about.

What Jaguar has managed less well is to make cars that convince millions of people to buy one; it has not followed up a brilliant initial offering, like the XF, with other derivatives straight away. Jaguar has never – and this is why the XF is one of the brand's last saloons before it reinvents itself as a luxury EV maker – sold enough cars.

So what went wrong? By way of research, I'm going to visit some haunts of famous Jaguar owners to see if I can get an insight into what makes them tick. Find, perhaps, who Jaguar needs to talk to.

I have much to ponder, then, while standing on a street in Hammersmith, west London, looking at an Edwardian (or Victorian – sorry, no expert) terrace in front of me, with a very similar-looking house behind me. Except the one behind is from the reign of Elizabeth II and wasn't a house at all as recently as the 1980s. It was a used car lot, in fact, owned by one of the most famous Jaguar owners of all. Fictional, yes, but a bona fide Jag driver. I give you Arthur Daley.

Arthur Daley: used car salesman, general wheeler-dealer and "mid-level professional criminal of mature years, a minor conman", according to a glowing Wikipedia biography. If one was to draw up a list of fictional characters you would →

In 2023, Jaguar sold 9935 XEs and 10,918 XFs



Our first drive of an XF featured in 19 December 2007 mag

← consider 'lovable rogues', there's a strong chance George Cole's Arthur Daley from Minder would be on it.

He mostly drove an XJ, initially an XJ6 4.2 Series II in early Minder series, with Sixes, Double Sixes and Jaguar and Daimler Sovereigns later. I would have brought an XJ along instead of the XF, but Jaguar hasn't made one of those for five years, when the final, Ian Callum-designed XJ, the best-looking modern executive/luxury car by miles to my eyes, was retired from sale. It was the best-driving luxury car of the time, too.

He didn't play by conventional rules, Arthur Daley, but he knew a thing or two about luxury: he got a minion to do the hard graft for him, drank at a private club and smoked expensive cigars, and I can only imagine how snug his camel coat felt. Alas, modern west London residential streets have no time for Daley's way of earning a living, so I can't park the XF up on the lot and interview his modern equivalent about Jags. And truth be told, a modern saloon like this would fit in better around here if it was an electric crossover.

Hammersmith, clearly, has moved on, so I try one of Daley's lock-ups instead, tucked under some railway arches in nearby Shepherd's Bush – but even that's a CrossFit studio rather than the storage location for some goods of dubious origin. Like the smell of his cigars, the spirit of Arthur Daley has long since dissipated.

The XF takes me onwards, then, to where I might find grubbier industry and less gentrification. I go to the hangout of other Jaguar

“ The XF is a quick car, ideal for wanging around derelict Southall ”

people who were society's rebels and outsiders but who needed a Jag's blend of characteristics. To Southall Gasworks it is.

The Sweeney, the Metropolitan Police's Flying Squad division, personified in this case by DI Jack Regan, played by John Thaw, would fire up their Fords to chase Jaguars around scruffy back roads and derelict warehouses right here.

When Squeeze sang "the Sweeney's doing 90 'cos they've got the word to go, they get a gang of villains in a shed up at Heathrow", the sheds in question would have been here, and the villains would have arrived in a car like this: a

sporting Jaguar saloon. And with good reason: Jaguars drove well, rode comfortably and could seat a healthy number of wrong 'uns. Crucially, they were fast too.

Today's XF, even with a 2.0-litre four-pot like this, would of course have left an XJ-engined old Jag for dead. But the driving character that appealed to scoundrels back then is the same thing that tempts Jaguar-driving rogues today.

This XF doesn't ride with the same absorbency as a classic car, but it really does ride well by modern standards, and while it has four cylinders instead of six, its 247bhp and 269lb ft are good for 0-60mph (let's stick with old-school 60, not the newfangled 100kph-compatible 62mph) in 6.5sec.

This is a quick car, then, and rear-drive, with switchable stability control and fast steering, so ideal for wanging around derelict Southall while I imagine the Granada estate I spotted earlier in a side street is chasing us. Shut it, etc.

But again, reader, no. There is more gentrification here, too, done rather pleasingly, in the form of The Green Quarter: fancy homes, £399,000 and upwards; roaming security; large play and leisure areas; 1km of canal frontage; 13 acres of park, it says here, and a really rather good oat milk latte from the cafe.

There's no place here, then, for rebels and old-fashioned scoundrels interested in Jaguars, or those invested in finding out what makes them tick.

The XF doesn't look too out of place, at least, although it would look more suited to the area if it was an e-scooter or a



Arthur Daley's car lot is now a west London residential utopia



supermarket delivery van.

Clearly I need to head to a location where I'm more likely to find, and which better suits, a modern Jaguar saloon. If there's no room for the antihero, perhaps I need to find a more discerning kind of owner, a more establishment-friendly type.

They don't get much more establishment than our Secret Intelligence Service, MI6, so that's where we are headed. Millbank is the road you would take to travel from the SIS building on the south bank of the Thames to Whitehall farther along on the north bank: if you're a top secret-agency bigwig, that's the route you'll be driven.

Certainly it's the route MI6's fictional head, M of Bond film fame, takes, most notably in Skyfall. →



Prior channels the spirit of 1970s villainy via the XF's engaging steering

JAGUAR'S SALOON SUCCESSES



MKVII 1950

The MkVII was powered by the then new XK engine and could reach a headline-grabbing (at the time) 100mph. More importantly, the model gained a foothold for Jaguar in the US market, where the brand remains highly regarded today.



2.4 LITRE AND 3.4 LITRE (LATER KNOWN AS MKI) 1955

A smaller, more dynamic Jaguar than its larger siblings and with more to it than heavier, more stately competitors. If ever there was a car that set the tone for what a Jaguar saloon could be, then this is probably it.



XJ6 SERIES I 1968

The finest saloon in the world when it was launched in 1968. Based on an earlier E-Type 2+2 design study, the XJ6 was the last car designed by Sir William Lyons, and it set a design template that lasted Jaguar for decades (probably too many decades, to be fair).



XF 2007

Thankfully, former Jaguar design director Ian Callum had no interest in producing retro-look Jags. He moved their appearance on quite dramatically - not to mention elegantly - with the XF line and later once again the fabulous 2010 XJ.

Production of XF, XE and F-Type models ended last month, although cars will be available from stock for some time



XF struggles to feel at home in the capital. Tastes have moved on



Designed to be driven: dynamically it's a star

← Obviously Dame Judi Dench is not in any sense a wrong 'un, but she has got a Jaguar, even if she rides in the back of it.

Establishment? Certainly. On the right side of things? Of course. But even here, in the heartland of law and democracy, there are shades of grey and allowed indiscretions. Shadows; a definite nonconformity. There's an edge to proceedings that's quite... British.

In Skyfall, Bond and M swap Jaguar for Aston Martin, two brands that sit alongside each other with ease (they once did, in fact, under Ford control), but no swaps for me as I head to our last outpost of fictional Jaguarness, necessary in order to stretch the XF's legs.

A drive out first on the M40 and then onto some twistier Home Counties back roads reminds me why I will miss a saloon like the XF, which was developed on roads that are definitely unique to our island. It's basically 5m long, the XF, and 1.98m wide, but its agility and steering precision mean it never feels that big. And it's priced more like a smaller car these days, its £41,265 being more in line with BMW 3 Series money, as opposed

to the 5 Series with which it ostensibly competes. With a relatively light four-cylinder petrol motor, it has a balance and poise that you won't find in most EVs, nor any SUVs. It's genuinely good fun in a way that most saloons of its ilk, and particularly cars of taller ilk, are simply not. In its commitment to being a dynamic-driving saloon, I wonder if, as it ages, there has been an irascibility, a reluctance to compromise and join the crowd and a refusal for it to conform.

And if that's not a hammed-up, creaky segue into the last of our famous Jaguar owners, Oxford's MkII-owning Inspector

Morse, another famous Jaguar nonconformist (and John Thaw again), I don't know what is. Morse first aired in 1987, but the MkII first appeared in 1959. Forward 30 years from now, then, and wonder what kind of car from today, a future classic, would a fictional Thames Valley police inspector drive? Could it be this XF, or the recently departed XJ? An F-Type? Maybe. Put it this way: I don't think TV producers working on a Morse reboot in 2050 will be on the hunt for a Volkswagen Tiguan.

Ultimately, I think there is something different, unusual, often rebellious, sometimes cranky, often uncompromising, about the owners of these Jaguars, and it says something about the car itself.

I do worry I'm making the Jaguar saloon in general, and the XF in particular, sound like some kind of outcast and heroic failure, and if so that wouldn't be fair. The XF arrived at a time when Jaguar desperately needed a convincing saloon of its own, and this car gave its maker just that; and although the XF is disappearing when the brand's position is similarly perilous, let's not forget how successful and well regarded it has been in the meantime against cars as solid and respected as the BMW 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz E-Class.

The Jaguar may not have had the interior tech of rivals, nor the breadth of their line-ups, but always in base form, and usually in its

sporty R form, it has out-driven them convincingly. It has won numerous design awards and at one point Jaguar even finished top of the JD Power/What Car? customer satisfaction survey.

For a time, Jaguar used the strapline 'fast, beautiful cars', and the XF was just as worthy of that as an XK or F-Type. It didn't save the brand but gave it a solid underpinning from which the F-Type, F-Pace and elegant new XJ could emerge, while in the Sportbrake estate and XE saloon, the XF was joined by other five-seat models that were the envy of their classes to drive. Today they still are. As the current Jaguar saloon heads to retirement, it is still an elegant, bold, nonconformist choice, intelligent and unafraid to stand outside the establishment. When a new Jag arrives, I don't think those would be bad traits to retain. **A**

“
The XF didn't save the brand, but it gave it a solid underpinning
”

JAGUAR XF INGENIUM 2.0 250PS

Price	£41,265
Engine	4 cyls in line, 1998cc, turbocharged, petrol
Power	247bhp at 5500rpm
Torque	269lb ft at 1300-4500rpm
Gearbox	8-spd automatic, RWD
Kerb weight	1735kg
0-60mph	6.5sec
Top speed	155mph
Economy	34.7mpg
CO ₂ , tax band	186g/km, 37%



Oxford's architecture
is Morse code for Jag
saloon car heritage



THE BRITIS TO WATCH AT LE MANS

What price a British winner at this weekend's prestigious 24-hour race? Damien Smith assesses our drivers with the best hopes

42 AUTOCAR.CO.UK 12 JUNE 2024

It's official: British racing drivers have won the most at the Le Mans 24 Hours over the past century. Since the first race 101 years ago, a total of 34 Brits have been part of the winning crew at the world's greatest endurance race, racking up 45 victories between them. The next closest is the French: 28 drivers for a tally of 42 home wins.

But look down the list since 1923, and from the 1960s onwards British winners become an elite club – especially when you break it down further to those with multiple wins. There aren't many. So who are the most likely contenders to wave the Union flag once more come Sunday afternoon?

JENSON BUTTON, WILL STEVENS, CALLUM ILOTT, PHIL HANSON

A quartet grouped together because they all have two things in common: one, none of them has an overall Le Mans win to their name; and two, they all drive for British privateer Jota. The Kent-based team runs a pair of Porsche 963s in a striking Hertz livery and is absolutely in with a shot of scoring the manufacturer's record-extending 20th Le Mans win. Proof of that was thrown up at the previous World Endurance

BRITAIN'S TOP LE MANS WINNERS

Derek Bell	5	(1975, '81, '82, '86, '87)
Woolf Barnato	3	(1928, '29, '30)
Allan McNish	3	(1998, 2008, '13)
Henry 'Tim' Birkin	2	(1929, '31)
Ivor Bueb	2	(1955, '57)
Ron Flockhart	2	(1956, '57)



NICK TANDY

Tandy, like the other contenders here chasing a second Le Mans win, is a trusted pair of hands within the Penske-run Porsche works team. But the 39-year-old has spent much of his frontline sports car career in GTs rather than top-class prototypes. After a gritty grass-roots career that began in Ministox on Britain's short-track ovals, Tandy rose to the international ranks through sheer hard graft. He landed a big chance in a third 919 Hybrid LMP1 at Le Mans in 2015 and won, sharing with Nico Hülkenberg – making a well-timed cameo from F1 – and Earl Bamber. Now crewed with Frenchman Mathieu Jaminet and Brazilian Felipe Nasr in Penske's #4 963, Tandy has every right to fancy his chances.



JAMES CALADO

Last year, Calado became only the second Brit to win Le Mans for Ferrari – and his predecessor Peter Mitchell-Thomson (aka Lord Selsdon of Croydon) only drove for 72 minutes in 1949, so he barely counts. This year, in the 499P's sophomore season, 34-year-old Calado will bid to join Ecurie Ecosse Jaguar D-Type ace Ron Flockhart as a British consecutive two-time winner. Ferrari should be in the mix once again, as Calado shares the #51 entry with fellow 2023 winners Alessandro Pier Guidi and Antonio Giovinazzi.



MIKE CONWAY

Somehow the Toyota lynchpin has only a single Le Mans win to his name, from 2021, despite his role in the Japanese manufacturer's streak of five consecutive wins across the end of LMP1 and the start of Hypercar. Conway, 40, scored his own opportunistic victory at Imola in April when Ferrari dropped the strategy ball on home turf – proof that the well-honed Toyota Gazoo race team can never be ruled out, especially at Le Mans. Conway shares the #7 GR010 Hybrid with Nyck de Vries, who is seeking sunny uplands after ejection from his F1 gloom, and Toyota player-manager Kamui Kobayashi.



FROM HISTORICS TO THE MODERN CUTTING EDGE

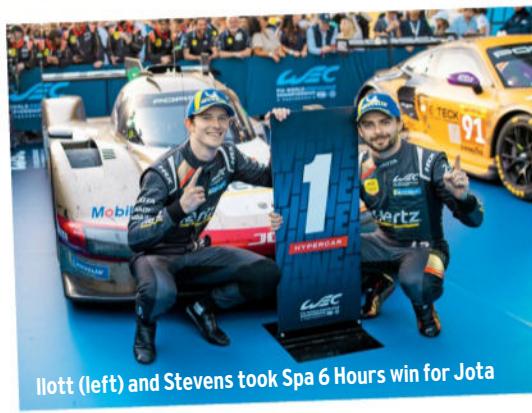
As career paths go, James Cottingham has taken a novel one to reach Le Mans. Most racing drivers transition to historic racing once they grow a few grey hairs and begin to wind down. But this 40-year-old is doing it all back to front.

"If you'd asked me three and a half years ago what I'd be doing now I would have said more of the same: driving historic racing cars," says Cottingham. "If you'd told me I'd be doing not only Le Mans but the whole of the WEC, I'd have thought you were kidding."

He is the son of David and Kate Cottingham, co-founders of DK Engineering, one of the world's foremost classic Ferrari specialists – hence the foundation in historic racing. Still DK's managing

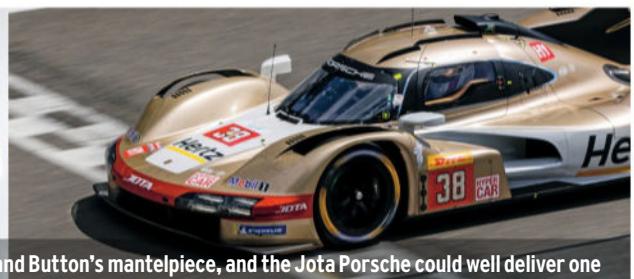
director, Cottingham chose to have a crack at modern GT racing and last year finished runner-up in the British GT Championship. Now he is part of United Autosports' full WEC line-up as the Leeds-based team takes McLaren back to Le Mans with a brace of 720Ss in the new LMGT3 class. "It's been a learning experience with the car," says the bronze-rated driver, "but having done the Asian Le Mans Series over the winter in a McLaren is a massive advantage and has really given me a head start. I'm enjoying it; I'm not daunted at all."

A class win first time out is a long shot. But keep an eye out for Cottingham all the same.



Ilott (left) and Stevens took Spa 6 Hours win for Jota

Championship round, the Spa 6 Hours, when Stevens and Ilott delivered Jota its first overall win at this level – also a first for any customer team in this era. Yes, a dose of luck was involved, but in such a competitive Hypercar field opportunism is the name of the game. Stevens is an ex-Formula 1 driver now established as one of the finest endurance racers on the planet, and Ilott is juggling Indycar with a transition to the long game. They share the #12 entry with Frenchman Norman Nato. In the #38 963, Hanson is the prime example of an increasingly common breed: a young driver who has focused on sports cars since his teens. Button needs little introduction: can the 2009 F1 world champion echo Fernando Alonso and add a Le Mans win to his glittering career? Hanson and Button share with fast Dane Oliver Rasmussen.



A Le Mans trophy would sit nicely on old hand Button's mantelpiece, and the Jota Porsche could well deliver one

RED WALL WILL HAVE A SAY IN UK'S EV FUTURE

Great Wall Motor is the latest Chinese giant with eyes on the UK, but the firm knows it must refine its cars to succeed at the second time of asking. Will Rimell reports

The Chinese car market is the biggest in the world. Last year alone more than 30 million cars were registered – three times the number in Europe. That's not a surprise, of course: it's why European firms have long flocked to China to sell their wares. What might be news, though, is that China is home to 61 domestic manufacturers.

Those brands are split among 18 different powerhouses, from the behemoths of Geely (owner of Volvo, Polestar and Lotus) and BYD (the world's biggest maker of PHEVs) to the state-controlled Changan and SAIC (MG's parent).

Strong sales in their home market has, over the past few years, resulted in these Chinese companies attempting to go global, and with much success: from 2020 car exports quintupled in just three years to 4.9 million. This means the country is now the biggest exporter of vehicles in the world, overtaking Japan (home of the world's biggest car maker, Toyota).

It's not just sheer volume that's putting China on the automotive map – these days it's quality, too. For instance, the MG 4, priced from £25,000,

was the UK's second-best-selling EV last year, behind Tesla's Model Y. BYD and Geely-owned Zeekr are other Chinese car firms making waves in the UK, with Xpeng, Nio (the one with the battery-changing stations) and Chery-owned Omoda coming soon.

Another name to take note of is Great Wall Motor. GWM is the fifth-biggest player in its home country, with 1.2 million global sales last year, and under its wing are five brands: Poer (pronounced Power), Haval, Wey, Tank and Ora.

GWM isn't strictly new to Europe – although its efforts so far don't inspire confidence. Once the only Chinese brand to sell vehicles in the region, it flirted with the UK with the now-discontinued – and two-star-rated – Steed pick-up. You can be forgiven for not remembering it.

Its latest venture here is Ora, the EV-only brand that focuses on quirky styling to carve a niche in some saturated segments. It arrived here in 2022 with the Funky Cat (now the GWM Ora 03), a Volkswagen ID 3-chasing, well-equipped but flawed raised hatchback. The Ora 07 saloon – think a Chinese Hyundai Ioniq 6 – is on the way later this year (First drives, 8 May), and an SUV has been tipped to follow.

So with just one brand and two cars in the market, why should UK buyers care about GWM's niche name? Because, before long, it might not be so niche. Having already cracked Australia and parts of South America, GWM is promising to turn its focus to Europe. "No brand is ruled out when it comes to expanding into our European markets," says Thiemo Jahnke, GWM's European brand and marketing director, adding: "Especially the UK."

Key to this wide-reaching ambition is that GWM is already well established in other European markets, especially Germany. In Bavaria it sells the Wey 05 (formerly the Coffee 01), a Europe-only, Mazda CX-5-sized hybrid SUV, while the smaller 03 is on the way. Both are tipped to come to the UK.

Its Haval SUV and Poer pick-up truck brands are also well known in eastern Europe. In Russia, GWM's Tula manufacturing and engine plant – opened in 2018, in a first for a Chinese car maker outside of its home market – produces 150,000 cars for markets such as Russia and Bulgaria, where it previously also had a factory. Other locations in Europe are being looked at.

What could hold it back, however, is that →

GWM has a diverse line of marques and models in its stable



“Having cracked Australia and South America, GWM is turning its focus to Europe”





GWM's reach is spreading. HaVal SUV brand is gaining a foothold in Australia

GREAT WALL'S LATEST OFFERINGS DRIVEN

WEY 07

The Wey 07 is a seven-seat crossover with a heavy focus on technology: three screens cover the dash, while another drops down from the roof to keep the rear passengers entertained. Being Chinese-designed, there is a dependence on the screen, with no physical buttons in sight. A plug-in hybrid powertrain offers more than 650 miles of range.

This is the first Chinese car I've driven that felt European. It rode well on pristine asphalt, albeit with the excess of body roll that's common with Chinese-market cars. It will be interesting to see how that translates to a UK specification.



TANK 700 Hi4-T

This is a ¥550,000 (£60,000) SUV with the chunkiest air springs you will find on a production car: ground clearance can be raised to 282mm, allowing for 32deg departure and approach angles. This is, unsurprisingly, a comfortable thing, with an interior clearly inspired by a new-age Defender's.

This body-on-frame off-roader is fitted with a sparky 516bhp hybridised V6. On a short course it felt nimble during slalom driving - albeit with heavy roll - and was quick off the line, while lockable diffs made the assault-course off-road section easy to traverse. All useful traits for a Chelsea tractor.



GWM's R&D HQ in Baoding. Its European base in Munich closed recently



← GWM's European business will now be conducted from China after it closed its Munich base last month, with the loss of 100 jobs. This decision, it says, was due to tough market conditions and the “very concrete threat of punitive taxes” on imported Chinese cars that are currently being considered by EU legislators. Regardless, the changes won't affect sales in Europe or the UK, promises GWM. Its UK operations are handled by distributor IML.

Behind the scenes, GWM has also been fundamental in creating the next generation of one of the UK's biggest automotive names: Mini. As part of a £183 million joint venture, the BMW-owned brand's new electric Cooper and Aceman models are being built at the Chinese group's Zhangjiagang plant. This will cater for both the local and global markets before Mini's Oxford factory takes on European builds from 2026. Along with this, the deal means GWM and BMW are jointly developing cars.

Translating something that works in China, a market that favours in-car tech over drivability, to Europe, a market that doesn't, is the biggest challenge for GWM. This was demonstrated clearly by the Funky Cat's reception in the UK: our two-and-a-half-star road test verdict pointed to its cheerful exterior being overshadowed by issues concerning “range, charging, long-distance comfort, ease of use, multimedia and assisted driving”.

“Yes, it can be better, it will be better, but it is not the worst and is still competitive,” says chief BEV engineer Rolf Albrecht, when asked why GWM launched a car that felt both unfinished and lacking from European market testing. So what was the goal? “We do not want to be the leaders, we want to have a robust system,” he says. “We have ideas of what we want to do better. I've taken the feedback [from the reviews] in.”

Albrecht adds that feedback will “give us a chance to improve and get better”, but he admits the firm “doesn't want to take risks”. Instead, the focus is on upgrading charging speeds and making the in-car software and technology more ‘European-friendly’ – so less-intrusive driver monitoring systems, for instance.

Designs will also be tailored to be more appealing to European customers. Key to this is the opening of two new design studios, one in Munich and the other in Turin, and they will be tasked with feeding ‘European trends’ into concepts. Design boss Andrew Dyson says: “They are so we can get a feel for the European market and secure talent from European designers.”

How much of this will make it onto the roads, however, is more difficult to predict. According to Dyson, who helped conceive cars such as the Chrysler Crossfire and Vauxhall Mokka, GWM owner Wei Jianjun signs off every vehicle, and he takes part in design reviews every Friday. “He will say if he likes something or not,” adds Dyson. “He has the final say.”

So what's next? Expect an influx of brands and models in Europe, including the UK, to begin with. GWM says it is targeting the “aspiring middle class” who are “tech-savvy and quality-focused”, and one brand that fits this mould is Wey. Already on sale in Germany and tipped to come to the UK, Wey has the fundamentals to do well here, with exterior and interior styling that feel much more suited to European tastes. We got an opportunity to drive the brand's 07 (see separate story, left).

Another that fits this demographic is Tank, GWM's flagship marque (again, see left), but don't expect to see it here. The issue is the business case: Tank told us the luxury SUV brand is positioned to compete with the likes of Range Rover, Defender and Mercedes-Benz

LOOKS FAMILIAR?

Some years ago Chinese car makers developed a reputation for being copycat firms, more or less ripping off the designs of some of the best-selling cars of the time (remember the Range Rover Evoque-mirroring Landwind X7?).

Today, the notion is a thing of the past, as GWM chief designer Andrew Dyson asserts: “The DNA at GWM is strong enough to stand up on its own.”

However, when asked about the Ora Ballet Cat, an Ora O3-based hatch with a design suspiciously close to that of the original Volkswagen Beetle, Dyson says: “The Chinese market lacks the heritage of the European market due to cars legally having to be scrapped after 25 years on the road. So we wanted to create something that looked iconic but with modern technology.”

Will it come to Europe? “No. There might be a problem with some Germans there!”



G-Class. That's not a problem in China, but in Europe those competitor brands have too much clout to steal their customers.

Regardless, the expansion plan is in full swing. GWM is targeting much of mainland Europe, including Spain, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark and Bulgaria.

In a bid to expand faster, GWM has even completed a renaming overhaul, with everything Europe-bound (such as the Funky Cat) positioned as product lines under the GWM name.

“This will help us create a stronger consumer brand in the tough European marketplace and a faster awareness and familiarity ramp-up,” says Jahnke. “Ultimately, this approach will ease further portfolio expansion in Europe.” **A**

Funky Cat was renamed to raise awareness of GWM



Steed failed to make much of an impression here



MG 3

Is the supermini able to offer quite as much bang for your buck in all-new hybrid form?

MODEL TESTED HYBRID+ TROPHY

Price £20,495 • Power 192bhp • Torque 313lb ft • 0-60mph 6.8sec • 30-70mph 6.2sec • Fuel economy 48.2mpg • CO₂ emissions 100g/km • 70-0mph 49.3m

MG may be making waves with its electric cars – the MG 4 EV in particular – but it isn't one of those car makers that has already committed to a fully electric range. Mainly, it seems committed to delivering good value cars.

As a result, while some are reassessing whether small cars can be made profitably, MG is introducing a second generation of its MG 3 supermini. The old one had been around, in one form or another, since 2013 and went through two facelifts. By the end, it had become rather dated but still offered undeniable bang for your buck.

This new MG 3 is a clean-sheet design, the firm claiming that it has effectively skipped a generation, such is the progress compared with the old MG 3. It brings a new hybrid drivetrain, plenty of new modern tech and therefore also more cost, because even MG has profit margins to think about. Has it moved away from its USP, or found a way to offer even more for less money than its rivals?

DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

★★★★☆

We are seeing quite a few 'all-new' cars that are effectively a thorough update of their predecessors' fundamentals (the new Mini Cooper and the Mercedes-Benz E-Class, for example). However, SAIC's MG is still a relatively young company applying plenty of recent learnings to its new cars. As a result, the new MG 3 shares next to nothing with its predecessor. Some of the boilerplate stuff might sound similar (1.5-litre four-cylinder engine, front-wheel drive, MacPherson struts up front and a torsion beam at the back), but a lot of that is just standard supermini fare.

First off, it looks nothing like the old MG 3, although most testers reckoned it's no improvement – the even longer front overhang, underwheeled stance and pinched face looking a bit awkward next to a Renault Clio. It has grown too, and the old MG 3 was already one of the larger cars in the supermini class. At 4113mm in length, it's 173mm longer than a Toyota Yaris and 5mm longer than a Skoda Fabia. It's also a bit wider across the mirrors than both of those rivals.

The new MG 3 owes very little of its mechanicals to the old one. MG doesn't bandy platform names around but says that the new 3 shares this and that with the MG 5 and is quite closely related to the upcoming ZS replacement.

It has been launched exclusively as a full (or self-charging, as Toyota would call it) hybrid, which does put the price up significantly, but in order not to abandon its most budget-conscious clientele, a pure-petrol with a manual is in the works and should arrive in the next six to eight months. MG isn't releasing any

Range at a glance

MODELS	POWER	FROM
MG 3	tbc	tbc
MG 3 Hybrid+	192bhp	£18,495

TRANSMISSIONS

3-spd automatic (Hybrid+) ■
Manual (standard)

The MG 3 has been launched with just one powertrain option, the full hybrid tested here. It comes in two trim levels, SE and Trophy. MG has confirmed that a more affordable petrol option with a manual gearbox is on the way but hasn't released any details yet. MG offers a naturally aspirated 1.5-litre four-cylinder with a five-speed gearbox and a turbocharged 1.0-litre triple with a six-speed gearbox in other models, so the MG 3 is likely to get a variation of one of those powertrains.

technical details of that just yet, but looking at the rest of the range, a 1.5-litre four-cylinder and a five-speed manual gearbox would be a safe bet.

The hybrid we are testing this week employs a drivetrain concept that is not entirely dissimilar to Toyota's. The engine is a naturally aspirated 1.5-litre four-cylinder with the same capacity as the old MG 3's. However, it has a different bore and stroke, and MG quotes a hard-to-believe compression ratio of 16.3:1. It also says the engine was heavily adapted for its hybrid application.

Like with Toyota hybrids, there is a main electric drive motor and a smaller motor-generator. It all drives through a planetary gearset, but whereas Toyota uses the smaller motor to make this arrangement function as a CVT, MG's transmission has only three fixed ratios, while the electric drive motor uses just a single-speed reduction gear.

The drive battery is quite a chunky 1.83kWh lithium ion unit (the Yaris's has just 0.76kWh) under the rear seat.

INTERIOR

★★★★☆

Despite a nod to style with a tartan insert on the passenger-side dashboard, some diamond-pattern stitching on the seats and a hexagonal steering wheel, the interior of the MG 3 is overall quite plain. That's fine, of course, for what is still a few-frills kind →



MG 3 hit the UK priced at less than £10k



● While 16in wheels may not sound that small, they can make a bulky modern car look rather underwheeled. We suspect the MG 3's handling would also benefit from swapping out the Kumho Solus tyres for some different rubber.



● From launch, all MG 3s are powered by a 1.5-litre, naturally aspirated four-cylinder engine and an electric motor. Most of it is packaged under the bonnet, but the drive battery sits under the rear seat. A manual petrol version will follow in six to eight months.



● Busy bumper design with a big grinning face and a pronounced nose in the middle is a strong, if not especially elegant, look. The 'wart' on said nose is one of the cameras for the 360deg view that comes with Trophy trim.



● Sloping roofline, bulky 'spoiler', small rear window and chunky rear headrests limit rear visibility. The high-level brake light sits behind the glass, underneath the spoiler, which doesn't help either. The MG 3 gets a rear wiper from launch.

We like

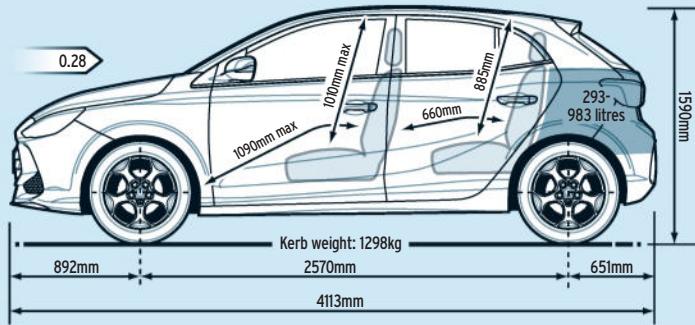
- Surprisingly generous performance means it feels unstressed most of the time
- It's a hybrid supermini for the price of a petrol manual one
- Comfortable ride

We don't like

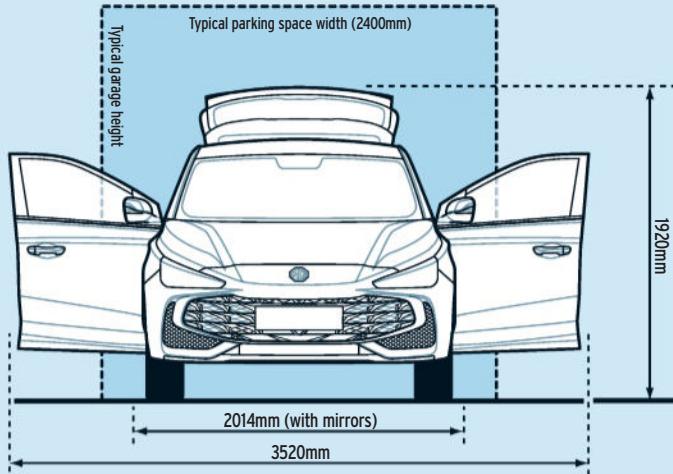
- Multimedia and driver assistance features need refining
- Some unforced design compromises, such as poor visibility, lack of adjustment in the driving position and drab interior
- Doesn't translate its generous exterior dimensions into class-leading interior space

Weights and measures

DIMENSIONS

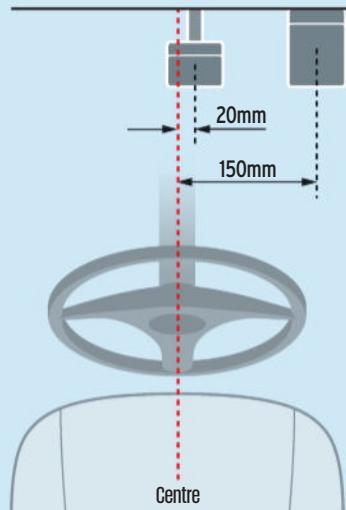


PARKING



WHEEL AND PEDAL ALIGNMENT

The pedal and steering wheel placements are very conventional, but it's rare these days to see a steering column that isn't adjustable for reach.



HEADLIGHTS

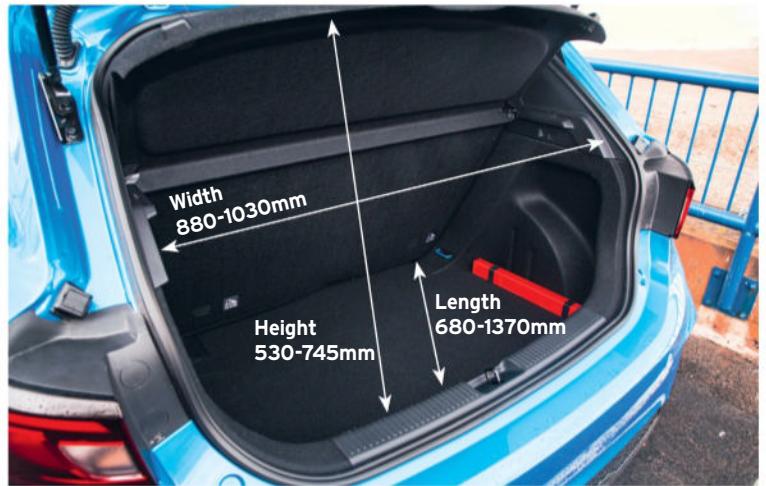
Headlights are LED as standard. Power is good and the automatic function works well.



• Despite not being able to alter the angle of the seat base and the lack of lumbar adjustment, the front seats are largely comfortable, even for tall people.



• The MG 3 offers fairly supermini-typical leg room in the rear but is a little short on head room. There are few toys and a single USB-A charging port back there.



• Boot space is also in the middle of the class pack, and the loading sill isn't excessively high. Single-piece rear seatback will be upgraded to a 60/40 split later.

◀ of car, but it is worth pointing out that other affordable small cars like the Renault Clio, Vauxhall Corsa and upper-echelon versions of the Dacia Sandero manage to be less forgettable thanks to some contrast fabrics and metal-effect trim and switches.

The latter is something the MG 3 doesn't have a great deal of anyway, which does little for the design, and also makes the general user experience more annoying than it ought to be.

Controls for the temperature and fan speed are displayed on the home screen but disappear when any other function is being used, while the (single-stage) heated seats and steering wheel can only be accessed through the climate

control menu. This can easily be called up with the physical button. However, when using Apple CarPlay or Android Auto, you first need to press the home button to return to the native interface for it to work. Having the physical buttons makes it all bearable but still needlessly involved.

There's a digital gauge cluster in front of the driver and, much like the general user interface, it's a slightly odd design, but one that can be made to work reasonably well. Part of it is permanently dedicated to the assisted driving display, which does the job of telling you that there are cars around you worse than the windows do. The digital speedo is nice and clear, and the right side of the screen can

scroll between trip information, a small tachometer/power flow graphic, and more. We did miss a power gauge that tells you how much throttle you can use before the engine will kick in, and how much braking you can use before tipping into the friction brakes.

Despite being on the larger end of the supermini class, the MG 3 offers only about average interior space. Rear passengers enjoy more leg room than the very tight Yaris offers but less than in the spacious Fabia. Rear head room is quite poor, however. The head restraints will be of no use to taller occupants, who will hit their heads on the sloping roofline. Folding down the rear seatback (it's only one-piece in our early-build test car, but a 60/40-split

option is imminent) leaves a step. Oddment storage in the front is much more generous, with plenty of cupholders, bins and trays of various sizes. They are all hard plastic, though, so objects tend to scratch around in them.

PERFORMANCE



It's not unusual for cars to better their quoted acceleration times by a little when we test them, but rarely do they beat them by this margin. MG quotes 8.0sec for the 3's 0-62mph sprint. That's already significantly quicker than the hybrid versions of the Renault Clio (9.3sec), Toyota Yaris (9.7sec in basic form), Honda Jazz (9.6sec) or Vauxhall Corsa (10.7sec in basic →



● Tartan print and yellow stitching are two of few nods towards frivolity in the MG 3's interior. There's soft vinyl below and hard plastic on top.



● Rotary drive selector works well, and the button for the auto hold is welcome, but the mode button could have been used for something more useful.



● Gauge cluster permanently shows the redundant ADAS display. Trip computer can be switched to a power flow and tachometer view.



Multimedia system



The 10.25in central touchscreen is familiar from other recent MG 3 products despite some detail and font differences. As a result, it's not the prettiest, the most feature-filled, or the one with the most logical menu structures. The biggest misses are that the climate controls aren't permanently displayed and that a number of features, such as the climate and the physical shortcut buttons, are disabled when using smartphone mirroring. You learn the system's quirks and how to work around them, but it's never a completely smooth experience.

Both Apple CarPlay and Android Auto require you to connect your phone via the main USB-A port. There are a further two USB-A ports (one in the interior mirror and one by the rear seats) and a USB-C port, but those only work for power.

Even SE trim gets built-in navigation. It's a fairly decent system, but not a patch on Google Maps or Waze for ease of use or traffic avoidance. The six-speaker audio system is nothing special but does the job.

“
The MG 3 has a remarkably supple
ride for a supermini
”



form). In perfect test conditions, the MG 3 took just 7.1sec, and it didn't run out of puff after that, either, storming on past its official top speed to 110mph.

However, because it has much more electric power than rivals but only a three-speed gearbox (and a slow-shifting one at that), the way it delivers its power is quite unusual. It gets going fairly gently on its electric motor, but receives a second wind soon after, as the petrol engine enters its powerband in the very long first gear. From about 65mph, acceleration dies off markedly as the gearbox makes its first very slow gearchange and the electric motor has to hold the fort by itself. As a result, 60-70mph takes over a second longer than 50-60mph.

Acceleration picks up again from 72mph until about 85mph, at which point we presume the electric motor is past its useful

rev range and the engine needs to cope with less assistance. The MG 3 keeps accelerating after that, just at a gentler pace. Similarly to the Lexus LBX we tested a few weeks ago, subsequent acceleration runs were slower, particularly during the gearchange phase, as the battery didn't get much of a chance to recharge.

As with Renault's E-Tech hybrid system, while it gets a bit ragged and confused on the test track, you notice little of the technical weirdness when you just use the MG 3 in its natural habitat. Because the battery is so large compared with rivals' and the electric motor is so powerful, it generally feels relaxed, with a good amount of power in reserve. Once the engine is warmed up, it's also mostly quiet and refined. When you ask for lots of performance, it produces a slightly strained four-cylinder noise, but

that's par for the course and can usually be avoided quite easily.

You do get the feeling that MG has thrown plenty of hardware at the 3, but rivals use their more modest components more cleverly. Given the battery is about twice as big as the Yaris's, you would expect it to be able to drive on electric power much more, but that isn't the case.

Braking is through a conventional blended hydraulic system, with discs front and rear. Pedal feel is mostly decent and allows smooth stops but does get mushy in an emergency stop. A little over 49m to stop from 70mph is a touch longer than other superminis in the dry, but not problematically so. The MG 3 has quite strong regenerative braking, which can be adjusted in three settings. However, progression leaves something to be desired in the stronger settings, and every time you turn the car off, it

resets to the middle setting, which is needlessly annoying. There's also no coasting mode.

HANDLING AND STABILITY

★★★★☆

Whether an MG will have any handling chops seems to be a lottery. We liked the original MG 3 when it was launched, but it became stiff-legged and numb as time went on. The MG 5 EV and ZS are mostly lacklustre, but the MG 4 proved a very pleasant surprise.

The MG 3 sits somewhere in the middle. You would never call it fun to drive, but there's also nothing especially objectionable about how it goes down the road. It's very softly sprung and rolls around a fair bit, but not in a way that feels uncontrolled or wallowy.

In its normal mode, the steering is intuitively geared and weighted, with fairly strong self-centring but



● MG 3 doesn't handle with anywhere near the same aplomb as its MG 4 range-mate, but makes up for that with plenty of pep all the way up to 60mph and an absorptive ride.

Assisted driving notes ★★☆☆☆

MG says that since China relaxed its Covid policies, its Chinese engineers have been able to visit Europe and the UK in particular to better tune the ADAS systems for our roads. Indeed, the MG 3's represents a step forward from the MG 4's in this respect, but there is still a lot of room for improvement.

The lane keeping assistance will start interfering with the steering when you are nowhere near the line, and the speed limit recognition gets it badly wrong too often. Thankfully the former can be disabled quite easily and the overspeed warning's volume can be permanently decreased to the point that it's barely audible when you have some music playing.

The adaptive cruise control remains erratic, slowing down too early and abruptly one time and disconcertingly late the other. Blindspot monitoring and rear cross-traffic alert are only fitted on Trophy spec and work satisfactorily.

AUTONOMOUS EMERGENCY BRAKING

- Does the system avoid false activation well? ✓
- Can it be deactivated? ✓
- Does it have pedestrian/cyclist detection? ✓

LANE KEEPING ASSISTANCE

- Is the system tuned to keep the driver engaged at all times? ✓
- Is it adjustable for sensitivity? ✓
- Does it allow you to drive around a pothole/obstacle within your lane easily and without deactivation? ✗

INTELLIGENT CRUISE CONTROL

- Can the system consistently recognise and automatically adopt motorway gantry-signed variable speed limits? ✗
- Does it prevent undertaking? ✗
- Does it have effective audible or visual alerts, or steering intervention, to prevent changing lanes into the path of an overtaking car? ✓



no feedback to speak of. The Kumho Solus tyres rather lazily translate steering inputs into direction changes, and grip is at a premium in the wet. Given its very nose-heavy weight distribution (64% front, 36% rear), it's no surprise that the MG 3 readily washes into understeer.

The safe balance, combined with well-tuned stability control that can't be completely switched off, means that the MG 3 never misbehaves, even with provocation.

COMFORT AND ISOLATION

★★★☆☆

For all its tepid handling, the MG 3 does have a remarkably supple ride for a supermini. It flows over choppy roads with ease, and while its cheap dampers can't completely smother poorly repaired surfaces, even those are rarely intrusive. Noise isolation is fairly typical for the class, if short of the best.

In terms of dynamic comfort, the MG 3 is easily one of the most comfortable small cars you can buy.

Seat comfort will depend more on the individual sitting in them, because the MG 3 is one of very few modern cars to lack reach adjustment on the steering column. As a result, our testers' assessments of the driving position varied from absolutely fine to quite poor. Most will find it compromised but bearable, with taller drivers generally at a disadvantage. The saving graces for the long-legged are that there is a good amount of leg room in the front and that the natural angle of the seat cushion is fairly acute, giving decent under-thigh support. The seats further lack lumbar support, even on the more expensive Trophy trim, like our test car.

Finally, visibility could be better. It has the short bonnet and

expansive dashboard that used to be typical of superminis, making it a little hard to judge the car's front extremities. Meanwhile, bulky rear headrests and a strongly sloping roofline conspire to shrink the rear windscreen, creating some moderately obstructive blindspots.

BUYING AND OWNING

★★★★☆

With pricing from £18,495 for the SE and £20,495 for the Trophy (the only options are paint colours), the MG 3 hybrid is more expensive than the old one was. Of course, it's a much more complete car, and the hybrid system doesn't come for free. In the grand scheme of modern new cars, this is still very affordable.

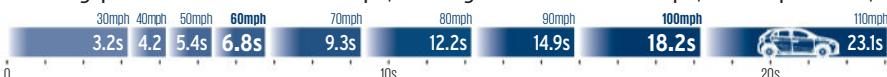
MG hopes to steal sales from the likes of the Renault Clio and Toyota Yaris, rather than just the other bargain-basement options. In that respect, it's cleverly priced. For the

same cash as a petrol, manual Clio or Vauxhall Corsa, you get a hybrid, automatic MG 3. MGs tend to hold their value well, so the PCP deals are even more enticing. There's a seven-year warranty, although it lasts for only 80,000 miles.

So if someone is cross-shopping this hybrid MG 3 with conventional petrol rivals, surely the fuel-efficient powertrain is a major benefit? That's where the mathematics get trickier, because the MG 3 hybrid is not as economical as you might hope. Over a week with the car, which did include performance testing, it returned 48.2mpg (although the trip computer claimed 52.3mpg). Even during gentler motoring, it never managed 60mpg, which you might well see from a Yaris or Clio hybrid. You will still notice an improvement over petrol-powered rivals around town, however. →

ACCELERATION**MG 3 Hybrid+ Trophy (20deg C, dry)**

Standing quarter mile 15.7sec at 92.8mph, standing km 28.3sec at 110.4mph, 30-70mph 6.2sec, 30-70mph in fourth na

**Toyota Yaris 1.5 Hybrid Design (2020, 20deg C, dry)**

Standing quarter mile 17.1sec at 83.5mph, standing km 31.0sec at 105.5mph, 30-70mph 8.8sec, 30-70mph in fourth na

**BRAKING 60-0mph: 2.70sec****MG 3 Hybrid+ Trophy (20deg C, dry)****Toyota Yaris 1.5 Hybrid Design (2020, 20deg C, dry)**

MG 3 HYBRID+ TROPHY

On-the-road price	£20,495
Price as tested	£21,040
Value after 3yrs/36k miles	£11,325
Contract hire pcm	£280
Insurance group	24

TYPICAL PCP QUOTE

3 years/24,000 miles, 15% deposit £263
 MG will add £750 on top of a £3075 deposit, putting the monthly cost of our test car at £263, with an optional balloon payment of £10,840. The MG 3's low list price, good residuals and a good finance deal mean it's pretty much unbeatable. A Renault Clio E-Tech with similar equipment on similar terms would cost £343, a TcE 90 £266.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

16in alloy wheels	■
Keyless entry and start	■
LED projector headlights	■
Rear parking sensors	■
360deg parking camera	■
Heated, electrically folding mirrors	■
10.3in multimedia screen with sat-nav	■
7.0in driver display	■
Apple CarPlay, Android Auto	■
Six-speaker audio system	■
Three USB-A, one USB-C ports	■
Cloth and synthetic leather seats	■
Heated seats and steering wheel	■
Adaptive cruise control, lane following	■
Battersea Blue paint	£545
Black, silver or grey paint	£545
Dynamic Red paint	£695

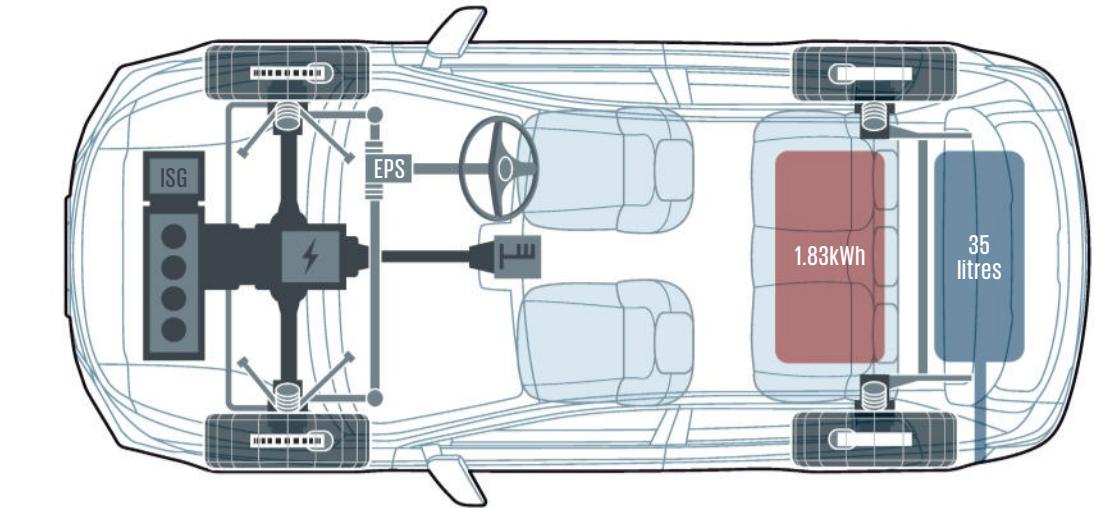
Options in **bold** fitted to test car
 ■ = Standard na = not available

CHASSIS & BODY

Construction	Steel monocoque
Weight/as tested	1298kg/1311kg
Drag coefficient	0.28
Wheels	16in
Tyres	195/55 R16 87H, Kumho Solus HS63
Spare	None (repair kit)

ACCELERATION

MPH	TIME (sec)
0-30	3.2
0-40	4.2
0-50	5.4
0-60	6.8
0-70	9.3
0-80	12.2
0-90	14.9
0-100	18.2
0-110	23.1
0-120	-
0-130	-
0-140	-
0-150	-
0-160	-



TECHNICAL LAYOUT

The MG 3 sits on its own platform, which shares some components with the MG 5's and is closely related to the upcoming MG ZS replacement. The ingredients are classic supermini. This hybrid version has a nose-heavy 64:36 weight distribution.

ENGINE & MOTORS

Installation	Front, transverse, front-wheel drive
Type	4 cyls in line, 1498cc, petrol
Made of	Aluminium block and head
Bore/stroke	72mm/92mm
Compression ratio	16.3:1
Power/torque	101bhp/94lb ft
Hybrid assist	Permanent magnet synchronised motor (134bhp, 184lb ft), plus ISG
Battery type	Lithium ion (nickel manganese cobalt)
Battery capacity	1.83kWh
Total system power	192bhp at 517rpm
Total system torque	313lb ft at 2586rpm
Power to weight	148bhp per tonne
Torque to weight	241lb ft per tonne
Specific output	67bhp per litre

TRANSMISSION

Type	3-spd epicyclic automatic (ICE), 1-spd reduction gear (EV)
Final drive ratio	3.75:1

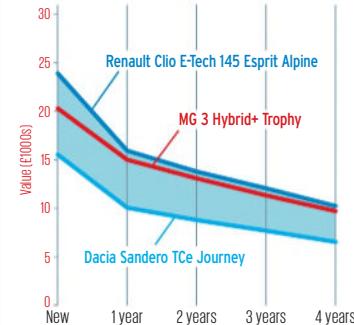
SUSPENSION

Front	MacPherson struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Rear	Torsion beam, coil springs

ACCELERATION IN KICKDOWN

MPH	TIME (sec)
20-40	2.2
30-50	2.3
40-60	2.6
50-70	3.9
60-80	5.4
70-90	5.6
80-100	5.9
90-110	8.2
100-120	-
110-130	-
120-140	-
130-150	-
140-160	-

RESIDUALS



● MG 3's predicted residual values exceed even the Sandero's and Clio's. Hybrid Corsa and Yaris are worse still.

BRAKES

Front	270mm (est) ventilated discs
Rear	250mm (est) solid discs
Anti-lock	Standard
Handbrake type	Electric
Handbrake location	Centre console

STEERING

Type	Electromechanical, rack and pinion
Turns lock to lock	2.6
Turning circle	10.5m

ECONOMY

TEST MPG	Track	27.2mpg
	Touring	47.9mpg
	Average	48.2mpg
CLAIMED	Low	48.7mpg
	Mid	256.8mpg
	High	60.1mpg
	Extra high	50.4mpg
	Combined	64.2mpg
	Tank size	35 litres
	Test range	371 miles

EMISSIONS & TAX

CO₂ emissions	100g/km
Tax at 20/40% pcm	£87/£174

SAFETY

ABS, ESC, LKA, blindspot monitoring, AEB with pedestrian and cyclist detection, rear cross-traffic alert, overspeed warning
Euro NCAP crash rating Not tested

CABIN NOISE

Idle na **Max power at 90mph** 76dBA
30mph 50dBA **50mph** 64dBA **70mph** 70dBA



THE SMALL PRINT Power-to-weight and torque-to-weight figures are calculated using manufacturer's claimed kerb weight. © 2024, Haymarket Media Group Ltd. Test results may not be reproduced without editor's written permission. For information on the MG 3, contact MG Motor UK Ltd, Westar House, 139-151 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5QE (01217 564864, mg.co.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). Contract hire figure based on a three-year lease/36,000-mile contract including maintenance; Wessex Fleet Solutions (01722 322888).

AUTOCAR ROAD TEST No 5678

Read all of our road tests [autocar.co.uk](https://www.autocar.co.uk)

Testers' notes

ILLYA VERPRAET

One of my bugbears with some modern cars, particularly those coming out of China, is the smell of cheap plastic and vinyl. There's a whiff of it in the MG 3, particularly when it has stood baking in the sun for a bit, but it's mercifully slight, and nowhere near as bad as in BYDs.

MATT SAUNDERS

The MG 3's fuel gauge is a thin line that gets shorter, but with a big range readout above it. The trouble is, when you dip under 40 miles, the range readout vanishes and a red fuel icon starts flashing angrily. A bit alarmist, I think.



VERDICT



Good value and with no serious vices, but still lacks a final layer of polish

When Renault facelifted the Clio, it planned to offer only the hybrid version in Britain, just like Toyota does with the Yaris and Honda with the Jazz. Of course, that drives up the price, and because of the demand for affordable cars, Renault ultimately decided to row back. With the new 3, MG is saying: why not both?

While it's not as cheap as the old one, the MG 3 offers the promise of hybrid running costs and convenience at the price of a standard petrol supermini, naturally with plenty of standard equipment.

At the same time, it still lacks the sophistication of some rivals, and loses stars for its design compromises, poor tech and fuel economy that doesn't quite live up to the promises. So to turn the situation on its head: if you don't need warm-hatch performance and don't mind shifting your own gears, you could have a Clio or Fabia that's more polished overall.

It's still an appealing offer, and the new MG 3 is strong enough in most of the key areas, with no deal-breaking vices, to be well worth considering, particularly if you like your small car comfortable and easygoing rather than sporty.

Spec advice

Trophy trim adds things like heated seats and steering wheel, blindspot monitoring and rear cross-traffic alert, so seems a worthwhile upgrade.

Jobs for the facelift

- Revise the infotainment so it integrates with phone mirroring, rather than simply switches to it, and turn one of the physical buttons into a rocker switch for the temperature.
- Add reach adjustment to the steering.
- Keep improving the ADAS.

ROAD TEST RIVALS

Verdicts on every new car, p68

Price

Power, torque

0-62mph, top speed

CO₂, economy

1 DACIA SANDERO Tce 90 JOURNEY

Other than the hard plastics, there's not much that shouts 'cheap' here. Automatic option is a CVT, so best avoided.

★★★★☆

£15,795

90bhp, 118lb ft

12.2sec, 108mph

119g/km, 53.3mpg



2 RENAULT CLIO Tce 90 ESPRIT ALPINE

Our preferred supermini if you can spend a little more. Hybrid costs £3800 extra. It's very rounded in any case.

★★★★☆

£20,795

90bhp, 118lb ft

12.2sec, 108mph

114g/km, 56.5mpg



3 SKODA FABIA 1.0 TSI 116 SE COMFORT DSG

Higher-power Fabia gets a proper DSG auto. Spacious, comfy and no-nonsense, if a bit short of equipment for the price.

★★★★☆

£21,780

114bhp, 148lb ft

9.7sec, 125mph

120g/km, 53.8mpg



4 MAZDA 2 1.5 90PS EXCLUSIVE-LINE

Sharp handling, zingy engine and snicky manual 'box make this the Fiesta replacement for those after some fun. Old but good.

★★★★☆

£20,375

89bhp, 111lb ft

9.8sec, 114mph

107g/km, 60.1mpg



5 TOYOTA YARIS 1.5 HYBRID EXCEL

Good to drive and very economical, and should be painless to own. Only available as a hybrid in the UK, so pricey.

★★★★☆

£23,545

114bhp, na

9.7sec, 109mph

97-112g/km, 57.3-70.6mpg

OUR CARS

FEATURED THIS WEEK



AUDI SQ8 E-TRON



CITROEN C4 X



LEXUS LBX



NISSAN ARIYA



POLESTAR 2



VOLKSWAGEN TOUAREG



LEXUS LBX

Can this smaller than usual Lexus live up to its longer than usual name? Let's find out

FIRST REPORT

WHY WE'RE RUNNING IT

Lexus has pinned its hopes of UK sales growth on this new compact crossover

Has anyone else got a mental block on all these Lexuses with an X in their name? There's the RX, a Jaguar F-Pace rival, the Audi Q5-sized NX, the very slightly smaller UX and then this, the LBX, Lexus's newest car and its smallest yet.

LBX stands for Lexus Breakthrough Crossover, which seemed a bit silly until I read that all of those other names are also abbreviations: Radiant Crossover, Nimble Crossover and Urban Crossover (still silly but consistent at least). And the fact that this one isn't called BX to follow the pattern is significant, according to Lexus.

The only other time a three-letter

name has previously been used by Lexus was for its V10-engined supercar. "As the LFA showed a different side to the brand in terms of attitude and performance, the LBX will challenge the status quo and redefine what a small car can offer", apparently.

And Lexus is very much hoping that this will be a breakthrough model, anticipated to comfortably become its biggest seller and intended to attract new, younger customers to the brand.

The sceptics among you might describe the LBX as a badge-engineered Toyota Yaris Cross for at least £5000 more. Indeed, the two cars share the same TNGA-B architecture and hybrid powertrain. But there's plenty to separate them, too: the LBX is longer, lower and wider and we're told that the two cars were developed separately and the Lexus was optimised for ride and handling. Plus, I don't think the

LBX's styling gives any clues that it's associated with the Yaris Cross.

The Premium Plus Design trim of our car is the fourth rung up on a ladder remarkably featuring seven. That puts this car at £35,595 – £5500 more than the starting price but still £5000 away from the range-topper, which is also four-wheel drive.

There's plenty of equipment for that money. The cheapest models receive 17in wheels, a 9.8in touchscreen and automatic high beam. Here, the wheels are 18in and there's a head-up display, blindspot monitoring, a 12.3in touchscreen, heated front seats, a wireless phone charger and a powered tailgate. The main difference with the top-spec LBX is fancier 18in alloys and a posh Mark Levinson speaker system.

The LBX offers only one hybrid powertrain, centred on a 1.5-litre three-cylinder engine and able to run on electricity alone. With a combined 134bhp, it can haul the

SECOND OPINION



The world needs more small cars, and I can see no reason why a small car can't be upmarket, so I want to like the LBX. On first encounter, I liked the idea more than the execution, but there was enough character to make me think familiarity could convince me. I will be interested to see if that happens for Rachel. **JA**



Our LBX gets the bigger, 12.3in screen

“
It's practical, smart and premium.
That it's uninspiring is a side note
”



It's designed to ride
and handle better than
cheaper Toyota sibling



car from 0-62mph in a respectable 9.2sec, while official fuel economy is a heartening 61.4mpg.

It seems odd in this day and age to launch a brand-new car – especially a smaller one – with no plans to launch plug-in hybrid or fully electric variants. Toyota and Lexus, having been trailblazers with hybrids, chose not to lead the way for electric cars, and given that Lexus expects the LBX to account for a third of its total UK sales, clearly this lack of choice isn't expected to be a barrier to success.

I like a compact car, especially because I live in London, but I was mildly concerned about the size of the LBX, knowing how bulky my son's car seat is and the impact that has on front passengers. I haven't tested it with any particularly tall passengers yet, and I strongly suspect that any such candidates wouldn't be comfortable on a long journey, but moderately sized adults have sat next to me and been comfortable. Our photographer Jack has verified that there's a decent amount of head room in the back, though.

The boot has also come as a pleasant surprise, at 402 litres – only three litres less than in the rival Audi Q2. There is a loading lip, admittedly, but the boot seems well packaged to make the most

of the space, and I can happily fill it up for a weekend, including my toddler's bike, without spilling over into the rear seats. Suitcases would be another matter, obviously. Now I just need to work out how to actually open the boot without a quizzical look and a second attempt...

The inside is very black in that safe way that so many cars are these days. It's practical, it's smart and it's (arguably) premium. The fact that it's uninspiring is a side note, and I've seen an alternative cream finish that looks swish. Nonetheless, this car does feel premium inside, with cosseting seats, a big touchscreen and nice surface finishes.

A few weeks in and I'm still getting the hang of reverse being a notch forward and drive being a notch back on the gearknob. It feels counterintuitive. I was wondering whether it was just me, but then a friend asked me to explain the exact same quirk on the BMW iX3. I had no answers but felt better at least.

As a Lexus model, the LBX uses the Toyota group's e-CVT, of which I've never been much of a fan. I'm intrigued by its execution in the LBX, though, because so far it's proving itself to be better than expected. There's still a noticeable moan when the engine is worked hard, but let's see how I adapt with more miles under my belt.

It has yet to be seen if the LBX will make a sales breakthrough for Lexus in the UK, so my goal for the coming months is to find out if it has the appeal to make that leap – and if it deserves that third letter in its title.

RACHEL BURGESS

TEST DATA

**LEXUS LBX HYBRID FWD
PREMIUM PLUS DESIGN**
Price new £35,595 Price as tested £36,265
Options Metallic bi-tone paint £670
Faults None Expenses None
Economy 61.4mpg (WLTP)

OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE
rachel.burgess@haymarket.com

CITROËN C4 X

Who ever said hatchbacks were more practical than saloons?

MILEAGE 5748

WHY WE'RE RUNNING IT

To see if this new saloon makes more sense in much cheaper ICE form

I've not got long left with our Citroën C4 X, so I'm trying to make the most of its practical nature. Our test car has gone up and down the country on various jobs, including ferrying luggage to Gatwick and Heathrow airports, shipping four people plus their belongings on a family holiday and even a house move.

With that, let's reflect on the positives. I initially thought the sloped rear window would cause me problems, but it has been completely fine: the commodious boot is more than big enough for most occasions, with 510 litres of space (the same as in the e-C4 X) regularly filled to the brim with footballs, suitcases and weekly food shops.

There's plenty of additional storage space too, particularly in the front. The door bins are sizeable and there's a useful hidden compartment beneath the wireless phone charger. In fact, said compartment is so effectively camouflaged that I lost my house

LOVE IT

UNUSUALLY RELAXING

After testing other cars, the C4 X welcomes me back each time to a push and peaceful environment.

LOATHE IT

OBSTRUCTIVE ARMS

The boot may be larger than in the C4 hatchback, but those hinge arms can be a real nuisance.

keys, the buzzer for my apartment complex's car park and a fresh pack of chewing gum all in the same night. After frantic searching and bugging my housemates to let me in for an entire week, I embarrassingly found that it had swallowed up all three items. Good luck to any thieves, I suppose...

Not everything is perfect, though. The bootlid hinges are solidly connected to the inside of the boot, meaning you need to arrange everything carefully. In my early days with the car, I kept forgetting this and blindly loaded up the boot only to find that some of my things were preventing it from closing. After a while, I started forgoing the boot altogether and chucked my gear on the back seats instead, which obviously isn't as secure or private.

The boot entry is also fairly narrow and loading heavier items isn't made any easier by the high loading lip.

These quibbles aside, the C4 X has been an accommodating companion, and while I think it might sacrifice some of the C4 hatchback's good looks for that additional 130 litres of luggage space, it's probably the more useful version for long-distance travel.

JACK WARRICK

TEST DATA

**CITROËN C4 X
PURETECH 130 MAX**
Price £26,820 Price as tested £27,965
Faults None Expenses None
Economy 49.3mpg Last seen 15.5.24

OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE
jack.warrick@haymarket.com



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151TE Turbo	30-150	£345.00	£414.00

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18"

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CBF200	20"	£39.98	£47.98
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CP18B100	18"	£59.98	£71.98

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Model	Min/Max Amps	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
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Model	Size (LxWxD)	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CIG61212	3.6x3.6x2.5m	£249.00	£298.80
CIG81015	4.5x3x2.4m	£279.00	£334.80
CIG81216	4.9x3.7x2.5m	£329.00	£394.80
CIG81020	6.1x3x2.4m	£349.00	£418.80
CIG81220	6.1x3.7x2.5m	£399.00	£478.80
CIG81224	7.3x3.7x2.5m	£499.00	£598.80
CIG1432	9.7x4.3x3.65m	£1099.00	£1318.80
CIG1640	12x4.9x4.3m	£2599.00	£3118.80

Clarke 2 & 3 TONNE TROLLEY JACKS

FROM ONLY £42.99 (exc.VAT) **£51.59** inc.VAT



CTJ2250LP

Model	Type	Tonne	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CTJ2250LP	Long	2.25	£42.99	£51.59
CTJ2250LP	Low Profile	2.25	£49.95	£59.94
CTJ3000GB	Pro Garage	3	£109.98	£131.98
CTJ3000QLB	Quick Lift	3	£122.98	£147.59
CTJ202LP	Low Quick Lift	2	£159.98	£191.98

* CTJ2250LP has a 2.25 tonne capacity, has a low entry of only 80mm and includes 2 sockets

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Model	Motor HP	CFM	Tank	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
Tiger 8/260	2	7	24lt	£109.98	£131.98
Tiger 7/260	2	7.8	24lt	£109.98	£131.98
Tiger 8/550	2	7	50lt	£149.98	£179.98
Tiger 11/550	2.5	9.3	50lt	£169.98	£203.98
Tiger 16/550	3	14.5	50lt	£239.00	£288.80
Tiger 16/1050	3	14.5	100lt	£299.00	£370.80

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AC10050	9000 BTU/h	£279.00	£334.80
AC13050	12000 BTU/h	£319.00	£382.80

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CHV18WF

18"

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CFF18C100

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• 12V battery charging facility



IG2200A

WAS £478.80 inc.VAT + WAS £454.80 inc.VAT

Model	Max Output	Weight	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
IG950D	800W	9.3	£219.00	£262.80
IG1200D	1100W	12.4	£279.00	£334.80
IG1700F	1700W	22	£249.00	£298.80
IG2000D	1800W	19.4	£389.00	£468.80
IG3500AF	3400W	35	£358.00	£430.80
IG2200A	2200W	26.6	£429.00	£514.80

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Range of precision bench & floor presses for enthusiast, engineering & industrial applications

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CDP102B

B = Bench mounted
F = Floor standing

Model	Motor (W)	Speeds	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CDP5B	350/5	5	£99.95	£119.94
CDP5B	350/5	5	£99.95	£119.94
CDP102B	350/5	5	£115.95	£139.14
CDP152B	450/12	12	£209.00	£250.80
CDP452B	550/16	16	£299.00	£358.80
CDP352F	550/16	16	£329.00	£406.80
CDP502F	1100/12	12	£699.00	£838.80

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FROM ONLY £104.99 (exc.VAT) **£125.99** inc.VAT

• Super light & compact



MMA140A

Model	Min/Max Output	Current	Electrode Dia. (mm)	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
MMA140A	20A-140A	1.6-3.2	1.6-3.2	£104.99	£125.99
MMA200A	20A-200A	1.6-4.0	1.6-4.0	£139.98	£167.98
AT165	10A-160A	2.5/3.2/4.0	2.5-4.0	£219.98	£263.98

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BC190

- Ammeter
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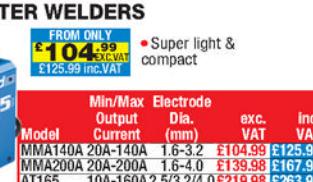


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VOLKSWAGEN TOUAREG

Transcontinental trips are what this big diesel was made for

MILEAGE 9788

WHY WE'RE RUNNING IT

To discover whether this disarmingly straightforward SUV is an anachronism or something to quietly covet

Since landing on the Autocar fleet, the Touareg has undertaken not one but two chunky Euro trips. Actually, three, now that I think about it. As I write this, my colleague Ilya Verpraet is strapped into the big Veedub's lofty front seat on his way to the Sachsenring in Germany, near the Czech border. He's wafting eastward to try out some new Alpinas, in what is – sob – the firm's penultimate year as an independent entity. New GT special editions of the B3 and B4, to be precise – not that I'm envious at all...

My own excursions in our V6 TDI SUV amounted to a rapid there-and-back to Cannes for the launch of the Porsche Macan Electric, and a few weeks later I crossed the Channel again, although this time in nothing like the same hurry, being on holiday. It was nevertheless a bit of a gruelling trip for the car. We covered 1000 miles down to Verdon, with plenty of iffy weather, tortuous tracks through Alpes-Maritimes

LOVE IT

NON-CHEESY GRIN

I like the Elegance model's silver wheels, but the chromed grille is too much. Our Black Edition's one is comparatively subtle.

LOATHE IT

ATTACHMENT ISSUES

I'm tiring of the car thinking I'm not holding the wheel on motorways and firing off a loud 'bing'.



It returned from France as a seven-seater

and a sofa in the back of the car for the return leg. But that's the sort of task any Touareg should ace, no?

And it did, being an indefatigable HQ while on tour. A shout-out needs to go to the air suspension in particular. It's standard fit on Black Edition models like ours but a £1705 option on certain models and worth the outlay. At autoroute speeds, I'm convinced there isn't much at all to separate the Touareg and its more rarefied cousins from Audi and even Bentley in terms of pure ride quality (isolation from road and wind roar is another matter, although the Volkswagen isn't poor in either respect – it merely isn't outstanding). The car has a lovely, languid gait that's underwritten by that torque-rich V6.

As for the long-range economy of that big motor, it returns 35mpg or so if you're pressing on but closer to 45mpg if you're mothering the throttle. With the car's 75-litre fuel tank, cruising range is about 600 miles. Interestingly, Volkswagen doesn't seem to offer the Touareg with the 90-litre tank any more, at least in the UK.

Serial Touareg owner Jon Samson got in touch with a picture of the range readout on his pre-facelift, oil-tanker-spec model: a cool 970

miles. Or London to Bratislava.

Our car's air suspension also came in handy when we found ourselves down a Provençal dirt track intersected by a reasonably fast-flowing stream about half a foot deep. Okay, raising the ride height wasn't a matter of life or death, but doing so generated peace of mind.

Technically the wading depth of our Touareg is a decent 580mm, although that drops to 500mm if you have steel springs and tumbles to 250mm if the car has a plug-in hybrid powertrain. With the strange way the Touareg line-up works in the UK, it means only the Black Edition is a dependable wader, as both the Elegance and the 456bhp R are PHEV-only.

Elsewhere, the car was pretty flawless. In small towns, rear steering might have been useful, although this can be had for a three-figure sum. A cheerier colour for the upholstery would have been nice, too. On the Black Edition, the only option is... black.

As for space? Well, you couldn't possibly want for more. Even the little old lady who sold us the sofa, who at first was worried our car wouldn't be big enough, knew the score. "C'est un Touareg? D'accord!"

RICHARD LANE

TEST DATA

VOLKSWAGEN TOUAREG 3.0 V6 TDI 286 4MOTION BLACK EDITION

Price £68,215 Price as tested £70,795
Faults None Expenses None
Economy 36.4mpg Last seen 22.5.24

OWN ONE? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE
richard.lane@haymarket.com



Polestar 2

MILEAGE 3111 **LAST SEEN** 29.5.24

It's easy to get sucked into talking solely about range when it comes to EVs, but range is the result of the battery size and the car's efficiency. There are larger batteries than the 2's 82kWh one (a capacity oddly plastered on the side of the car), but I've yet to live with an EV that's as efficient at motorway speeds. I can see 4.0mpkWh on a good run. **MT**



Nissan Ariya

MILEAGE 11,758 **LAST SEEN** 29.5.24

The Ariya's Aurora Green paintwork flits beautifully between hues – but it's extremely tricky to photograph. Luckily the textured grey clouds of late are bringing out a colour that, offset against grass and trees, looks almost British Racing Green. When it's dark outside, it can be an Aston Martin colourway, and when the sun is shining super-bright, it can saunter over to TVR purple. **MSC**



Audi SQ8 E-tron Sportback

MILEAGE 13,308 **LAST SEEN** 29.5.24

The SQ8 is going out on a high. Early last Sunday, I took it out on favourite roads for a short-range sprint, and it was great fun. It definitely needs new tyres now, but the powerful thrust was addictive and, at least on roads devoid of lumps and camber changes, the damping and steering came into their own. More range and this would be a different car. **SC**

YOUR VIEWS

WRITE TO
autocar@haymarket.com

Hybrid disaster

Unfortunately, although I still have a very big soft spot for the brand, there isn't a Subaru in our driveway, nor will there be in the near future.

Having had a succession of older and new models that all performed faultlessly, a few years back we invested in a Forester e-Boxer. This led to the termination of our family's involvement with Subaru. It was launched too early, with faulty technology and significantly poorer MPG than the old pure-ICE Forester, and Subaru responded dreadfully to our six (six!) breakdowns. We were told absolute rubbish that we shouldn't expect the car to hold its charge for more than two days.

I found class action lawsuits taking place in the US regarding the same issues, as well as online forum comments from owners in the UK.

Eventually, we got a great deal from our dealer and sold it back. Was this with official support from Subaru? I suspect so.

So good luck, Autocar, with your Crosstrek e-Boxer. Just remember to stick it on the trickle charger if you've parked it up when abroad on holiday or camping in the UK.

Subaru even treated our dealer (who had been selling its cars in rural Northumberland since the 1970s) badly and dumped them. They had tried their best for us.

We now have a family of Hondas.

John

County Durham

Subaru was approached for comment

Hybrid miracle

I have a Renault Clio E-Tech Esprit Alpine, and my experience with the stop-start adaptive cruise control has been excellent: in recent runs of around 80 miles, I've experienced more than 70mpg and the most relaxing of drives in comfort. I can't help feeling a little smug at the sheer value for money, as it feels like a luxury car for a small outlay. On a cold day, the heated seats and steering wheel are just magic.

Rick Auty

Shropshire



We love the Clio E-Tech and so does Rick

LETTER OF THE WEEK



WIN
Letter of the week wins this ValetPRO exterior protection and maintenance kit worth £48



Valet PRO

My dear friend Zoe

Picking up a couple of stories from your brilliant columnist-cum-podcaster, Steve Cropley, I would like first to reinforce his support for the now-defunct Renault Zoe. I bought a used one 18 months ago (so I've lost a bit of money, but hey ho). It's superb: cheap to run, comfortable, has a long range and with a small slice of fun. I still feel a bit like a trailblazer with an EV, though: it has its challenges. So, picking up on Steve's point about public charger reliability (My Week In Cars, 6 March), it's true that it's not always easy, but there's a real hit of dopamine when I get a successful charge. You don't get that with petrol.

Jeremy Smith
Via email

Uncivil service

Your road test of the new Lexus LBX (29 May) resulted in it coming first in its class. I don't doubt that it's a good car and deserves that accolade. However, something not touched on by you when reviewing cars is their service costs, and Lexus is renowned for being expensive to service. I think you ought to include service costs in your financial breakdowns.

A number of years ago, I had put a deposit down on a Lexus IS 300h F Sport, which I subsequently had to pull out from buying, as the dealer, on realising I wasn't going to be taking out finance, pretended the price was an error and should be £2000 more. I told him where to go and started looking at other cars, and while looking on forums to see if another F Sport was worth seeking out, I found numerous references to the high cost of

servicing, which I hadn't realised was the case. These high costs appear to remain.

Clearly the customer is paying for the swanky Lexus dealerships, as the service costs for an LBX – a small car costing from around £30,000 – are £285 for an interim service and £505 for a full service. Servicing is every 12 months or 10,000 miles, whichever comes first.

So although the LBX is frugal and is likely to hold its value reasonably well, servicing the car is going to hurt the wallet considerably.

GMT

Wirral, Cheshire

Modern-day Allegro

I've owned a new MG 3 Hybrid+ Trophy for just over a month and can honestly say that Kris Culmer's recent four-star first drive verdict (1 May) now looks, if anything, a tad mean. The car has so far performed



Not this week's road test car (honest)

way above my expectations.

I wonder if anyone else has noticed the striking similarity to another vehicle that was partially engineered at Longbridge: the Austin Allegro. As soon as I saw the MG in the flesh and sat in it, I detected a distinct Allegro vibe going on. Compare the launch brochure photo of the interior of the 1500 to the new 3: the quartic steering wheel, the instrument pod mounted high up between the wheel spokes, the horizontal air vents and even the seats. The outside styling is also vaguely Allegro, with its rounded-off lines and curving bonnet.

The Allegro's compliant ride and softer seats are also a refreshing reminder of how British cars used to be, compared with the firm ride and seating that we have to put up with these days.

Have I gone mad, or does anybody agree with me?

G Tones

Sunderland

I'd suggest it's more than a tad mean to liken the 3 to the dreadful Allegro! – KC

Rattle and squeak

Why do motoring journalists give some manufacturers such an easy ride? In the 22 May issue, Matt



Saunders test drove the £165,000 Mercedes-AMG GT 63. Something not even mentioned in the main article but in an aside tester's note was: "Our test car had an ill-fitting bootlid that squeaked and rattled almost constantly on slightly rough roads." This would be an irritating deal-breaker on a 15-year-old Kia Picanto, let alone on a car costing £165,000!

Matt generously hoped this was a "one-off problem". I would argue that there's no room for defects of any kind at this price, one-off or otherwise.

Why wasn't Mercedes hauled over the coals for this? Especially as journalists can't wait to roll out the quality clichés when it comes to other manufacturers.

Alastair Howe

Via email

Customer expectations of build quality are typically different when connected to part-hand-built sports cars than to volume-produced cars, we find, and this default would quite likely only have taken an adjustment in service to solve. But the criticism was made, and made prominently enough in any case – MS

Fading star

Matt Saunders' four-star rating for the new Mini Cooper SE was far too kind (First drives, 8 May). Reading between the lines, it would have been much simpler to just say that it looks like any other bland, generic, made-in-China EV, it's too heavy and it drives badly and given it two stars.

John Dixon

Via email

Seen it all before

I can't compete with Greg Kable in terms of automotive journalism, but if I had been covering the new BMW Concept Skytop (News, 29 May), I would have been sorely tempted to include the words 'Corvette' and 'Porsche' apropos the Targa panel and 'Jaguar XJS' apropos the flying buttresses. There's nothing new under the sun!

Jack Cooper

Hook, Hampshire

Does BMW's idea of a reborn Z8 give you déjà vu too?



GREAT REASONS TO BUY

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

ON SALE 19 JUNE



DRIVEN

Ford Explorer

The Blue Oval's crucial new electric family crossover arrives at long last. We find out how good it really is



INTERVIEW

Lynn Calder

We meet the car industry newcomer leading ambitious 4x4 maker Ineos



ROAD TEST

McLaren 750S

Heavily updated 720S makes more power while weighing a great deal less. We rate it

EVERY WEEK



NEWS

Alpine A290 revealed

Renault's sporty brand unveils its new hot hatch in full



USED GUIDE

Ford Focus

Production will soon end, but it will be a fine used buy for years to come

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SECOND CHANCE AUDI A1



MILLION-DOLLAR BABY

The smallest Audi was no less capable or plush than the others

Here's an interesting sentiment: if you want something to age well, minimalism is better than maximalism.

That was clearly the design premise of the Audi A1, which inside and out is as pared back as small hatchbacks get. It would be harsh to call it featureless, but it's not exactly the automotive equivalent of Tobermory. This Germanic attention to efficient, neat design has served the A1 well, because even now with the earliest examples more than 14 years old, they still look modern – a good thing, because they're in a tussle in the classifieds with the evergreen Mini hatchback.

If you were to buy a Mini, would you be missing out? Well, unlike that car, the A1 didn't draw on its maker's heritage. Instead, it was

one of the few small cars to have a team of engineers smelling each of its interior surfaces to make sure the scents didn't clash. Upmarket appeal was the clear priority here.

That interior also offers enough space for average-sized passengers and their average-sized luggage but not much else beyond that. The rear seats will accommodate anyone below average height and the boot any load smaller than 270 litres. By contrast, the contemporary Mini makes do with just 160 litres, while the Mk6 Ford Fiesta offers 295 litres.

What about trim levels? If you can live with halogen headlights,

entry-level SE models come with 15in alloy wheels, cruise control, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors, rear parking sensors and a 6.5in pop-up display that, like many of the other trim pieces and buttons around the cabin, has the tactility of a Bang & Olufsen hi-fi.

Stepping up to Sport trim grants you 16in alloys, sportier suspension, front foglights and USB and Bluetooth connectivity, while S Line (our recommendation) includes 17in alloys, xenon headlights, LED tail-lights, front sports seats, an aggressively styled bodykit and LED ambient interior lighting.

“My own S Line A1 was comfy, was more than potent enough and regularly bested 40mpg”

HOW TO GET ONE IN YOUR GARAGE



Materials are lovely and screen doesn't yet feel obsolete

Handling is fun without ruining the ride comfort



WHAT WE SAID THEN 10 NOVEMBER 2010

"The A1 has the cabin quality and powertrain refinement we've come to expect from an Audi. The cabin may lack the quirkiness of either the Mini or Citroën DS3, but it sets a new quality benchmark for a premium supermini. But it is how the A1 drives that overturns our expectations. It's not as supple as a Fiesta or as poised as a Renault Clio Cup, but it is still an enjoyable and capable car to drive quickly. In many ways it doesn't feel like an Audi at all but like a slightly smaller VW Golf GTI."

You could upgrade further to the Black Edition variant, getting 18in alloys and gloss black exterior trim, but we don't think it adds that much styling flair or kit over S Line.

For over a year, an S Line A1 was owned by yours truly, and never did I want for more. It was comfortable enough around town despite its firmer suspension, the gearchange of its six-speed manual (a five-speed manual and a seven-speed S Tronic automatic were also available) had

a reassuringly damped and high-quality feel, it had a 1.4-litre four-cylinder petrol engine that was more than potent enough and it regularly bested 40mpg. It certainly felt worthy of its Audi badges.

There were a multitude of powertrains available, ranging from a slightly underpowered 94bhp 1.0-litre three-pot petrol (replacing an 85bhp 1.2-litre four in the pre-2015 facelift model) to the 1.4-litre four with 123bhp, 148bhp or 183bhp, although that last version was axed in 2014.

You could also get a 1.6-litre or 2.0-litre diesel four, both of which offer up to 60mpg. The 2.0-litre is our choice of the oil-burners, as it's not only abstemious but pacy too.

So, it depends on what you're looking for in your small car. If you're after some nostalgic charm, buy a Mini. But if you want refinement, quality appeal and a tidy (if slightly anonymous) design, it's the A1 all the way.

JONATHAN BRYCE

An owner's view

JACKIE ROTHENBERG

"I bought my A1 Sportback new in 2016. I was looking for a nippy hatchback and chose the Audi for its neat styling and quality fittings. There's enough interior space to carry four people in a car that's ideal for driving in town, and having four narrower doors is a boon in car parks. I have some issues with the sat-nav, though: while it's easy to program and the radio/navigation console is nicely laid out, the maps aren't very clear. I have driven a lot of BMWs in the past and think Audi could learn something from them. But overall it's a great little car and not one I want to change yet."

Buyer beware...

■ ENGINE

A1s with the 1.6-litre and 2.0-litre TDI engines have diesel particulate filters that can become clogged up if the car is used only for short journeys. Happily, there is an easy fix: simply drive the car at 60-70mph on a motorway for 20 minutes and the warning light should disappear as the DPF clears itself out.

On high-mileage cars, the timing chain can become stretched and wear out prematurely. Telltale signs include a whining noise when the engine is cold or powering the car up a hill. Budget around £600 for a replacement.

While the 1.4 TSI is a good engine, its turbocharger has been known to fail. This could cost around £2000 to replace, so check that there's no black smoke coming from the exhaust or a loud whistle when the engine is under load.

■ ELECTRICS

The alarm can go off at seemingly random times, and if your A1 is specified with parking sensors and it's raining, they might think they are closer to an object than they really are. To save yourself from tinnitus, get an Audi dealer to run diagnostics on the electronics.

■ INTERIOR

The infotainment in some A1s has been known to suddenly lose its connection with a smartphone or outright refuse to connect in the first place. So before you buy, make sure everything links up as it should and the connection stays uninterrupted during your test drive.

Also worth knowing

It is likely that the A1 has been used by younger drivers who may not have taken as much care of it as you would



have wanted, with many examples out there looking quite neglected. So ensure there's a comprehensive service record of the car and at the very least check that it has had two long-life services.

Also check tyre and brake wear, oil and coolant levels and how many advisories the car received on its last MOT test. Essentially, try to work out exactly why the current owner doesn't want it any more.

The A1 was available with either three or five doors; the Sportback tag attached to some examples simply signifies the latter.

How much to spend

£1500-£4999

Very high-mileage, ragged diesels and some petrols. All powertrains can be found here, but it's an end of the market we would avoid.

£5000-£7999

Mileages ranging from 45,000 to 110,000, with a mixture of modified examples (of which buyers should always be wary) and some facelifts.

£8000-£9999

Mostly clean, mostly pre-facelift SE models, with mileages as low as 35,000.

£10,000-£13,999

Low-mileage, pre-facelift S Line models or average-mileage facelift SE cars.

£14,000 AND ABOVE

Late models and the best of the second-hand breed.



One we found

AUDI A1 1.4 TFSI, 2011, 45,000 MILES, £7199

This tidy, 13-year-old example has a mileage well below average and a full service history, plus no scuffs on any of its alloys or interior trim. It's in our recommended S Line spec and one of the brighter colours to boot.



James Ruppert

KICKING TYRES



Peugeot RCZ is a French twist on an Audi TT and yours for around £3k

As new cars become aggressively ugly, less characterful and just so downright expensive, thank heavens for the infinite choice that the used car market offers. As a result, I have been able to reassure some readers that coupés are the future. Sort of.

An Audi TT is the affordable and durable fastback cliché. Its Golf underpinnings have contributed to some spectacular mileages in the classifieds, but there is nothing to prove in that respect. I was rather taken by a 2008 2.0 TFSI petrol, which is arguably the perfect powerplant. This one had covered a reasonable 84,000 miles, which was all backed up by a service history with careful owners. The cost? An extremely reasonable £3295.

That very quickly brings us to

the TT's Euro-clone in the similar shape of the Peugeot RCZ. These are fabulous value and there are loads to choose from, and some substantial mileages push the majority of them down below £3000. Rather than the diesel, which includes the excellent 2.0 HDi that might encounter some city-centre access problems, the 1.6 petrol is fine. Consequently, a 2011 1.6 THP GT with 88,000 miles is £3500, which is a reasonable price for a full-history example that remains fully ULEZ-compliant.

There seems to be a lot of enduring love for the Daihatsu Copen, a Far Eastern micro-TT with the added benefit of a folding metal roof, deployable at the press of a button. There are fewer of them around, but immaculate low-mile examples that may be recent

imports are now a solid £5000-ish. There are some one-owner cars, too, like this one with the 1.3 engine and 80,000 miles, yours for just over £2k. Full history, garaged forever and as immaculate as it could be: a proper ULEZ bargain.

Finally, Renault Mégane coupés are cheap. Not quite TT-cute, but they are a throwback to three-door hot hatches of old and capable of high-end six-figure mileages. A 2012 with 168,000 miles and 1.5 dCi power is £1500 and does at least have £30 road tax. However, a 2010 petrol at 100,000 miles is only £1000. But ignore the price – it's always the spec and condition that matter. So a 2010 Euro 5-friendly 1.6 petrol in fancy Dynamique spec with 88,000 miles is a better choice. The added plastic chrome is an improvement. And the cost is £2000.

RUPPERT'S GARAGE

A final bit of tidying up on the Mercedes C-Class. I bought some random pieces of Elegance-spec chrome plastic to go on the nearside front, while on the offside rear some more of those inserts were coming adrift: some glue and tape seems to have done the trick. It's pretty much perfect now.



CAUGHT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS



JEEP AVENGER 1.2 ALTITUDE
2024, 10 miles, £20,995

It's not just electric cars you can get massive discounts on at the moment. This cutesy Jeep Avenger with delivery miles is being offered by a reputable dealer at a discount of more than £5000.



JAGUAR XF 2.0 D200
R-DYNAMIC
2023, 10 miles, £34,990

Another pre-reg bargain. The XF is long in the tooth but still one of the best exec saloons to drive, and the four-pot diesel here is surprisingly refined. You won't get posher or comfier for the money.



ALPINE A110
2023, 100 miles, £42,990

The A110 is great value as well as an incredible sports car. This one is basic (or pure, if you like), on 17in alloys and with no interior fripperies. That makes it nearly £20,000 less than the current cheapest new-in-stock Boxster.



TOYOTA COROLLA 1.8 ICON
2023, 18 miles, £22,495

The Corolla is one of our favourite family hatches thanks to its ride and handling balance, great economy and comfy interior. From the approved-used lot it's £8k less than new, so much cheaper than its rivals.

The Autocar
FROM THE ARCHIVE

Tate & Lyle trucked sugar from London; this Foden is a later, 1970 model

EASY TO FORGET THESE
FUEL-OIL-WATER-CLEANLINESS
FLASHERS MAIN LIGHTS TYRES
INSPECT FOR VEHICLE DAMAGE
CHECK AIR BRAKES STEERING
S ALARM WORKING - KEY?
ENSURE YOUR LOAD IS SAFE
NUMBER PLATES ON
COLLECT NOTES DEFECT BOOK
YOU REPRESENT SILVER ROADWAYS



We experience the life of a 1960s lorry driver

THE HEAVY GOODS vehicles of today are incredibly sophisticated, featuring all manner of electronic systems to keep their drivers and road users around them as safe as possible. Not so in 1964, when an Autocar journalist rode along in an articulated lorry to discover just how different things looked from three metres up with 15 tonnes of cargo right behind, and how hard it was to thread a 22-tonne eight-wheeler through towns and get it to scale hills and safely come down again – all on a freezing December night.

The willing haulier was Silver Roadways (a subsidiary of sugar refiner Tate & Lyle), our driver a 44-year-old Cockney called Alf and our tractor a Foden with a Gardner 10.5-litre diesel six that produced 150bhp and 485lb ft of torque.

A quick aside: Cheshire-based Foden was one of the first British firms to make motorised lorries, having started out manufacturing

industrial steam and traction engines in 1880. Like everything else in Britain, it all went wrong in the 1970s. American firm Paccar came to the rescue in 1980, did the same for Leyland Trucks in 1998 and axed the Foden brand in 2006.

Anyway, back to 1964, and our job was to transport sugar from east London's docks to a staging post on the A40 near Northleach, Gloucestershire.

Silver Roadways had three route destinations: Exeter, Liverpool and, our choice, Cardiff. At the Windrush cafe, we would swap our load for one of bars from South Wales' steel mills, so that we would start and end our shift like all the other drivers back in the capital.

We arrived at Silver's yard at 8.30pm to find drivers smoking and chatting as their lorries' idling engines mixed acrid diesel fumes into the misty Thames-side air.

Alf, whose father had also been a lorry driver, had been on nights for 14 years. "I prefer it," he said. "You meet all the same mates. It's a bit like a club. But it takes a good woman to stand it. I try to make it up to my wife. I take her for three weeks' good holiday every year."

Having bled his reservoirs to avoid frozen airlines, he climbed into his cab at 9pm, filled out two log sheets – one for the tractor, one for the trailer – and set off into the night, the cab briefly choking our



man with trapped exhaust fumes.

'Alarming' was the term he used for the ride comfort, explaining: "Being hinged in the middle, our [11m] overall length had very little resistance to pitch, and the tractor with only a [2.7m] wheelbase was continually being bounced about with a violent bucking motion."

"Don't brace yourself! Ride with the motor," yelled an unruffled Alf over the engine roar, but try as he might have, our man was unable to stop himself lurching in and out of his seat.

"Through the City we thundered along, constantly changing gear and peering into the large mirrors to judge the trailer line on corners and keep an eye on faster traffic.

"Approaching roundabouts and junctions, we had a most commanding view of all the feed-in roads and could thus judge very well the speed to filter through to avoid having to stop dead.

Car drivers quite often balked at us as they dithered indecisively – a much greater handicap to our progress than they realised.

"It was obviously second nature to Alf to know which gears in [Foden's 12-speed] combination were the best for each situation, and he displayed an uncanny skill for lightning changes up and down through the crash 'box'."

Soon we had joined a convoy, punching a tunnel through the thick fog. Later, on some isolated dual-carriageway stretches, Alf actually turned off his headlights and drove only by the light of the moon to improve his vision.

It was 3am when Welsh Bill arrived with our return load. "Bloody grim it was," he said, relaying how an oncoming car had flipped through a hedge in front of him. Rain in the meantime had become ice, so we had to return at less than 20mph, Alf occasionally tweaking his trailer brake to check adhesion. We arrived around 6am.

"How do you feel driving a car after this?" our man asked Alf. "Bloody murder!" he replied. "It's a race with all the others, pushing and shoving – and then there's all the mad lorry drivers!"

Haulage has changed a lot in the past 60 years, then – but some things are just as they ever were.

KRIS CULMER

Trucking wasn't easy, especially in winter



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AUTOCAR ARCHIVE

ROAD TEST INDEX

The latest and greatest rated as only Autocar knows how

A road test in any other magazine might well be a short, subjective summary of a new car produced under almost any circumstances, but the Autocar road test is different. Specific, rigorous and detailed, it's the closest examination we can give of any new model. It appears over at least eight pages and is close to 50 man-hours in the making every week.

Most of what the road test process entails is designed to be strictly repeatable and fair. We benchmark standing-start and in-gear acceleration at a purpose-built test facility every week. We carry out both subjective and objective handling tests on both road and track, on the latter up to and beyond the limit of grip, so as to fully assess stability, drivability and limit handling appeal. And while benchmark lap times are sometimes taken, they're never an end in themselves.

We record and publish stopping distances too, as well as taking cabin noise measurements at various cruising speeds and benchmarking either indicated or brim-to-brim fuel economy. We independently measure leg room, head room, boot space and certain key exterior dimensions, and we weigh every car we test.

Just as every new car is different, however, the road test has developed to be versatile enough, week by week, so as to best assess and reflect the suitability of each test subject to its intended purpose. It now includes modular sections describing in detail the limit handling of a new car, or its semi-autonomous assisted driving technologies or its off-road capability.

All of this goes to bringing you the most thorough, relevant and fair test of a new car we can produce. The scores from the most recent road tests cited here are the ones we gave the cars at the time so they don't necessarily represent what those same cars might score today were they rejudged using current class standards. But you can dig deeper into their attributes by using the magazine publication dates listed here to look up a test in your own collection or digitally in the Autocar Archive (themagazineshop.com/aca23ed/aca).

Matt Saunders, road test editor



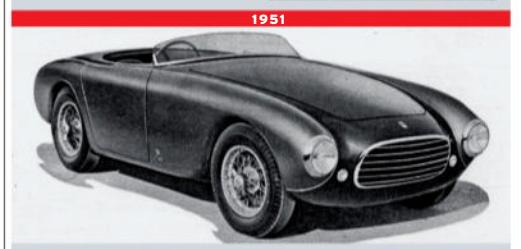
i5eDrive40 M Sport Pro	★★★★★	29.11.23	Wrangler 2.2MJet-II0v'd	★★★★★	10.4.19
iX xDrive50 M Sport	★★★★★	2.3.22	KIA		
X1 xDrive23i M Sport	★★★★★	25.1.23	Ceed 1.6 CRDi 115 2	★★★★★	29.8.18
X2 M35i	★★★★★	25.9.19	Proceed 1.4T-GDI	★★★★★	27.2.19
X3 xDrive20d M Sport	★★★★★	17.1.18	Xceed 1.4T-GDI	★★★★★	20.11.19
X4 M Competition	★★★★★	13.11.19	Niro EV 3	★★★★★	7.9.22
X5 xDrive30d M Sport	★★★★★	2.1.19	Soul EV Urban	★★★★★	5.7.23
X6 M Competition	★★★★★	20.3.24	Sportage 1.6 HEV 2WD	★★★★★	15.6.22
X7 M60i xDrive	★★★★★	29.3.23	Sorento 1.6 HEV-GT 2	★★★★★	20.1.21
BMW ALPINA			EV6 77.4kWh GT-Line RWD	★★★★★	12.1.22
B3 Touring	★★★★★	4.11.20	GT	★★★★★	4.10.23
B8 Gran Coupé	★★★★★	22.9.21	EV9 GT-Line S	★★★★★	31.1.24
BYD			LAMBORGHINI		
Atto 3 Design	★★★★★	31.5.23	Huracán Evo RWD Coupé	★★★★★	20.5.20
Seal Design	★★★★★	17.1.24	Aventador SVJ	★★★★★	19.6.19
CATERHAM			Urus	★★★★★	3.7.19
Seven 420 Cup	★★★★★	31.8.22	LAND ROVER		
CHEVROLET			Defender 110 P400 X	★★★★★	13.5.20
Corvette LT3 Coupé	★★★★★	22.6.22	Discovery Sport D180 AWD	★★★★★	8.1.20
Z06 Coupe 3LZ	★★★★★	16.8.23	Range Rover Evoque P300e	★★★★★	10.2.21
CITROEN			Range Rover Velar D240	★★★★★	30.8.17
Ami Colour	★★★★★	11.1.23	Range Rover Sport D300	★★★★★	2.11.22
C3 Aircross Puretech 110	★★★★★	7.3.18	Range Rover D350 HSE	★★★★★	13.7.22
C4 Puretech 130 Auto	★★★★★	26.5.21	LEXUS		
e-C4i Shine	★★★★★	3.5.23	LBFX PWD Pre'm Plus Design	★★★★★	29.5.24
C5 X Puretech 180	★★★★★	28.9.22	NX 350h Pre'm Plus Pack	★★★★★	16.3.22
C5 Aircross Hybrid 180	★★★★★	13.2.19	UX 300h F Sport	★★★★★	22.3.23
CUPRA			ES 300h Takumi	★★★★★	6.2.19
Born 204 58kWh V3	★★★★★	6.7.22	LM 500 Sport+	★★★★★	18.10.17
Leon 310V23 Estate	★★★★★	8.9.21	LC 350h AWD Takumi	★★★★★	7.2.24
Leon 215V23 Hatch	★★★★★	27.7.22	LOTUS		
Ateca 2.0 TSI Adrive	★★★★★	23.1.19	Elise Cup 250	★★★★★	29.6.16
Formentor 2.0 TSI V22	★★★★★	3.2.21	Exige Sport 390 Final Edit'n	★★★★★	21.7.21
DACIA			MASERATI		
Sandero Stepway Tce 90	★★★★★	28.4.21	Quattroporte Trofeo	★★★★★	4.8.21
Duster Cse 115 Comfort	★★★★★	22.8.18	Grecale Trofeo	★★★★★	18.10.23
Jogger 1.0 Tce 110 Comfort	★★★★★	20.4.22	Levante S Granlusso	★★★★★	8.5.19
DODGE			MAZDA		
3 Crossback Puretech 155	★★★★★	10.7.19	21.5 Skyactiv-G SE	★★★★★	22.4.15
4E-Tense 225	★★★★★	29.6.22	3.2.0 Skyactiv-X	★★★★★	6.11.19
7E-Tense 4x4 260	★★★★★	26.4.23	MX-5 SE L-Nav	★★★★★	2.9.15
9E-Tense 225	★★★★★	2.2.22	MX-30 145PS	★★★★★	10.3.21
FERRARI			CX-5 2.2D Sport Nav	★★★★★	28.6.17
488 Pista	★★★★★	7.8.19	CX-60 e-Skyactiv D 3.3 RWD	★★★★★	10.5.23
296 GTB	★★★★★	21.12.22	Exclusive-Line	★★★★★	10.5.23
812 Superfast	★★★★★	25.7.18	McLAREN		
SF90 Stradale	★★★★★	3.11.21	Artura	★★★★★	19.10.22
FIAT			600LT Spider 3.8 V8	★★★★★	22.5.19
Panda 4x4 Twinair	★★★★★	17.4.13	GT 4.0 V8	★★★★★	27.1.21
500 Icon 42kWh	★★★★★	26.1.22	720S 4.0 V8	★★★★★	24.5.17
600e La Prima	★★★★★	27.3.24	MERCEDES-AMG		
FORD			A-Class A45 S 4Matic+ Plus	★★★★★	4.3.20
Fiesta 1.0T EcoBoost	★★★★★	9.8.17	C-Class C63 S Coupé	★★★★★	24.4.19
ST 31.5T EcoBoost	★★★★★	15.8.18	CLS 53 4Matic+	★★★★★	17.10.18
Focus 1.5 EcoBoost 182	★★★★★	20.2.19	EOS 53 4Matic+	★★★★★	8.6.22
ST	★★★★★	11.9.19	GT R	★★★★★	10.5.17
Mustang Bullitt	★★★★★	5.12.18	GT 4dr Coupé 63 4Matic+	★★★★★	13.3.19
Mustang Mach-E Extended Range RWD	★★★★★	23.6.21	63 S E Performance	★★★★★	21.6.23
GT AWD	★★★★★	27.4.22	GLC 63 4Matic+	★★★★★	13.9.23
Puma 1.0T 125 MHEV	★★★★★	25.3.20	GLE 53 4Matic+	★★★★★	14.10.20
ST	★★★★★	24.3.21	SL 63 4Matic+ Pr'm Plus	★★★★★	26.7.23
Kuga 2.5 PHEV ST-Line	★★★★★	24.6.20	MERCEDES-BENZ		
Ranger 2.0L TD EcoBlue 205PS Wildtrak	★★★★★	14.6.23	A-Class A200	★★★★★	24.5.23
Transit Custom LZHI 320 2.0 EcoBlue	★★★★★	8.5.24	A250e AMG Line Premium	★★★★★	5.8.20
150PS Limited	★★★★★	8.5.24	B-Class B180 Sport	★★★★★	3.4.19
GENESIS			CLA 250	★★★★★	21.8.19
GV60 Sport Plus	★★★★★	24.8.22	C-Class C300e AMG Line	★★★★★	4.5.22
G70 2.2 CRDi Luxury Line	★★★★★	10.11.21	E-Class E220d AMG Line Premium Plus	★★★★★	3.1.24
Electrified G80	★★★★★	12.10.22	E400 Coupé	★★★★★	14.6.17
GV80 3.0D Luxury 5-Seater	★★★★★	15.9.21	E300 Cabriolet	★★★★★	6.10.21
HONDA			S-Class S580e L	★★★★★	6.4.22
E Advance	★★★★★	26.8.20	EOA 250	★★★★★	17.11.21
Jazz 1.5i MMD Hybrid EX	★★★★★	7.10.20	EOB 300 4Matic	★★★★★	18.5.22
HR-V e:HEV	★★★★★	24.11.21	EOE 350+	★★★★★	4.1.23
e:Ny1 Advance	★★★★★	1.11.23	EOS 450 SUV B'ness Class	★★★★★	6.3.24
CR-V 1.5i EX CVT AWD	★★★★★	7.11.18	GLB 200d 4Matic	★★★★★	16.9.20
HYUNDAI			GLC 300 4Matic AMG Line Premium Plus	★★★★★	13.9.23
i10 1.2 MPI Premium	★★★★★	15.4.20	G-Class G350d AMG Line	★★★★★	17.7.19
i20 1.0T-GDI 100 48V	★★★★★	24.2.21	GLS 400	★★★★★	12.2.20
N	★★★★★	25.8.21	MG		
i30 N	★★★★★	27.12.17	31.5 3Form Sport	★★★★★	25.12.13
1.4 Premium SE	★★★★★	13.9.17	Hybrid+ Trophy	★★★★★	12.6.24
Ioniq 6 RWD Ultimate	★★★★★	7.6.23	4EV Long Range SE	★★★★★	5.4.23
Kona Electric 64kWh	★★★★★	31.10.18	5SW EV Exclusive	★★★★★	25.11.20
1.0 120PS Advance	★★★★★	9.9.23	ZS EV Exclusive	★★★★★	4.12.19
Santa Fe 2.2 CRDi	★★★★★	6.3.19	MINI		
Tucson 1.6T-GDI Hybrid	★★★★★	17.3.21	3dr Cooper S Works 210	★★★★★	6.12.17
INEOS			Clubman Cooper D	★★★★★	25.11.15
Grenadier 3.0T Fieldmaster	★★★★★	20.9.23	Convertible Cooper S Sport Automatic	★★★★★	19.5.21
JAGUAR			Countryman Plug-in Hybrid	★★★★★	26.7.17
F-Type 2.0 R-Dynamic	★★★★★	22.11.17	C Exclusive	★★★★★	17.4.24
P575 R AWD	★★★★★	29.4.20	MORGAN		
XF 2.0 R-Sport	★★★★★	2.12.15	Super 3	★★★★★	9.11.22
300 R-S Sportbrake	★★★★★	17.4.19	Plus Four	★★★★★	12.8.20
XE 2.0 R-Sport	★★★★★	1.7.15	Plus Six	★★★★★	10.4.24
E-Pace D180 AWD SE	★★★★★	11.4.18	NISSAN		
S-Pace P400e R-Dyn c HSE	★★★★★	1.12.21	Micra DIG-T 117 N-Sport	★★★★★	27.3.19
F-Pace EV400S	★★★★★	12.9.18	Juke 1.0 DIG-T 117	★★★★★	29.1.20
JEEP			Qashqai 1.3 DIG-T 158	★★★★★	28.7.21
Avenger Electric Summit	★★★★★	24.1.24	Ariya 87kWh Evolve	★★★★★	26.10.22
Compass 2.0MJet 4x4 Ld	★★★★★	3.10.18	GT-R Recaro	★★★★★	16.11.16
4xe 5	★★★★★	16.2.22	X-Trail e-Power e-4orce AWD Tekna	★★★★★	22.2.23
Renegade 4xe Trailhawk	★★★★★	30.6.21	ORA		
			Funky Cat 48kWh First Ed'n	★★★★★	1.2.23

PEUGEOT			SUBARU		
208 e-208 Allure Premium	★★★★★	6.5.20	Outback 2.5i Touring	★★★★★	27.9.23
308 1.2T Puretech 130 GT	★★★★★	25.5.22	XV 2.0i SE Lineartronic	★★★★★	28.2.18
408 Hybrid 180 GT	★★★★★	11.10.23	Crossrek 2.0i e-Boxer Touring	★★★★★	3.3.21
508 GT BlueHDI 180	★★★★★	24.10.18	★★★★★	28.2.24	
Hybrid 225 Allure SW	★★★★★	8.7.20	Solterra AWD Touring	★★★★★	15.3.23
PSE Hybrid4 SW	★★★★★	5.5.21	SUZUKI		
2008 e-2008 GT Line	★★★★★	30.9.20	3008 1.6 BlueHDI GT Line	★★★★★	17.5.17
5008 2.0 BlueHDI GT Line	★★★★★	18.1.17	Across 2.5 PHEV E-Four CVT	★★★★★	7.4.21
POLESTAR			TESLA		
1	★★★★★	21.10.20	Model 3 Standard Range Plus	★★★★★	4.9.19
2BST Edition 270	★★★★★	12.4.23	Long Range	★★★★★	14.2.24
PORSCHE			Model S Plaid	★★★★★	2.8.23
718 Boxster	★★★★★	8.6.16	Model Y Long Range AWD	★★★★★	23.3.22
Spyder	★★★★★	1.4.20	Model X 90D	★★★★★	15.2.17
Cayman GT4 RS	★★★★★	9.5.18	TOYOTA		
Cayman GT4 RS	★★★★★	14.9.22	Aygo X Limited Edition	★★★★★	11.5.22
911 Carrera T	★★★★★	30.8.23	Yaris 1.5 Hybrid Design	★★★★★	23.9.20
Dakar	★★★★★	10.1.24	GR Yaris Circuit Pack	★★★★★	3.3.21
Turbo S	★★★★★	10.8.22	Corolla 2.0 Hybrid ST	★★★★★	5.6.19
Range Rover Velar D240	★★★★★	22.1.23	Mirai Design Premium	★★★★★	16.6.21
Cayenne S	★★★★★	21.1.24	C-HR Excel 1.8 Hybrid	★★★★★	4.1.17
Turbo SE-Hybrid	★★★★★	27.5.20	bZ4X AWD Vision	★★★★★	18.1.23
Turbo GT	★★★★★	20.7.22	GR Supra Pro	★★★★★	14.8.19
Taycan Turbo S	★★★★★	29.7.20	HiLux 2.8D-4D GR Sport	★★★★★	1.3.23
RENAULT			VAUXHALL		
Clio Tce 100 Iconic	★★★★★	27.11.19	Corsa 1.2T 100 auto	★★★★★	22.1.20
Mégane E-Tech Electric	★★★★★	23.12.21	Crossland X 1.2T 130 Elite	★★★★★	7.6.17
Arkana E-Tech Hybrid 145	★★★★★	13.10.21	Astra 1.2T 130 GS Line	★★★★★	5.10.22
Captur 1.3 Tce 130 EDC	★★★★★	18.3.20	Combo Life 1.5T 100 Energy	★★★★★	27.12.18
Austral E-Tech Iconic Esprit Alpine	★★★★★	19.7.23	Mokka 1.2 Turbo 130 auto	★★★★★	12.5.21
★★★★★	19.7.23	Grandland X Hybrid 4	★★★★★	22.4.20	
ROLLS-ROYCE			VOLKSWAGEN		
Phantom	★★★★★	4.4.18	Up GTI 1.0 TSI 115	★★★★★	21.3.18
Ghost	★★★★★	13.1.21	Polo 1.0 TSI 95 SE	★★★★★	31.1.18
Spectre	★★★★★	20.12.23	Golf 1.5 eTSI 150 Style DSG	★★★★★	22.7.20
Cullinan Black Badge	★★★★★	19.2.20	R	★★★★★	14.4.21
SEAT			ID 3 Pro Performance Life	★★★★★	31.3.21
Ibiza SE Technology 1.0 TSI	★★★★★	19.7.17	ID 4 GTX Max	★★★★★	27.10.21
Leon eHybrid FR	★★★★★	2.12.20	ID 7 Pro Match	★★★★★	13.3.24
Arona SE Technology 1.0 TSI	★★★★★	15.11.17	T-Roc 2.0 TSI SEL 4Motion	★★★★★	24.1.18
Ateca 1.5 Eco TSI DSG FR Black Edition	★★★★★	25.10.23	Cabriolet 1.5 TSI Evo DSG	★★★★★	10.6.20
SKODA			Arteon 2.0 TDI 240	★★★★★	27.9.17
Fabia 1.0 TSI 95PS	★★★★★	9.2.22	eHybrid Shooting Brake	★★★★★	9.6.21
Scala 1.5 TSI 150 DSG	★★★★★	31.7.19	Passat GTE	★★★★★	7.9.16
Octavia 2.0 TDI 150 SE L First Edition	★★★★★	2.9.20	Tiguan 2.0 TDI 150 SE	★★★★★	22.6.16
DSG Estate	★★★★★	17.2.21	1.5 eTSI 150 DSG R-Line	★★★★★	22.5.24
2.0 TDI VR6	★★★★★	17.2.21	Touareg 3.0 TDI R-Line Tech	★★★★★	8.8.18
Superb 1.4 TSI 118 SE L	★★★★★	26.2.20	3.0 4M eHybrid Elegance	★★★★★	5.6.24
Karoq 2.0 TDI 150 Scout	★★★★★	30.1.19	ID Buzz SWB 77kWh	★★★★★	8.2.23
Enyaq iV 80	★★★★★	18.8.21	Multivan 1.4 eHybrid Style	★★★★★	8.3.23
Kodiaq 2.0 TDI Edition	★★★★★	23.11.16	VOLVO		
2.0 TSI 245PS VR6 4x4	★★★★★	23.2.22	EX30 Single Motor Extended Range Plus	★★★★★	1.5.24
SMART			XC40 D4 First Edition AWD	★★★★★	7.2.18
#1 Premium	★★★★★	8.11.23	C40 Recharge Twin Ultimate	★★★★★	13.4.22
#3 Premium	★★★★★	15.5.24	S60 T8 Polestar En'd	★★★★★	24.12.19
SSANGYONG			V60 T8 Recharge	★★★★★	21.2.22
Tivoli XLV ELX auto	★★★★★	14.9.16	XC60 D4 R-Design AWD	★★★★★	5.7.17
			S90 D4 Momentum	★★★★★	13.7.16
			V90 16 Recharge R-Design	★★★★★	11.1.20
			XC90 D5 Momentum	★★★★★	17.6.15

ROAD TESTS ON THIS DAY



CITROEN AX 14 TRS
New supermini impresses in how it drives but not its refinement
Price £6190 Engine 4 cyls in line, 1360cc, petrol Power 65bhp at 5400rpm Torque 83lb ft at 3000rpm 0-30mph 3.4sec 0-60mph 11.0sec Quarter mile 18.1sec Top speed 101mph Economy 34.7mpg



NEW CARS A TO Z

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STAR RATINGS EXPLAINED

- ☆☆☆☆ Inherently dangerous/unsafe. Tragically, irredeemably flawed.
- ☆☆☆☆ Appalling. Massively significant failings. Very poor. Fails to meet any accepted class boundaries.
- ☆☆☆☆ Poor. Within acceptable class boundaries in a few areas. Still not recommendable.
- ☆☆☆☆ Off the pace. Below average in nearly all areas.
- ☆☆☆☆ Acceptable. About average in key areas, but disappoints.
- ☆☆☆☆ Competent. Above average in some areas, average in others. Outstanding in none.
- ☆☆☆☆ Good. Competitive in key areas.
- ☆☆☆☆ Very good. Very competitive in key areas, competitive in secondary respects.
- ☆☆☆☆ Excellent. Near class-leading in key areas and in some ways outstanding.
- ☆☆☆☆ Brilliant, unsurpassed. All but flawless.

ABARTH

595 3dr hatch/2dr open £23,225-£27,375 **☆☆☆☆**
The Fiat 500's Abarth makeover makes it a true pocket rocket. **LxWxH** 3660x1627x1485 **Kerb weight** 1070kg
1.4 T-Jet 165 162 135 7.3 317-38.2 156

695 3dr hatch/2dr open £25,725-£32,075 **☆☆☆☆**
A convincing track-day 500 with decent dynamic ability, but overly firm ride spoils it. **LxWxH** 3660x1627x1485 **Kerb weight** 1045kg
1.4 T-Jet 180 Essoesse 177 140 6.7 36.2-36.7 156

500e 3dr hatch/2dr open £34,195-£41,695 **☆☆☆☆**
A sportier take on Fiat's smallest electric car with a host of technical upgrades. **LxWxH** 3673x1682x1518 **Kerb weight** 1375kg
42.2kWh Scorpionissima 152 96 7.0 150 0

ALFA ROMEO

Giulia 4dr saloon £39,995-£78,195 **☆☆☆☆**
Handsome and special dynamically but lacks finesse and comes as an auto only. **LxWxH** 4643x1860x1436 **Kerb weight** 1429kg
2.0 Turbo Petrol 280 276 149 5.7 33.6 195
2.9 Quadrifoglio 503 191 3.9 23.5 227

Tonale 5dr SUV £36,040-£51,995 **☆☆☆☆**
Decent dynamics and reasonable value. However, lacks the appeal expected from the marque. **LxWxH** 4528x1841x1601 **Kerb weight** 1525kg
1.3 PHEV Speciale 5dr Auto 276 128 6.2 47.2 33
1.3 PHEV TI 5dr Auto 276 128 6.2 47.2 33
1.3 PHEV Veloce 5dr Auto 276 128 6.2 47.2 33
1.5 MHEV Speciale 5dr Auto 160 132 8.8 49.6 130
1.5 MHEV TI 5dr Auto 160 132 8.8 49.6 130
1.5 MHEV Veloce 5dr Auto 160 132 8.8 49.6 130

Stelvio 5dr SUV £47,895-£87,195 **☆☆☆☆**
Alfa's second SUV is a solid effort. Choosing the petrol version gives it charisma. **LxWxH** 4687x1903x1671 **Kerb weight** 1604kg
2.2 Turbo Diesel 210 Q4 AWD 207 134 6.6 42.8 162
2.0 Turbo 280 Q4 AWD 276 143 5.7 30.4 195
2.9 Quadrifoglio 503 176 3.8 23.9 267

ALPINE

A110 2dr coupé £54,490-£91,490 **☆☆☆☆**
A much, much greater car and achievement than the sum of its parts suggests. **LxWxH** 4180x1980x1252 **Kerb weight** 1080kg
1.8 Turbo 248 155 4.5 42.2 152
1.8 Turbo S 288 162 4.4 41.5 153
1.8 Turbo R 288 177 3.9 41.5 154

ARIEL

Atom 0dr open £40,669 **☆☆☆☆**
Simple, purist concept remains but everything else has changed... for the better. **LxWxH** 3520x1800x1122 **Kerb weight** 595kg
2.0 turbo 320 162 2.8 na na na

Nomad 0dr open £37,549 **☆☆☆☆**
Well inside the top 10 list of our favourite cars. A revelation and a riot to drive. **LxWxH** 3215x1850x1425 **Kerb weight** 670kg
2.4 K241-VTEC 235 125 3.4 na na na

ASTON MARTIN

Vantage 2dr coupé/2dr open £134,160-£165,660 **☆☆☆☆**
The faster, cleverer, more hardcore entry-level Aston tops its class. **LxWxH** 4465x1942x1271 **Kerb weight** 1630kg
4.0 V8 510 190-195 3.6-3.8 25.7 264
4.0 V8 F1 Edition 535 195 3.6 24.3 264

DB12 2dr coupé/2dr open £202,160 **☆☆☆☆**
DB11 replacement is a masterclass in restrained yet modernised GT talent. **LxWxH** 4725x2060x1295 **Kerb weight** 1655kg
4.0 V8 671 202 3.6 na na na

DBS 2dr coupé/open £259,660-£280,160 **☆☆☆☆**
Effortlessly fast, intoxicating to drive: the big Aston is better than ever. **LxWxH** 4715x1970x1295 **Kerb weight** 1693kg
5.2 V12 715 211 3.4 20.9 306

DBX 5dr SUV £179,160-£197,160 **☆☆☆☆**
Doesn't try to be the biggest, fastest SUV, and may be all the more appealing for it. **LxWxH** 5033x1998x1680 **Kerb weight** 2245kg
4.0 V8 550 181 4.5 19.8 323
4.0 V8 DBX 707 697 193 3.3 19.9 323

AUDI

A1 Sportback 5dr hatch £22,790-£29,785 **☆☆☆☆**
Quite pricey, but a rounded car with plenty of rational appeal. **LxWxH** 4029x1740x1409 **Kerb weight** 1105kg
1.0 25 TFSI 94 116 10.8 48.7-50.4 128-133
1.0 90 TFSI 114 126 9.5 46.3-51.4 124-139
1.5 95 TFSI 148 137 7.7 44.1-44.8 142-145

A3 Sportback 5dr hatch £28,075-£50,090 **☆☆☆☆**
Bolder design and improved dynamics make the A3 stand out more than ever. **LxWxH** 4343x1816x1425 **Kerb weight** 1220kg
1.0 90 TFSI 108 127 10.6 48.7-51.4 125-132
1.5 95 TFSI 148 139 8.7 46.3-50.4 128-138
2.0 40 TFSI 201 141 7.6 235.4 29
2.0 45 TFSI 242 144 6.6 235.4 29
2.0 53 quattro 306 155 4.8 34.4-34.9 183-186
2.0 35 TDI 148 142 8.3 56.5-62.8 112-130

A3 Saloon 4dr saloon £28,640-£50,855 **☆☆☆☆**
Undercuts the case to own an A4. Upmarket interior and good to drive. **LxWxH** 4495x1984x1425 **Kerb weight** 1225kg
1.0 90 TFSI 108 130 10.6 50.4-51.4 124-128
1.5 95 TFSI 148 144 8.7 47.9-50.4 127-134
2.0 53 quattro 306 155 4.8 35.3-36.2 178-181
2.0 35 TDI 148 142 8.3 58.9-67.3 111-127

A4 4dr saloon £36,965-£45,780 **☆☆☆☆**
High quality and competent but leaves the dynamic finesse to its rivals. **LxWxH** 4762x2022x1431 **Kerb weight** 1320kg
2.0 35 TFSI 148 140 8.6 40.9-46.3 141-155
2.0 40 TFSI 201 155 7.3 40.9-44.8 143-156
2.0 35 TDI 148 142 8.9 50.4-55.4 133-146
2.0 40 TDI quattro 187 146 7.4 50.4-54.3 137-148

A4 Avant 5dr estate £40,100-£90,470 **☆☆☆☆**
Classy and mature estate lacks the dynamic sparkle of rivals. **LxWxH** 4762x2022x1460 **Kerb weight** 1370kg
2.0 35 TFSI 148 137 9.2 39.8-44.8 143-162
2.0 40 TFSI 201 146 7.3 39.8-43.5 147-162
3.0 V6 TFSI RS4 Avant 448 155-180 4.1 28.1-28.2 220-226
2.0 35 TDI 148 132 9.2 49.6-54.3 137-150
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 143-144 7.1 47.9-52.3 144-156
3.0 S4 TDI quattro 342 155 4.7 39.2-39.8 181-193

A5 2dr coupé £43,335-£94,660 **☆☆☆☆**
Refreshed coupé gets a sharper look and a refreshed interior. Still mundane to drive. **LxWxH** 4697x2022x1371 **Kerb weight** 1390kg
2.0 35 TFSI 148 140 8.9 41.5-45.6 141-154
2.0 40 TFSI 201 150 7.1 41.5-47.1 141-154
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 4.8 34.9-38.8 180-184
2.9 V6 TFSI RS5 quattro 448 174 3.9 29.1 220
2.0 35 TDI 163 162 8.2 51.4-55.4 133-144
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 146 6.9 50.4-54.3 135-146

A5 Sportback 5dr coupé £43,335-£94,660 **☆☆☆☆**
Refreshed coupé gets a sharper look and a refreshed interior. Still mundane to drive. **LxWxH** 4757x2029x1388 **Kerb weight** 1425kg
2.0 35 TFSI 148 139 9.1 40.9-44.8 144-158
2.0 40 TFSI 201 150 7.2 40.9-44.8 143-158
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 5.6 34.4-35.3 183-187
2.9 V6 TFSI RS5 quattro 448 174 3.9 28.5-28.6 222-224
2.0 35 TDI 148 135 8.4 50.4-54.3 135-147
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 146 7.6 49.6-54.3 137-149

A6 4dr saloon £44,555-£95,425 **☆☆☆☆**
A capable and high-tech throwback that's a timely reminder of what Audi does best. **LxWxH** 4939x1886x1457 **Kerb weight** 1645kg
2.0 40 TFSI 201 152 7.3 37.7-39.2 163-171
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 6.0 35.3-37.2 172-182
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 299 155 6.2 217.3 31
3.0 65 TFSI quattro 335 155 5.1 32.8-34.9 184-196
2.0 40 TDI 201 152 8.1 47.9-51.4 145-155
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 153 7.6 45.6-47.9 156-163
3.0 S6 TDI quattro 344 155 5.0 36.2 203-205

A6 Avant 5dr estate £47,100-£176,975 **☆☆☆☆**
A capable and high-tech throwback that's a timely reminder of what Audi does best. **LxWxH** 4939x1886x1470 **Kerb weight** 1710kg
2.0 40 TFSI 201 149 7.5 36.2-38.2 168-178
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 6.2 34.0-36.2 177-189
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 294 155 6.2 217.3 31
4.0 RS6 quattro 596 155-174 3.6 21.9-22.6 283-294
2.0 40 TDI 201 149 8.3 45.6-49.6 156-162
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 150 7.6 44.1-46.3 159-167
3.0 S6 TDI quattro 344 155 5.1 35.3 209

A7 Sportback 5dr coupé £58,800-£136,535 **☆☆☆☆**
Easy on the eye and to live with, but let down by stolid dynamics. **LxWxH** 4969x1908x1422 **Kerb weight** 1880kg
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 6.2 35.3-36.2 177-183
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 294 155 6.3 134.5-141.2 46-47
4.0 RS7 quattro 596 155-174 3.6 22.2-23.0 280-287
2.0 40 TDI 201 152 8.3 47.9-49.6 156-163
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 155 7.0 45.6-47.1 158-165
3.0 S7 TDI quattro 344 155 5.1 35.3-35.8 205-208

A8 4dr saloon £92,970-£122,410 **☆☆☆☆**
Technical tour de force benefits from Audi's knack of making very good limousines. **LxWxH** 5127x1954x1743 **Kerb weight** 1920kg
3.0 65 TFSI quattro 335 155 5.6 28.2-29.4 208-212
3.0 65 TFSI quattro LWB 335 155 5.7 28.9-30.1 219-228
3.0 65 TFSI quattro 449 155 4.9 100.9-113.0 57-64
3.0 60 TDI quattro 282 155 5.9 38.7-40.9 180-192

Q3 5dr SUV £29,090-£49,855 **☆☆☆☆**
Audi's smallest SUV is a decent stepping stone from the A3 to the Q range. **LxWxH** 4191x1794x1508 **Kerb weight** 1205kg
1.0 90 TFSI 108 122 11.2 44.8-47.1 135-143
1.5 95 TFSI 148 131 8.6 42.2-44.8 142-151
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 298 155 4.9 32.6-33.2 192-195

Q2 5dr SUV £29,090-£49,855 **☆☆☆☆**
Audi's smallest SUV is a decent stepping stone from the A3 to the Q range. **LxWxH** 4191x1794x1508 **Kerb weight** 1205kg
1.0 90 TFSI 108 122 11.2 44.8-47.1 135-143
1.5 95 TFSI 148 131 8.6 42.2-44.8 142-151
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 298 155 4.9 32.6-33.2 192-195

Q3 5dr SUV £34,465-£46,165 **☆☆☆☆**
Typically refined and competent but feels more like an A3 than an Audi SUV. **LxWxH** 4484x1849x1616 **Kerb weight** 1365kg
1.5 95 TFSI 148 128 9.6 38.7-42.2 153-168
2.0 40 TFSI quattro 187 136 7.4 31.0-32.5 197-207
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 243 147 5.8 31.0-31.7 195
2.0 45 TFSI 243 130 7.3 141.2 44-45
2.0 35 TDI 148 128 9.3 47.9-49.6 150-154
2.0 35 TDI quattro 148 131 9.3 39.2-40.9 133-139
2.0 40 TDI quattro 197 139 7.3 37.7-40.4 173

Q3 Sportback 5dr SUV £35,615-£47,550 **☆☆☆☆**
A more sporting take on the compact SUV, with similarly stable handling. **LxWxH** 4484x1849x1567 **Kerb weight** 1460kg
1.5 95 TFSI 148 128 9.6 39.2-41.5 153-168
2.0 40 TFSI quattro 187 136 7.4 30.7-32.1 197-207
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 243 147 5.8 32.5-32.8 195
2.0 45 TFSI 243 130 7.3 141.2 44-45
2.0 35 TDI 148 128 9.3 48.7-51.4 146
2.0 35 TDI quattro 148 131 9.3 40.4-44.8 133-139
2.0 40 TDI quattro 197 139 7.3 38.2-39.8 173

Q4 e-tron 5dr SUV £50,745-£61,925 **☆☆☆☆**
Practical, pleasant and efficient - if not quite a superior premium product. **LxWxH** 4588x2108x1632 **Kerb weight** 1890kg
40 150kW 201 99 8.5 307 0
50 150kW 296 111 6.2 298 0
55 quattro 82kWh 335 112 5.4 316 0

Q4 e-tron Sportback 5dr SUV £52,245-£63,425 **☆☆☆☆**
Fastback variant of Audi's mainstream electric SUV is agile and terrifically refined. **LxWxH** 4588x2108x1614 **Kerb weight** 1895kg
40 150kW 201 99 8.5 318 0
50 quattro 220kWh 296 111 6.2 302 0
55 quattro 82kWh 335 112 5.4 316 0

Q5 5dr SUV £49,300-£59,755 **☆☆☆☆**
Appealing combination of Audi allure, affordable SUV practicality and attractiveness. **LxWxH** 4682x2140x1659 **Kerb weight** 1720kg
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 147 6.4 31.0-33.6 191-206
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 249 148 6.1 28.4 4.9
2.0 40 TDI quattro 187 136 8.1 41.5-44.8 165-179

Q5 Sportback 5dr SUV £51,780-£62,205 **☆☆☆☆**
Reduced accommodation and practicality, but still a refined and solid steer. **LxWxH** 4689x2140x1660 **Kerb weight** 2010-2150kg
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 263 149 6.1 31.7-33.6 192-202
2.0 50 TFSI quattro 297 148 6.1 176.6-188.3 36-38
2.0 40 TDI quattro 201 137 7.6 42.2-44.8 166-176

Q7 5dr SUV £69,000-£108,620 **☆☆☆☆**
Unengaging to drive and light on feel, but the cabin is both huge and classy. **LxWxH** 5053x2212x1741 **Kerb weight** 2060kg
3.0 V6 55 TFSI quattro 338 155 5.9 25.4-27.4 233-253
4.0 S07 quattro 500 155 4.1 29.4-30.1 232
3.0 V6 45 TDI quattro 228 142 7.3 32.1-34.0 217-230
3.0 V6 50 TDI quattro 282 150 6.5 32.1-34.0 217-230

Q8 5dr SUV £76,215-£130,595 **☆☆☆☆**
Striking and effective coupé SUV range-topper leaves us wanting more. **LxWxH** 4986x1968x1705 **Kerb weight** 2145kg
3.0 V6 55 TFSI quattro 335 155 5.9 25.9-26.4 243-248
4.0 S08 quattro 503 155 4.1 31.0-31.7 234-239
4.0 V8 RS Q8 quattro 592 155 3.8 20.2-20.5 314-318
3.0 V6 50 TDI quattro 282 150 6.1 32.8-33.2 222-226

Q8 e-tron 5dr SUV £70,115-£115,215 **☆☆☆☆**
A rounded, uber-luxurious addition to the premium EV niche. **LxWxH** 4901x1935x1629 **Kerb weight** 2490kg
50 quattro 95kWh 335 124 6.8 190 0
55 quattro 114kWh 408 124 5.6 237 0
S08 quattro 114kWh 503 130 4.5 223 0

Q8 e-tron Sportback 5dr SUV £72,615-£117,715 **☆☆☆☆**
Quick and classy EV builds on the solid foundations of its more upright sibling. **LxWxH** 4901x1935x1629 **Kerb weight** 2480kg
50 quattro 95kWh 335 118 6.0 192 0
55 quattro 114kWh 403 124 5.6 242 0
S08 quattro 114kWh 503 130 4.5 224 0

TT 2dr coupé £39,340-£56,555 **☆☆☆☆**
Still serves up plenty of pace, style and usability for the money. It's better to drive, too. **LxWxH** 4191x1832x1355 **Kerb weight** 1365kg
2.0 40 TFSI 194 155 6.6 40.4-41.5 154-158
2.0 45 TFSI 242 155 5.8-5.9 38.7-39.2 162-167
2.0 45 TFSI quattro 242 155 5.2 34.9-35.8 180-184
2.0 50 TFSI quattro TTS 302 155 4.5 34.9-35.3 180-183
2.5 TT RS quattro 395 155 3.7 30.7 208-210

R8 2dr coupé £135,160-£171,265 **☆☆☆☆**
Usable but no less involving or dramatic for it. V10 is deliciously brutal. **LxWxH** 4426x1940x1240 **Kerb weight** 1590kg
5.2 V10 RWD 538 201 3.7 22.2 288
5.2 V10 quattro 567 201 3.4 21.9 294

5.2 V10 Performance q'tro 610 205 3.1 21.7 295-296

BAC

MONO 0dr open £165,125 **☆☆☆☆**
An F-22 Rapier for the road, only significantly better built. **LxWxH** 3952x1830x1110 **Kerb weight** 580kg
2.5 V12 Speed 305 170 2.8 na na

BENTLEY

Continental GT 2dr coupé £209,260-£273,360 **☆☆☆☆**
Refined and improved in every area, making the Conti a superb grand tourer. **LxWxH** 4850x1960x1405 **Kerb weight** 2244kg
4.0 V8 542 198 4.1 23.3 275
6.0 W12 Speed 626 207 3.7 20.2 336

Continental GTC 2dr open £229,760-£300,460 **☆☆☆☆**
Immensely capable and refined open-top cruiser with effortless performance. **LxWxH** 4850x1964x1399 **Kerb weight** 2414kg
4.0 V8 542 198 4.1 23.3 275
6.0 W12 Speed 626 207 3.7 20.2 336

Flying Spur 4dr saloon £201,075-£233,860 **☆☆☆☆**
New from the ground up, with the looks and technology of a class winner. **LxWxH** 5316x1978x1483 **Kerb weight** 2437kg
3.0 V6 Hybrid 536 177 4.3 na na
3.0 V8 Hybrid 548 198 4.1 22.2 288
6.0 W12 632 207 3.8 19.1 337

Bentley 5dr SUV £165,675-£222,460 **☆☆☆☆**
Bentley's first attempt at an SUV remains ahead of most luxury rivals. **LxWxH** 5125x2010x1728 **Kerb weight** 2505kg
3.0 V6 Hybrid 448 158 5.5 63.1 82
4.0 V8 542 171 4.5 21.7 302

BMW

1 Series 5dr hatch £28,740-£41,845 **☆☆☆☆**
May not drive like a traditional BMW but delivers on upmarket hatch values. **LxWxH** 4319x1799x1434 **Kerb weight** 1365kg
118i 138 132 8.5 46.3-47.1 130-134
128ti 161 155 6.1 40.9 157
M135i xDrive 302 155 4.8 38.2 177
116d 114 124 10.3 60.1-62.8 119-123
120d 187 144 7.3 55.4-57.6 129-133

2 Series Coupé 2dr coupé £37,815-£66,375 **☆☆☆☆**
Takes everything positive about its predecessor and refines it further. **LxWxH** 4537x2068x1390 **Kerb weight** 1490kg
220i 184 147 7.5 44.1 145
230i 242 155 5.9 42.8 151
M240i xDrive 374 155 4.3 34.4 186
M2 454 155 4.3 29

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
4 Series Gran Coupé 4dr coupé £45,380-£60,290 ★★★★★					
The same impressive package we love from the 3 Series, with added style. LxWxH 4783x1852x1442 Kerb weight 1825kg					
420i	161	146	7.9	41.5	15.4
M440i xDrive	371	165	4.7	36.3	182

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
I4 4dr saloon £50,755-£72,140 ★★★★★					
Fast, refined and with lots of traditional appeal to convert sceptics. LxWxH 4783x1852x1448 Kerb weight 2215kg					
edrive35	282	116	6.0	28.5	0
edrive40	335	116	5.7	36.2-36.5	0
M50	542	140	3.9	31.8	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
5 Series 4dr saloon £51,010-£79,805 ★★★★★					
The perfect compromise between the comfy E-Class and dynamic XF, and then some. LxWxH 5060x1900x1515 Kerb weight 1605kg					
520i	161	143	7.5	48.7	142-145
530e	295	143	6.8	na	na
550e	489	155	4.3	na	na

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
5 Series Touring 5dr estate £46,675-£54,120 ★★★★★					
The excellent 5 Series made it more practical form. The 520d is still the best. LxWxH 4963x2126x1498 Kerb weight 1630kg					
520i	161	139	8.2	40.4-42.2	152-160
530e	292	140	6.1	156.9-176.8	35-40
530e xDrive	292	140	6.1	134.5-156.9	42-47
540i xDrive	395	155	5.1	34.9-35.8	17.9-18.5
520d	187	147	7.8	52.3-55.4	134-142

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
I5 4dr saloon £74,105-£97,745 ★★★★★					
Munich's 50-year-old icon goes into the EV age with a 493bhp range-topper. LxWxH 5060x2156x1505 Kerb weight 2205kg					
edrive40	na	120	6.0	35.3-37.7	0
M60 xDrive	493	143	3.8	31.5	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
7 Series 4dr saloon £105,510-£121,085 ★★★★★					
New mid-hybrid flagship saloon is better in every way than its predecessor. LxWxH 5391x1950x1544 Kerb weight 1755kg					
750e xDrive	482	155	4.8	53.4	23-27

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
I7 4dr saloon £101,765-£164,320 ★★★★★					
Tech-laden luxury saloon is new flagship with class-leading comfort. LxWxH 5391x1950x1544 Kerb weight 2155kg					
edrive50	455	127	5.5	35.7-37.9	0
edrive60	526	149	4.7	38.6-37.4	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
8 Series 2dr coupé/2dr open £83,905-£140,215 ★★★★★					
Has dynamism to spare but not quite the breadth of ability of the best sporting GTs. LxWxH 4843x1902x1336 Kerb weight 1830kg					
840i	395	155	5.0	33.2-33.6	19.3-19.4
M850i xDrive	523	155	3.7	24.8-25.2	25.5-26.0
M8 Competition	623	155	3.2-3.3	25.2-25.4	28.2-25.4

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
8 Series Gran Coupé 4dr saloon £83,905-£140,215 ★★★★★					
Four-door grand tourer offers greater practicality than its two-door siblings. LxWxH 5074x1932x1401 Kerb weight 1890kg					
840i	395	155	5.2	33.2	19.4
M850i xDrive	523	155	3.9	24.6	26.0
M8 Competition	623	155	3.2	25.4	25.4

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X1 5dr SUV £34,935-£49,690 ★★★★★					
Pick of the premium bunch and very spacious, but expensive and not that small. LxWxH 4500x1845x1642 Kerb weight 1655kg					
sDrive20i	189	138	7.4	40.9	156-157
sDrive20i	189	na	7.7	38.2-38.7	166-167
sDrive23i	201	145	7.4	41.5	15.3
sDrive25e	220	118	6.8	na	na
sDrive30e	321	127	5.6	na	na
sDrive18d	148	126	8.9	55.4	133-134
sDrive23d	194	140	7.4	56.5	131

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
IX1 5dr SUV £46,205-£56,875 ★★★★★					
Not the most engaging to drive, but a seriously comprehensive electric prospect. LxWxH 4500x1845x1642 Kerb weight 2085kg					
edrive20	201	106	8.6	27.5	0
xDrive30	308	112	5.7	27.2	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X2 5dr SUV £40,515-£49,340 ★★★★★					
Proves crossovers aren't always worse than the hatchbacks on which they're based. LxWxH 4554x2104x1590 Kerb weight 1460kg					
sDrive20i	189	141	7.7	40.9-41.5	15.4-15.6
M35i	302	155	4.9	34.4	18.7

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
IX2 5dr SUV £51,615-£57,445 ★★★★★					
IX1-based crossover gets coupé looks and a bigger footprint. Rivals Audi Q4 E-tron. LxWxH 4554x2104x1590 Kerb weight 1960kg					
edrive20	201	106	8.6	28.6	0
xDrive30	308	112	5.6	27.9	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X3 5dr SUV £48,005-£93,660 ★★★★★					
Continues where the last one left off. Dynamically good and more luxurious inside. LxWxH 4708x1891x1676 Kerb weight 1875kg					
xDrive20i	181	134	8.3	35.3-35.8	17.9-18.1
xDrive30e	288	130	6.1	13.4-15	51-54
xDrive M40i	355	155	4.8	31.4	20.4
X3M Competition	503	155	4.1	24.8	26.1
xDrive20d	187	132	8.0	47.1-47.9	15.4-15.6
xDrive30d	286	155	5.7	42.8	17.1

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
IX3 5dr SUV £65,160-£67,165 ★★★★★					
All-electric SUV is brisk, agile, versatile and competitive with its closest rivals. LxWxH 4584x1852x1640 Kerb weight 2270kg					
80kWh	282	112	6.8	28.6	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X4 5dr SUV £54,000-£95,445 ★★★★★					
Downsized X6 is respectable even if not lovable, but the X3 is a better option. LxWxH 4752x1918x1621 Kerb weight 1735kg					
xDrive M40i	336	155	4.9	31.7	20.3
X4M Competition	503	155	4.1	24.8	25.9
xDrive20d	187	131	8.0	47.1-47.9	16.1-16.5
xDrive30d	254	145	5.8	45.6-46.3	15.9-16.3
xDrive M40d	322	155	4.9	43.5	16.9

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X5 5dr SUV £73,585-£128,705 ★★★★★					
More capable, convenient, refined and classy SUV than its more satisfying drive. LxWxH 4922x2004x1745 Kerb weight 210kg					
xDrive50e	482	155	4.8	na	31
xDrive M60i	523	155	4.3	27.3	27.6
X5M Competition	623	155	3.8	22.1	30.4
xDrive30d	261	130	6.8	41.5-42.2	17.5-17.9
xDrive40d	340	152	5.5	38.7-39.2	18.2-19.6

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X6 5dr SUV £77,535-£131,405 ★★★★★					
The world's first off-road coupé, but appearances make it difficult to love. LxWxH 4935x2004x1696 Kerb weight 2065kg					
xDrive40i	338	155	5.5	28.0-28.5	22.5-23.0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
xDrive M60i	523	155	4.3	23.5	27.2
X6M Competition	623	155	3.8	22.4	28.7
xDrive30d	254	143	6.7	42.2-42.8	17.2-17.6
xDrive40d	340	154	5.5	38.7-39.8	18.7-19.1

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
IX 5dr SUV £70,985-£124,605 ★★★★★					
Comfort-conscious yet strong and athletic. A bold flagship for BMW's EV family. LxWxH 4953x1967x1695 Kerb weight 2510kg					
xDrive40i	326	124	6.1	25.6	0
xDrive50i	523	124	4.6	37.5	0
M60	623	155	3.8	34.6	0

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
X7 5dr SUV £88,805-£112,915 ★★★★★					
BMW's largest SUV yet crowns the line-up, but faces strong competition. LxWxH 5151x2000x1805 Kerb weight 2395kg					
xDrive40i	338	155	6.1	28.7	24.9-25.0
xDrive M60i	523	155	4.7	22.1	28.3-29.1
xDrive40d	340	152	6.1	36.2	20.3-20.4

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
XM 5dr SUV £110,730-£174,330 ★★★★★					
M division's second-ever bespoke car lacks real purpose beyond shock and awe. LxWxH 5104x2008x1755 Kerb weight 2785kg					
xDrive	644	155	4.3	188.3	na

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Z4 2dr coupé £45,135-£57,295 ★★★★★					
Better to drive than ever but makes a better open-top cruiser than a true sports car. LxWxH 4324x1864x1304 Kerb weight 1485kg					
sDrive20i	195	155	6.6	38.8-40.4	160-161
sDrive30i	255	155	5.4	38.8	161-162
sDrive M40i	338	155	4.6	35.8	18.1

BMW ALPINA					
B3/D3 4dr saloon/5dr estate £65,000-£80,700 ★★★★★					
Buchi's 3 Series makes a very strong case for being all the car you could ever need. LxWxH 4620x1811x1430 Kerb weight 1655kg					
3.0i Turbo	488	187	3.7	25.9	22.9
3.0i DSS	355	168-170	4.6-4.8	37.2	18.2

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
B4 4dr saloon £67,000-£82,200 ★★★★★					
4 Series shell combines the B3's engine to make a very compelling package. LxWxH 4794x2068x1438 Kerb weight 1890kg					
3.0i Turbo	488	187	3.7	25.9	22.9
3.0i DSS	355	168-170	4.8	na	18.2

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/3rd/100)	Economy (l/100km)	CO ₂ (g/km)
B5/D5 4dr saloon/5dr estate £125,500-£127,900 ★★★★★					
Is it the best alternative to an M5? Yes, at least from a practicality viewpoint. LxWxH 4956x1868x1466 Kerb weight 2015kg					
4.4 V8 Biturbo	599	200-205	3.4-4.6	23.5	26.3

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/combined)	CO ₂ (g/km)
91KWh GT AWD	480	124	4.4	310	0

Mustang 2dr coupé/open **E55,585-E65,585** ★★★★★
American muscle built for the UK, in coupe and convertible forms. What's not to like? **LxWxH** 4784x1916x1381 **Kerb weight** 1653kg
5.0 V8 444 165 4.9 23.9 286
5.0 V8 Mach-1 453 166 4.8 22.8 284

GT 2dr coupé **E420,000** ★★★★★
The GT is back as a race car for the road. Compelling if not perfect. **LxWxH** 4808x1926x1692 **Kerb weight** 1912kg
3.5 V6 EcoBoost 650 216 3.0 na na

Ranger 4dr pick-up **E24,369-E47,889** ★★★★★
Capable pick-up becomes off-road monster in Raptor spec but loses VAT incentives. **LxWxH** 5277x1977x1703 **Kerb weight** 1866kg
2.0 EcoBlue 130 128 106 13.5 42.8 173
2.0 EcoBlue 170 158 109 11.8 40.4-43.5 184-207
2.0 EcoBlue 213 210 106 10.5 30.7 201-233
3.2 Duratorq TDCI 200 197 109 10.6 32.1-36.2 221-231

Transit Nugget 5dr MPV **E76,027-E89,079** ★★★★★
Famed load-lugger is now available with an in-house camper conversion. **LxWxH** 4973x1980x1979 **Kerb weight** 2496kg
2.0 EcoBlue 130 128 na na 39.2 204-260
2.0 EcoBlue 150 148 na na 39.0 204-260
2.0 EcoBlue 170 168 na na 36.7 230-273

Grand Tourneo Connect 5dr MPV **E91,434-E93,824** ★★★★★
Van-derived seven-seater is first product of tie-up between Ford and Volkswagen. **LxWxH** 4973x1980x1979 **Kerb weight** 2496kg
1.5 EcoBoost 120 116 12.0 52.9 140

GENESIS					
GV60 5dr SUV E54,105-E67,705 ★★★★★ Nascent brand's first EV arrives as a luxurious, efficient SUV, lacks sharpness. LxWxH 4515x1890x1580 Kerb weight 2098kg					
77.4kWh Premium	225	115	7.6	323	0
77.4kWh Sport	313	124	5.5	292	0
77.4kWh Sport Plus	483	146	4.0	289	0

GT0 4dr saloon **E42,870** ★★★★★
Likeable left-field choice has style but struggles to threaten the establishment. **LxWxH** 4885x1850x1400 **Kerb weight** 1675kg
2.0 T 245 241 149 6.1 35.4 181

GT0 Shooting Brake 5dr estate **E42,870** ★★★★★
Best-looking Genesis yet is also the best to drive, despite slightly flat-four-pot engines. **LxWxH** 4885x1850x1400 **Kerb weight** 1717kg
2.0 T 245 245 146 6.4 32.5-34.0 193-204

GV70 5dr SUV **E42,870-E65,105** ★★★★★
Willfully different from the posh SUV competition and none the wiser for it. **LxWxH** 4715x1910x1630 **Kerb weight** 2010kg
2.5T 301 149 6.1 29.7 216
2.2D 207 133 7.9 40.0 185
77.4kWh 483 146 4.2 283 0

680 4dr saloon **E48,870-E69,805** ★★★★★
A luxury car for those who've had their fill of the typical premium options. **LxWxH** 4995x1925x1465 **Kerb weight** 1830kg
2.5T 301 155 6.0 31.0 205
82.2kWh 364 139 4.9 32.3 0

GV80 5dr SUV **E60,525-E75,425** ★★★★★
Rich, spacious and comfortable but not a world-class luxury car just yet. **LxWxH** 4945x1975x1715 **Kerb weight** 2145kg
2.5T 301 147 6.9 27.4-27.7 240
3.0D 268 143 6.9 32 231

GORDON MURRAY AUTOMOTIVE					
T33 2dr coupé £1,400,000					
Smaller, even more daily-usable sibling of the T50 with the same glorious engine. LxWxH na Kerb weight 1030kg					
4.0 V12	607	na	na	na	na

T50 2dr coupé £2,800,000					
Ultra-lightweight, V12-powered spiritual successor to legendary McLaren F1. LxWxH 4352x1850x1164 Kerb weight 986kg					
4.0 V12	650	na	na	na	na

GWM					
Ora 03 5dr hatch £31,995 ★★★★★					
Decent value and funky looks but a mediocre experience overall. LxWxH 4235x1825x1603 Kerb weight 1540kg					
126kWh 84kWh	169	99	8.3	193	0

HONDA					
E 5dr hatch £37,395 ★★★★★					
Eminently likeable, with good dynamics but a limited range and ambitious price. LxWxH 3894x1752x1512 Kerb weight 1620kg					
36kWh Advance	154	90	8.3	136	0

Jazz 5dr hatch **E26,395-E28,695** ★★★★★
Not the most compact or vivacious but has decent handling and is cleverly packaged. **LxWxH** 4044x1694x1526 **Kerb weight** 1247kg
1.5 i-MMD 109 108 9.4-9.9 62.8 102-110

Civic 5dr hatch **£34,995-E49,995** ★★★★★
A fresh look while remaining practical, refined and upmarket. Lacks some dynamism. **LxWxH** 4551x1799x1408 **Kerb weight** 1533kg
2.0 eHEV 181 112 7.9 56.4 113
2.0 VTEC Turbo Type R 316 169 5.8 33.2 191-193

HR-V 5dr SUV **£30,695-E36,295** ★★★★★
Fine ergonomics and big on superficial charm, but ultimately leaves us cold. **LxWxH** 4340x1790x1582 **Kerb weight** 1380kg
1.5 eHEV 131 106 10.7 52.3 122

ZR-V 5dr SUV **£39,945-E42,895** ★★★★★
Honda's answer to the Nissan Qashqai isn't as good as the Civic on which it is based. **LxWxH** 4568x1840x1620 **Kerb weight** 1380kg
2.0 eHEV 141 108 7.8 49.6 130-132

e:Ny1 5dr SUV **£44,995-E47,195** ★★★★★
Charming in some ways, but too little substance to justify the price. **LxWxH** 4387x1866x1584 **Kerb weight** 1730kg
69kWh 201 229 7.6 256 0

CR-V 5dr SUV **£45,895-E53,995** ★★★★★
Tardis-like SUV stalwart has lots of space for five and a big boot. **LxWxH** 4706x1942x1684 **Kerb weight** 1545kg
2.0 i-MMD hybrid 181 112 8.6-9.2 47.4 151-163

HYUNDAI					
I10 5dr hatch £15,920-E18,520 ★★★★★					
The smallest Hyundai matures and regains leadership of the city car class. LxWxH 3670x1680x1480 Kerb weight 933kg					
1.0 MPI	67	97	14.6	53.3	114-120
1.0 T-GDI	99	116	10.2	52.3	123
1.2 MPI	84	106	12.6	51.4	124

I20 5dr hatch **E20,770-E26,530** ★★★★★
Steady gains for a versatile runabout that, N version aside, still lacks personality. **LxWxH** 4035x1734x1474 **Kerb weight** 980kg
1.0 T-GDI 100 98 117 10.4 47.9-49.6 120
1.0 T-GDI 48V MHD 100 98 117 10.4 54.3-55.4 115-118
1.0 T-GDI 48V MHD 120 116 116 10.2 53.3 120
1.6 T-GDI N 201 142 6.7 40.4 158

I30 5dr hatch **E22,700-E35,110** ★★★★★
As good as we've come to expect from Hyundai, but not one inch better. **LxWxH** 4340x1795x1455 **Kerb weight** 1194kg
1.0 T-GDI 120 116 118 11.1 45.6 121-122
1.5 T-GDI 157 130 8.6 42.2-46.3 142
2.0 T-GDI 275 N Performance 272 155 6.1 34.0 188

I30 Fastback 4dr saloon **E25,960-E34,845** ★★★★★
Combines good looks with sensible, practicalities and dynamic charm. **LxWxH** 4455x1795x1425 **Kerb weight** 1287kg
1.5 T-GDI 157 130 8.6 49.6-52.3 141-151
2.0 T-GDI 275 N Performance 272 155 6.1 34.0 188

I30 Tourer 5dr estate **E23,450-E26,400** ★★★★★
Another solid car, good value and practical but lacks excitement. **LxWxH** 4565x1795x1465 **Kerb weight** 1245kg
1.0 T-GDI 120 118 117 11.4 47.9-49.6 130-139

Bayon 5dr SUV **E21,570-E25,820** ★★★★★
Much better at meeting your motoring needs than kindling your affections. **LxWxH** 4180x1715x1500 **Kerb weight** 1233kg
1.0 T-GDI 48V MHEV 98 113 10.7 53.3 120-121
1.0 T-GDI 48V MHEV 120 116 116 10.4 53.3 121

Kona 5dr SUV **E25,725-E43,095** ★★★★★
Hyundai's first crossover is the perfect blend of practicality, value and style. **LxWxH** 4350x1825x1550 **Kerb weight** 1233kg
1.0 T-GDI 120 118 112 12.0 44.1-44.8 142-147
1.6 GDI Hybrid 134 119 10.2 52.3 114-123
2.0 T-GDI N 278 149 5.5 32.8 194
Electric 39kWh 134 96 9.6 180 0
Electric 64kWh 201 104 7.6 280 0

Ioniq 5 5dr SUV **£43,445-E65,000** ★★★★★
Won't upend the electric SUV segment, but a compelling option in a developing class. **LxWxH** 4635x1890x1605 **Kerb weight** 1145kg
58kWh 164 115 8.5 238 0
77kWh 224 116 7.4 238-315 0
77kWh Premium 320 116 5.1 282 0
84kWh N 641 160 3.4 257 0

Ioniq 6 4dr saloon **E47,040-E55,290** ★★★★★
Distinctive saloon with great practicality and road manners and a well-equipped cabin. **LxWxH** 4855x1880x1495 **Kerb weight** na
77kWh 224 116 7.3 238-315 0
77kWh Premium 320 116 5.1 282 0

Tucson 5dr SUV **£31,535-E45,630** ★★★★★
Shows Hyundai can do both style and substance. A family SUV that's easy to like. **LxWxH** 4500x1865x1653 **Kerb weight** 1612kg
1.6 T-GDI 150 148 117 10.3 40.9 156
1.6 T-GDI 48V MHEV 150 148 117 9.6 43.5 144-151
1.6 T-GDI 48V MHEV 180 178 125 9.0 39.8 162
1.6 T-GDI Hybrid 228 120 8.0 50.4 127
1.6 T-GDI Plug-in hybrid 263 119 8.6 201.8 31

Santa Fe 5dr SUV **£43,240-E51,680** ★★★★★
Superficial charm and an expansive cabin but not much polish to the powertrain. **LxWxH** 4785x1900x1710 **Kerb weight** 2225kg
1.6 T-GDI Hybrid 228 116 8.9-9.1 42.2 145-168
1.6 T-GDI Plug-in hybrid 262 116 8.8 173.7 37
2.2 CRDI 199 127 9.2 na 177-178

NEXO 5dr SUV **£69,495** ★★★★★
Impressive effort that heads in the right direction for fuel cell cars. **LxWxH** 4670x2060x1640 **Kerb weight** 1814kg
95kWh Fuel Cell 161 130 9.6 42.0mpkg 0

INEOS					
Grenadier 5dr SUV £79,140 ★★★★★					
Has bags of charm on the road and is virtually unbeatable off it. LxWxH 4896x1930x2036 Kerb weight 2669kg					
3.0T 6dr Auto	282	99	8.6	21.4	299
3.0TD 6dr Auto	245	99	9.9	27.4	268

XE 4dr saloon **£33,230-E43,500** ★★★★★
Tops the pile thanks to outstanding driver appeal. Poised and engaging but refined. **LxWxH** 4678x1850x1416 **Kerb weight** 1450kg
2.0 P300 AWD 296 155 5.9 30.8-32.4 197-207
2.0 P250 246 150 6.7 52.8-56.5 131-140
2.0 D200 198 146 7.3 54.0-57.7 128-137

XF 4dr saloon **£35,660-E48,145** ★★★★★
Outstandingly broad-batted dynamically, plus a pleasant cabin. **LxWxH** 4954x1880x1457 **Kerb weight** 1545kg
2.0 P250 246 155 6.9 33.0-34.9 183-193
2.0 P300 AWD 296 155 6.1 31.2-32.8 194-204
2.0 D200 198 146 7.6 52.8-56.5 131-140
2.0 D200 AWD 198 143 7.8 48.9-51.3 128-137

XF Sportbrake 5dr estate **E40,810-E49,420** ★★★★★
Superb XF is now available in the more practical Sportbrake form. It's a win-win. **LxWxH** 4955x1880x1494 **Kerb weight** 1660kg
2.0 P250 246 150 7.1 32.3-37 189-199
2.0 P300 AWD 296 155 6.2 29.9-31.2 204-213
2.0 D200 198 143 7.8 50.7-53.7 138-146
2.0 D200 AWD 198 143 8.0 47.0-49.1 151-157

F-Type 2dr coupé **£58,420-E134,925** ★★★★★
A full-blooded assault on Porsche's backyard, with noise, power and beauty. **LxWxH** 4470x1923x1311 **Kerb weight** 1525kg
2.0 P300 296 155 5.7 29.9 215
5.0 P450 444 177 4.6 26.0-26.8 238-246
5.0 P575 518 186 3.7 26.4 243

F-Type Convertible 2dr open **£67,970-E138,390** ★★★★★
Costs serious money, but you get a serious car with a likeable wild side. **LxWxH** 4482x1923x1308 **Kerb weight** 1545kg
2.0 P300 296 155 5.7 29.6 217

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/combined)	CO ₂ (g/km)
5.0 P450	444	177	4.6	26.0-26.6	241-247
5.0 P575	518	186	3.7	26.4	243

E-Pace 5dr SUV **£43,185-E54,260** ★★★★★
Misses the mark for kern drivers, but is still a desirable SUV nevertheless. **LxWxH** 4411x1984x1649 **Kerb weight** 1757kg
1.5 P300e 305 134 6.5 143.1 44
2.0 D200 AWD 201 131 8.4 42.9-43.0 170-173

F-Pace 5dr SUV **£48,770-E87,090** ★★★★★
Creditable first SUV effort is as refined and dynamic as a Jaguar should be. **LxWxH** 4731x2071x1666 **Kerb weight** 1690kg
2.0 P250 AWD 246 135 7.3 30.4 214-220
3.0 P400 AWD 394 155 5.4 28.8 222-230
2.0 P400e 398 149 5.3 112.5 51-55
5.0 V8 SVR 550 AWD 548 178 4.0 23.1 275
2.0 D165 AWD 160 121 9.9 45.4 165-171
2.0 D200 AWD 197 130 8.0 45.4 165-171
3.0 D300 AWD 296 143 6.4 38.1 195-202
5.0 V8 SVR 542 178 4.0 23.1 275

I-Pace 5dr SUV **£69,995-E79,995** ★★★★★
Fast, refined and the first of its kind from a European manufacturer. **LxWxH** 4682x1895x1558 **Kerb weight** 2133kg
EV400 398 124 4.8 277-287 0

JEEP					
Avenger 5dr/4dr SUV £34,800-E38,700 ★★★★★					
B-segment SUV has sights set on UK success with good looks and well-controlled drive. LxWxH 4084x1776x1534 Kerb weight 1601kg					
54kWh	153	93	9.6	248	0

Avenger e-Hybrid 5dr/4dr SUV **£23,600-E27,600** ★★★★★
B-segment SUV has sights set on UK success with good looks and well-controlled drive. **LxWxH** 4084x1776x1534 **Kerb weight** 1280kg
1.2 98 116 10.6 51.4 124

Compass 5dr SUV **£33,855-E44,455** ★★★★★
Wants to be a catch-all crossover but is beaten by more road-focused rivals. **LxWxH** 4394x2033x1629 **Kerb weight** 1430kg
1.5 48V MHEV 128 120 10.0 47.1-50.4 133-140
1.3 4xe PHEV 238 124 7.3 141-156 44-47

Renegade 5dr SUV **£30,030-E38,500** ★★★★★
Middling compact crossover with chunky looks but no obvious charm. **LxWxH** 4236x1805x1667 **Kerb weight** 1346kg
1.3 6SE 14 150 148 122 9.4 38.2-39.8 151
1.3 Turbo 4xe 188 111 7.5 122.8-134.5 42-49
1.3 Turbo 4xe Trailhawk 238 124 7.1 117.7-128.4 51-53

Wrangler 2dr/4dr SUV **£60,785-E62,785** ★★★★★
Heavy duty off-roader goes anywhere but lacks on-road manners. **LxWxH** 4334x1873x1840 **Kerb weight** 1827kg
2.0 GME 265 97-110 7.3-7.6 25.4-26.4 248-254

Grand Cherokee 5dr SUV **£85,605** ★★★★★
Flagship is characterful but poor efficiency and high price make it hard to justify. **LxWxH** 4915x1968x1798 **Kerb weight** 2434kg
2.0 Turbo 4xe PHEV 375 132 6.0 108.7 60

KGM					
Tivoli 5dr SUV £20,245-E22,795 ★★★★★					
Small SUV isn't up with the best in class but is worth considering as a budget option. LxWxH 4225x1810x1690 Kerb weight 1369kg					
1.5P	163	112	12.0	na	158-175

Korando 5dr SUV **£25,540-E39,995** ★★★★★
Competitive towing capabilities and generous kit, but still lacks dynamics. **LxWxH** 4450x1870x1629 **Kerb weight** 1610kg
1.5 GDI Turbo 160 119 12.0 37.2 172
e-Motion 140kWh 61.5kWh 187 97 9.0 294 0</

	Power (max)	Top speed (max)	0-60 (2nd/10th)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Discovery 5dr SUV £60,540-£77,765 ★★★★★					
The country bumpkin given elocution lessons without losing its rugged capabilities. LxWxH 495x207x1888 Kerb weight 2150kg					
3.0 P360	355	130	6.5	26.0/26.4	241/245
3.0 D250	246	120	8.1	33.4/33.7	220/222
3.0 D300	296	130	6.8	33.2/33.5	221/223

LEXUS					
LBX 4dr SUV £29,995-£40,545 ★★★★★					
Hybrid crossover is Lexus's cheapest car and uses the Toyota Yaris Cross platform. LxWxH 4190x1825x1550 Kerb weight 1260-1350kg					
1.5	134	106	9.2	61.4/62.7	102/108

ES 4dr saloon £47,115-£56,365 ★★★★★					
Gatecrashes the German-crafted saloon market in a way the GS could never manage. LxWxH 4975x1865x1445 Kerb weight 1680kg					
2.5 VVT-1E3 300h	218	112	8.9	53.2	119

LS 4dr saloon £101,720-£120,575 ★★★★★					
Luxury saloon gets more tech and opulence but is let down by its hybrid powertrain. LxWxH 5235x1900x1460 Kerb weight 2270kg					
3.5 V6 VVT-1L5 500h	348	165	5.4	30.7/36.6	175/208

RC F 2dr coupé £76,560-£93,810 ★★★★★					
An also-ran, but the V8 RC F packs plenty of character and handles well enough. LxWxH 4699x1840x1395 Kerb weight 2270kg					
5.0 V8	470	168	4.5	23.9	268

LC 2dr coupé/open £98,950-£116,000 ★★★★★					
Superb-looking coupé shows flickers of what made the LFA great. LxWxH 4770x1920x1345 Kerb weight 1935kg					
5.0 V8 LC 500	457	168	4.7	24.3	262
3.5 V6 LC 500h	394	155	5.0	34.8	184

UX 5dr SUV £34,740-£47,495 ★★★★★					
Refreshingly different premium SUV is a credible, if not class-leading, alternative. LxWxH 4495x1840x1520 Kerb weight 1620kg					
2.0 UX 250h	160	110	8.5	53.2	120/136
7X.8kWh UX 300e	201	100	7.5	195	0

NX 5dr SUV £44,430-£65,295 ★★★★★					
PHEV option and welcome cabin overhaul sustain the allure of the firm's best-seller. LxWxH 4660x1865x1640 Kerb weight 1900kg					
2.5 NX 450h+ PHEV	306	124	6.3	256-313	20-26

RX 5dr SUV £62,615-£81,620 ★★★★★					
Low flexibility, but hybrid powertrain makes a degree of economic sense. LxWxH 4890x1895x1690 Kerb weight 2100kg					
2.5 RX 350h	246	124	7.9	44.8	143
2.5 RX 450h+	308	112	6.5	na	na
3.5 RX 500h	365	130	6.2	35.3	182

RZ 5dr SUV £64,500-£74,000 ★★★★★					
Brand's entry into the premium electric SUV club is a well-executed post Toyota bZ4X. LxWxH 4805x1895x1635 Kerb weight 2055kg					
450e	309	99	5.6	245	0

LM 5dr SUV £89,995-£112,995 ★★★★★					
Lexus re-enters the full-blown luxury sphere with an unconventional BMW 7 rival. LxWxH 4495x1840x1520 Kerb weight 1620kg					
2.5 350h	246	116	9.1	39.2	163

LOTUS					
Emira 2dr coupé £89,755 ★★★★★					
A superb sports car that's also much more habitable than any previous Lotus. LxWxH 4413x1895x1226 Kerb weight 1405kg					
3.5 V6 400	395	180	4.3	na	na

Eletre 5dr SUV £90,850-£121,305 ★★★★★					
Urus-sized, tech-rich, high-performance SUV marks firm's shift to high-tech EV maker. LxWxH 5103x2019x1636 Kerb weight 2520kg					
112kWh	603	160	4.5	37.3	0
112kWh R	905	165	2.9	30.4	0

MASERATI					
Ghibli 4dr saloon £75,945-£169,625 ★★★★★					
Maser's compact exec has the allure but lacks power and is poorly finished in places. LxWxH 4971x1945x1461 Kerb weight 1810kg					
2.0 Hybrid	325	158	5.7	33.2	192
3.0 V6	345	166	5.5	25.2	254
3.0 V6 S	424	178	4.9	25.0	254
3.8 V8	572	203	4.3	23.0	279
3.8 V8 Ultima	572	207	3.9	22.2	286

Quattroporte 4dr saloon £113,970-£142,745 ★★★★★					
Now a full-sized executive limo, with some added flair. Off the pace in most key areas. LxWxH 5262x1948x1481 Kerb weight 1860kg					
3.0 V6 S	424	179	5.0	24.8	257
3.8 V8	572	203	4.5	23.2	277

Grecale 5dr SUV £63,970-£102,480 ★★★★★					
For all its promise and character, it needs work if it's to trouble the Porsche Macan. LxWxH 4846x1948x1660 Kerb weight 2027kg					
48V MHEV 300 Auto	296	149	5.6	32.5	198
48V MHEV 330 Auto	325	149	5.3	32.1	199
V6 Trofeo Auto	523	177	3.8	25.2	254
97kWh Folgore	550	137	4.1	31.1	0

Levante 5dr SUV £92,280-£169,625 ★★★★★					
Italian flair and good looks in abundance, but diesel not as sonorous as petrols. LxWxH 5005x1981x1693 Kerb weight 2109kg					
3.0 V6	339	156	6.0	22.6	283
3.0 V6 S	424	164	5.2	22.4	286
3.8 V8 Trofeo	572	186	4.1	17.8	359

Granturismo 5dr coupé £133,000-£163,470 ★★★★★					
Rejuvenated luxury coupé packs plenty of Latin style, charm and personality. LxWxH 4359x1957x1353 Kerb weight 1795kg					
3.0 V6 Modena	483	188	3.9	na	230
3.0 V6 Trofeo	542	199	3.5	na	230

MC20 2dr coupé/open £207,125-£232,125 ★★★★★					
A triumphant return to the supercar ranks: fast and thrilling, yet approachable. LxWxH 4669x1965x1224 Kerb weight 1475kg					
3.0 V6	621	203	2.9	24.6	262

MAXUS					
Mifa 9 5dr MPV £65,141-£77,537 ★★★★★					
Seven-seat electric people carrier is cheaper than rivals - but in many ways fits it. LxWxH 5270x2000x1840 Kerb weight 2535kg					
90kWh	241	112	9.9	267	0

MAZDA					
2 5dr hatch £18,615-£23,835 ★★★★★					
Grown up, well made and drives with charm and vigour, engines aren't brilliant. LxWxH 4070x1695x1515 Kerb weight 1141kg					
1.5 Skyactiv-G 75	74	106	11.3	49.6	121
1.5 Skyactiv-G	88	114	9.8	60.1	107
1.5 e-Skyactiv-G 115	113	124	9.1	56.5	113

2 Hybrid 5dr hatch £24,130-£29,230 ★★★★★					
Efficient and economical in isolation, but it's not really a Mazda 2. LxWxH 3940x1745x1500 Kerb weight 1125kg					
1.5 Hybrid	114	109	9.7	74.3	87

3 5dr hatch/saloon £23,945-£31,645 ★★★★★					
Pleasing dynamism teamed with good practicality and punchy diesel engines. LxWxH 4460x1795x1435 Kerb weight 1411kg					
2.0 e-Skyactiv-X 186	183	134	8.1	53.3	118-121

CX-30 5dr SUV £25,350-£35,750 ★★★★★					
Dynamic qualities, a classy interior and a handsome look set it apart from rivals. LxWxH 4395x1795x1550 Kerb weight 1334kg					
2.0 e-Skyactiv-G	120	116	10.6	47.9	134
2.0 e-Skyactiv-X 186	183	127	8.3-8.8	50.4	127

CX-5 5dr SUV £31,250-£39,050 ★★★★★					
Classy and affordable all-electric crossover marred only by its limited range. LxWxH 4395x1795x1550 Kerb weight 1645kg					
35.5kWh	143	87	9.7	124	0
17.8kWh R-EV	127	87	9.1	263	21

6 TOURER 5dr estate £27,340-£35,080 ★★★★★					
Passat estate rival gets rakish styling and lightweight, low-emissions tech. LxWxH 4405x1840x1475 Kerb weight 1530kg					
2.0 e-Skyactiv-G	143	128	10.0	39.0-42.0	134
2.0 e-Skyactiv-G	161	133	9.4	39.0-42.0	127
2.5 e-Skyactiv-G	190	139	8.1	40.4-42.2	172

CX-5 5dr SUV £31,045-£40,735 ★★★★★					
Offers powerful diesel engines and strong performance, plus a welcoming interior. LxWxH 4550x1840x1675 Kerb weight 1598kg					
2.0 165	162	125	10.3	36.7	152-154
2.5 194	191	121	9.2	35.3	182
2.2d 184	181	129	9.3	42.8	175

CX-60 5dr SUV £45,420-£55,055 ★★★★★					
Feels upmarket inside and combines tidy handling with easy pace. LxWxH 4745x1890x1675 Kerb weight 1995kg					
2.5 PHEV 4WD Auto	323	124	5.8	188.3	33
3.0d	250	136	7.4	54.3	137

MX-5 2dr open £28,000-£34,800 ★★★★★					
Brilliantly packaged, priced and perfectly poised but more vibrant than the original. LxWxH 3915x1735x1225 Kerb weight 1050kg					
1.5 Skyactiv-G 132	129	127	8.3	44.1	142
2.0 Skyactiv-G 184	181	136	6.5	40.4	153

MX-5 RF 2dr open £29,900-£37,000 ★★★★★					
Remains perfectly poised and vibrant, even with a folding metal roof. LxWxH 3915x1735x1230 Kerb weight 1090kg					
1.5 Skyactiv-G 132	129	126	8.6	44.1	142
2.0 Skyactiv-G 184	181	124-126	7.9	37.7-40.4	155

MCLAREN					
Artura 2dr coupé/open £190,715 ★★★★★					
A technical marvel that wears its hybrid tech lightly. LxWxH 4539x1976x1193 Kerb weight 1498kg					
3.0 V6 PHEV	671	205	3.0	61.5	104

GT5 2dr coupé £181,920 ★★★★★					
Working's most user-friendly car to date is still a McLaren first and foremost. LxWxH 4683x2095x1213 Kerb weight 1339kg					
4.0 V8	612	203	3.2	23.7	270

750S 2dr coupé/open £247,420-£271,820 ★★★★★					
Swooping GT offers sensational performance and picks up where the 720S left off. LxWxH 4569x2050x1196 Kerb weight 1389kg					
4.0 V8	740	206	2.8	23.2	276

765LT 2dr coupé/open £282,420-£313,160 ★★★★★					
Longtail treatment to 720S combines sharp handling poise with startling pace. LxWxH 4600x2054x1159 Kerb weight 1339kg					
4.0 V8	755	205	2.8	23.7	270

MERCEDES-BENZ					
A-Class 5dr hatch £31,905-£63,285 ★★★★★					
A little bit of luxury in a desirable, hatchback-sized package. LxWxH 4419x1796x1440 Kerb weight 1445kg					
1.3 A180	134	134	8.9	47.9	134-138
1.3 A200					

	Power (bhp)	Top speed (mph)	0-60 (2.0/2.0h)	Economy (mpg/combined)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Cyberster 2dr open E54,995-E59,995					
Deliveries of MG's EV-powered halo drop-top are set to begin in August. LxWxH 4574x1876x1664 Kerb weight 1850kg					
77kWh Trophy	335	na	5.0	316	0
77kWh GT	496	na	3.2	276	0

MINI

3dr Hatch 3dr hatch E23,135-E31,035

We have yet to test this latest edition of Britain's iconic hatchback. **LxWxH** 3876x1744x1432 **Kerb weight** 1190kg

1.5	163	140	7.7	479	133
2.0	201	150	6.6	45.6	140

Cooper Electric 3dr hatch E30,000-E38,000 ★★★★★

Mini's fourth-gen supermini icon reaches for better looks, range and the latest tech. **LxWxH** 3858x1756x1460 **Kerb weight** 1440kg

41kWh	160	99	7.3	184	0
54kWh	215	106	6.7	242	0

Countryman 5dr hatch E29,335-E41,520 ★★★★★

Bigger than before, but still more fun than useful. Still not all that pretty, either. **LxWxH** 4444x2063x1661 **Kerb weight** 1535kg

1.5 Cooper	136	124	8.3	44.8	143
2.0 Cooper S	192	140	7.1	42.4-42.8	151-152
2.0 John Cooper Works All4	302	155	5.1	37.2	174

Countryman E/SE 5dr hatch E42,080-E50,880 ★★★★★

Interior and sense of fun help to overcome average performance and range. **LxWxH** 4444x2063x1661 **Kerb weight** 2000kg

66kWh	201	105	8.6	274	0
66kWh All4	309	111	5.8	269	0

MORGAN

Super 3 2dr open E41,995 ★★★★★

Puts a smile on your face with an experience that takes you away from the everyday. **LxWxH** 3561x1650x1132 **Kerb weight** 635kg

1.5	118	130	7.0	49.2	131
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Pius Four 2dr open E63,895 ★★★★★

Morgan's four-cylinder lifeblood model gets 21st-century underpinnings. **LxWxH** 3830x1500x1250 **Kerb weight** 1013kg

2.0	255	149	5.1	38.8	165
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Plus Six 2dr open E83,090 ★★★★★

Feels like progress in lots of ways, but not yet the driver's car it might be. **LxWxH** 3890x1756x1220 **Kerb weight** 1075kg

3.0	335	162	4.2	38.2	180
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NISSAN

Leaf 5dr hatch E28,495-E31,955 ★★★★★

Better looks, better value and better range from this second-gen electric hatch. **LxWxH** 4490x1788x1530 **Kerb weight** 1955kg

93kWh	147	90	7.9	168	0
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Juke 5dr hatch E20,985-E31,110 ★★★★★

Second-generation crossover is impressive in some respects, but outstanding in few. **LxWxH** 4135x1765x1655 **Kerb weight** 1250kg

1.0 Die-T114	114	112	10.7	47.9	134-139
1.6 Hybrid	139	103	10.1	58.2	112-113

Qashqai 5dr SUV E27,120-E42,050 ★★★★★

Ticks the important family car boxes, but ICE powertrain lacks refinement. **LxWxH** 4425x2084x1625 **Kerb weight** 1435kg

1.3 Die-T140	138	122	10.2	44.3	143-144
1.3 Die-T158	156	123	9.9	41.5-44.4	145
1.5 E-power	187	105	7.9	54.3	117-119

Ariya 5dr SUV E39,645-E59,025 ★★★★★

Nissan's second electric car arrives with a slick powertrain but an unsettled ride. **LxWxH** 4595x1850x1660 **Kerb weight** 2093kg

63kWh	220	100	7.5	223-247	0
87kWh	245	100	7.6	310-328	0
87kWh e-4orce	310	124	5.7	285	0

X-Trail 5dr SUV E32,890-E47,980 ★★★★★

Shortfalls on refinement and drivability, plus a slight lack of the original's character. **LxWxH** 4640x1830x1725 **Kerb weight** 1650kg

1.5 MHEV	159	124	9.6	37.7-39.8	161-169
1.5 E-power	200	105	8.0	46.3-48.7	132-141
1.5 E-power 213	210	111	7.0	42.8-54.3	143-150

M60 2dr coupé E248,000-E287,600 ★★★★★

Deliciously fast, natural and involving, a bit ergonomically flawed. **LxWxH** 4360x1910x1120 **Kerb weight** 1198kg

4.4 V8	662	225	3.0	16.8	333
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OMODA

5dr SUV E25,200-E27,000

Chinese brand's first UK car rivals Nissan Ariya and Toyota b24X. **LxWxH** 4400x1830x1588 **Kerb weight** 1535kg

1.6 T-GDI	185	128	7.8	37.7	170
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5 (EV) 5dr SUV E34,395-E35,595

Reasonable range, good value and decent dynamics make this a real threat to MG. **LxWxH** 4400x1830x1588 **Kerb weight** 1710kg

61kWh	201	107	7.6	257	0
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PEUGEOT

208 3dr/5dr hatch E20,400-E36,250 ★★★★★

A big improvement for Peugeot, if not for the supermini class. **LxWxH** 4055x1745x1430 **Kerb weight** 1033kg

1.2 PureTech 75	72	106	14.9	58.9	124
1.2 PureTech 100	98	117	9.9	53.0	124-126
1.2 PureTech 130	128	129	8.7	51.9	128
50kWh e-208 51kWh e-208	136	93	8.1	217	0
51kWh e-208	153	93	8.2	232	0

308 5dr hatch E28,050-E42,170 ★★★★★

Brings electrification and design flair but retains the old model's dynamic character. **LxWxH** 4365x1850x1441 **Kerb weight** 1288kg

1.2 PureTech 130	131	130	9.7	52.1	122
1.6 Hybrid	180	140	7.6	213-281	23-30
1.6 Hybrid 225	225	146	8.0	213-266	24-30
1.5 BlueHDi 130	129	129	10.6	65.4	113-124
54kWh e-308	153	105	9.8	250	0

308 SW 5dr estate E29,250-E43,450 ★★★★★

Blends character and practicality, without compromising on the hatchback's style. **LxWxH** 4635x2062x1442 **Kerb weight** 1345kg

1.2 PureTech 130	131	130	9.9	52.1	122
1.6 Hybrid	180	139	7.7	213-281	25-30
1.6 Hybrid 225	225	146	7.6	213-266	26-30
1.5 BlueHDi 130	129	129	10.6	65.4	113-124
54kWh e-308	153	105	9.8	250	0

	Power (bhp)	Top speed (mph)	0-60 (2.0/2.0h)	Economy (mpg/combined)	CO ₂ (g/km)
408 5dr hatch E31,775-E44,720					
Comfortable, spacious, stylish companion targets fleet buyers and hits the bulls-eye. LxWxH 4687x1859x1478 Kerb weight 1467kg					
1.2 PureTech 130	131	130	na	137	
1.6 Hybrid	160	140	na	na	154
1.6 Hybrid 225	222	145	7.8	211.3-269.5	28

508 4dr saloon E34,170-E53,975 ★★★★★

Stylish and likeable but lacking the polish of more premium rivals. **LxWxH** 4750x1859x1430 **Kerb weight** 1535kg

1.2 PureTech 130	131	127	8.1	49.1	129
1.6 Hybrid	223	155	8.3	166.0-235.0	27-38
1.6 Hybrid PSE	355	155	5.2	141.2	42
1.5 BlueHDi 130	126	126	10.0	62.0	124

508 SW 5dr estate E35,370-E55,175 ★★★★★

Bodystyle takes the edge off the 508's style yet doesn't fully address practicality. **LxWxH** 4776x1859x1420 **Kerb weight** 1430kg

1.2 PureTech 130	131	127	8.3	49.1	129
1.6 Hybrid	223	155	8.3	166.0-235.0	27-38
1.6 Hybrid PSE	355	155	5.2	141.2	42
1.5 BlueHDi 130	126	129	10.1	62.0	127

2008 5dr SUV E24,170-E40,700 ★★★★★

Compact crossover has most rivals licked, but class is still waiting for a game-changer. **LxWxH** 4300x1770x1650 **Kerb weight** 1205kg

1.2 PureTech 100	98	115	10.9	52.0	125-127
1.2 PureTech 130	128	122	8.9	50.6	132
50kWh e-2008	138	93	8.5	191-206	0

3008 5dr SUV E34,650-E49,650 ★★★★★

Cleverly packaged Peugeot offers just enough SUV DNA to make the difference. **LxWxH** 4447x1844x1620 **Kerb weight** 1250kg

1.2 Hybrid	167	105	10.5	52.5	146-149
1.6 Hybrid e-3008	210	105	8.7	326	0

5008 5dr SUV E36,795-E42,835 ★★★★★

Less MPV, more SUV, and shares its siblings' good looks. Competent to drive. **LxWxH** 4641x1844x1640 **Kerb weight** 1511kg

1.2 PureTech 130	126	117	10.4-10.9	46.0	160-163
1.6 PureTech 100	178	135	8.3	39.6	168-170
1.5 BlueHDi 130	129	119	10.7	57.3	139-142

PININFARINA

Battista 2dr coupé E2,000,000 ★★★★★

Considering its ridiculous power, that it's such a joy to drive is a marvel in itself. **LxWxH** na **Kerb weight** 2200kg

1417kWh 120kWh	1900	217	2.0	311	0
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POLESTAR

2 5dr hatch E44,950-E52,950 ★★★★★

High-rise saloon takes the EV off in a development direction all of its own. **LxWxH** 4607x1859x1478 **Kerb weight** 2048kg

89kWh Standard Range	221	99	6.4	273	0
82kWh Long Range	228	99	6.1	317	0
82kWh Long Range AWD	402	127	4.6	298	0

3 5dr SUV E79,900-E81,500

Firm's first SUV is a blank-sheet design tasked with beating BMW's iX at its own game. **LxWxH** 4900x1968x1627 **Kerb weight** 2584kg

111kWh Long Range	482	130	5.0	379	0
111kWh Long Range AWD	510	130	4.7	347	0

4 5dr SUV E59,990-E66,990

Segment-straddling Macan rival looks to meld sporting appeal with practicality. **LxWxH** 4839x2008x1544 **Kerb weight** 2232kg

100kWh Long Range	268	124	7.1	372	0
100kWh Long Range AWD	536	124	3.8	347	0

PORSCHE

718 Boxster 2dr open E54,495-E125,660 ★★★★★

Our idea of drop-top heaven. Exceptional to drive, whether cruising or hurrying. **LxWxH** 4379x1810x1280 **Kerb weight** 1335kg

2.0 T	296	170	4.7-5.3	35.2	199
2.5 S	339	177	4.4-4.6	29.1	229
4.0 GTS	396	182	4.5	25.9	247
4.0 Spyder	414	189	4.4	25.4	251

718 Cayman 2dr coupé E51,800-E125,660 ★★★★★

Scalpel-blade incisiveness, supreme balance and outstanding driver involvement. **LxWxH** 4379x1810x1295 **Kerb weight** 1335kg

2.0 T	296	170	4.9-5.3	35.5	198
2.5 S	339	177	4.4-4.6	29.1	228
4.0 GTS	396	182	4.5	25.9	247
4.0 GT4	414	188	4.4	25.7	251
4.0 GT4 RS	493	196	3.4	21.4	299

911 2dr coupé E99,275-E195,260 ★★★★★

Wider, eighth-generation 911 is still eminently fast, and capable at all speeds. **LxWxH** 4519x1852x1300 **Kerb weight** 1565kg

3.0 Carrera	380	182	4.0	27.4	233
3.0 Carrera 4	380	180	4.0	26.9	238
3.0 Carrera S	444	191	3.7	27.4	234
3.0 Carrera 4S	444	190	3.4	26.9	239
3.0 Carrera 4 GT	473	193	3.4	24.8-26.4	244-258
3.0 Carrera 4 GTS	473	193	3.3	24.8-26.6	240-259
3.0 Targa 4	380	179	4.4	26.9	239
3.0 Targa 4S	444	189	3.8	26.4	244
3.0 Targa 4 GTS	473	193	3.4	24.8-27.1	236-258
4.0 GT3	503	199	3.4	21.7-21.9	283-304
3.7 Turbo	572	199	2.8	23.5	271
3.7 Turbo S	641	205	2.7	23.5	271
Sport Classic	542	205	4.1	22.4	285

911 Cabriolet 2dr open E109,275-E193,260 ★★★★★

Fewer compromises than ever, if rewarding only at full attack. **LxWxH** 4519x1862x1297 **Kerb weight** 1585kg

3.0 Carrera	380	180	4.4	27.2	236
3.0 Carrera 4	380	180	4.4	26.9	238
3.0 Carrera S	444	190	4.4	27.4	233
3.0 Carrera 4S	444	188	3.6	26.6	241
3.0 Carrera 4 GTS	473	192	3.6	26.9	239
3.0 Carrera 4 GT	473	191	3.5	25.0	244
3.7 Turbo	572	199	2.9		

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Kamiq 5dr SUV £24,030-£30,865 ★★★★★					
Skoda's supermini platform has birthed a practical but predictable compact crossover. LxWxH 4241x1793x1553 Kerb weight 1251kg					
1.0 TSI 95	93	112	11.2	49.6	129
1.0 TSI 115	112	120	10.3	47.1-49.6	130-136
1.5 TSI	148	132	11.2	46.3-47.9	133-139

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Karoq 5dr SUV £28,365-£41,095 ★★★★★					
Yeti replacement may not have its forebear's quirkiness, but it's brilliant otherwise. LxWxH 4362x1841x1603 Kerb weight 1265kg					
1.0 TSI 110	108	117	11.3	44.8-47.9	133-143
1.5 TSI	148	126	9.0	42.8-44.8	143-149
2.0 TSI 190 4x4	188	132	7.0	33.2	191
2.0 TDI 160	148	126	8.7	47.0-49.2	126
2.0 TDI 160	148	127	9.0	50.4-52.3	142-148
2.0 TDI 160 4x4	148	121	8.8	42.8	172-174

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Enyaq 5dr SUV £38,970-£53,120 ★★★★★					
Practical, rangy and well priced. Hits a sweet spot in the EV market. LxWxH 4649x1879x1621 Kerb weight 1917kg					
62kWh 60	177	99	8.7	25.6	0
82kWh 60	201	99	8.5	33.1	0
82kWh 60x Sportline	263	99	6.9	30.3	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Enyaq Coupé 5dr SUV £46,440-£54,820 ★★★★★					
More sporty-led EV is the first to wear Skoda's performance badge. LxWxH 4655x1882x1660 Kerb weight 2204kg					
82kWh vRS	299	111	6.4	31.2	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Kodlak 5dr SUV £38,730-£49,335 ★★★★★					
Skoda's first seven-seat SUV is a viable alternative to a traditional MPV. LxWxH 4659x1882x1675 Kerb weight 1430kg					
1.5 TSI 150	148	123	9.3	37.2-39.2	164-172
2.0 TSI 190 4x4	188	132	7.8	32.1-32.5	196-200
2.0 vRS	242	144	6.6	32.5	198
2.0 TDI 150	148	123	9.8	46.3-47.9	154-161
2.0 TDI 160 4x4	148	120	9.6	44.8-47.9	155-165
2.0 TDI 200 4x4	197	131	7.8	41.5-42.5	175-178

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
#1 5dr SUV £31,950-£43,450 ★★★★★					
Well-executed and spacious hatchback drives nicely, but won't set the world on fire. LxWxH 4270x1822x1636 Kerb weight 1725kg					
66kWh	268	112	6.7	25.3	0
66kWh Brabus	422	112	3.9	24.6	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
#3 5dr SUV £32,950-£45,450 ★★★★★					
New chapter Smart goes after style-conscious, value-savvy EV buyers. LxWxH 4400x1844x1556 Kerb weight 1810kg					
66kWh	268	112	5.8	28.3	0
66kWh Brabus	422	112	3.7	25.8	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Outback 5dr estate £36,990-£42,490 ★★★★★					
Acceptable in isolation, but no class leader. LxWxH 4815x1840x1605 Kerb weight 1612kg					
2.5i	172	130	10.2	33.0	193

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Forester 5dr SUV £37,990-£40,990 ★★★★★					
Solid, spacious and willfully unsexy. A capable 4x4 nonetheless. LxWxH 4610x1795x1735 Kerb weight 1488kg					
2.0i e-Boxer	148	117	11.8	34.7	185

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Crossstreik 5dr SUV £34,290-£36,290 ★★★★★					
Rugged Impreza hatch has likeable capability and fewer on-road virtues than before. LxWxH 4495x1800x1600 Kerb weight 1630kg					
2.0i e-Boxer	134	123	10.8	36.8	174

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Solterra 5dr SUV £52,495-£55,495 ★★★★★					
The classic Subaru traits are all carried over into the firm's first EV. LxWxH 4690x1860x1650 Kerb weight 2016kg					
150kWh 71.4kWh	215	99	6.9	28.9	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Ignis 5dr hatch £17,949-£19,949 ★★★★★					
Cute and rugged-looking 4x4 city car capable of tackling roads bereft of asphalt. LxWxH 3700x1660x1595 Kerb weight 855kg					
1.2 Dualjet 12V	83	103	12.7	52.3	110-112
1.2 Dualjet 12V Allgrip	83	103	12.8	48.6	121

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Swift 5dr hatch £17,199-£24,270 ★★★★★					
Given mature looks, more equipment and a hybrid powertrain, but it's no class leader. LxWxH 3840x1735x1495 Kerb weight 890kg					
1.2 Dualjet 83 12V	82	112	13.1	59.7	106
1.2 Dualjet 83 12V Allgrip	82	106	13.8	52.3	121
1.4 Boosterjet 48V Sport	129	130	9.1	50.4	125

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
SW6C 5dr estate £29,599-£31,399 ★★★★★					
Rebadged Toyota Corolla Touring Sports serves as a useful addition to Suzuki's line-up. LxWxH 4655x1790x1460 Kerb weight 1420kg					
1.8 Hybrid	120	112	11.1	64.2	99

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Vitara 5dr SUV £24,849-£30,399 ★★★★★					
Utterly worthy addition to the class drives better than most. LxWxH 4175x1775x1610 Kerb weight 1075kg					
1.4 Boosterjet 48V	127	118	9.5	52.7	128
1.4 Boosterjet 48V Allgrip	127	118	10.2	45.2	140
1.5 Hybrid	113	111	12.7	na	119

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
SX4 S-Cross 5dr SUV £26,099-£32,649 ★★★★★					
Latest round of updates help keep it a decent budget offering. LxWxH 4300x1785x1593 Kerb weight 1305kg					
1.4 Boosterjet 48V	127	121	10.2	53.2	120
1.4 Boosterjet 48V Allgrip	127	118	10.2	46.3	139
1.5 Hybrid	113	111	12.7	na	119

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
ACROSS 5dr SUV £49,529 ★★★★★					
Rebadged Toyota PHEV plunges Suzuki convincingly into several new segments. LxWxH 4635x1855x1690 Kerb weight 1915kg					
2.5 PHEV	182	112	6.0	28.2	22

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Model S 5dr hatch £93,480-£113,480 ★★★★★					
Large range makes it not only a standout EV but also the future of luxury motoring. LxWxH 4978x1963x1445 Kerb weight 2108kg					
AWD	670	155	3.1	40.5	0
Plaid	1020	200	2.0	39.6	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Model 3 4dr saloon £39,990-£49,990 ★★★★★					
Lowest-price, biggest-volume Tesla yet arrives in the UK after wooing the US. LxWxH 4694x1849x1443 Kerb weight 1726kg					
RWD	320	140	5.3	26.7	0
Long Range	434	145	4.2	36.0	0
Performance	522	162	3.1	35.2	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Model Y 5dr SUV £44,990-£59,990 ★★★★★					
A compelling proposition, with respectable dynamics and a long range. LxWxH 4751x2129x1624 Kerb weight 2072kg					
Long Range	434	133	5.0	31.5	0
Performance	563	155	3.5	30.3	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Model X 5dr SUV £98,480-£124,780 ★★★★★					
A genuine luxury seven-seat electric SUV that also has a large range. LxWxH 5036x2107x1684 Kerb weight 2459kg					
AWD	670	155	3.8	34.8	0
Plaid	1020	163	2.5	34.0	0

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
AYGO X 5dr hatch £16,130-£19,050 ★★★★★					
City car returns from SUV boot camp ready for the ultimate series of speed bumps. LxWxH 3700x1740x1525 Kerb weight 1025kg					
1.0 VVT-I	71	98	14.9	57.6	110

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Yaris 5dr hatch £22,630-£28,925 ★★★★★					
Stylish interior but ultimately a scaled-down version of bigger Toyotas. LxWxH 3495x1695x1510 Kerb weight 1310kg					
1.5 VVT-I Hybrid	114	109	9.7	65.7-68.9	92-98

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
GR Yaris 5dr hatch £32,205-£35,705 ★★★★★					
Focused, exhilarating all-wheel-drive hot hatch is the most exciting Toyota in ages. LxWxH 3995x1800x1455 Kerb weight 975kg					
1.6 AWD	253	143	5.5	na	186

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Corolla 5dr hatch £30,495-£35,975 ★★★★★					
Rebranded hatch has rolling refinement, interior ambience and affable handling. LxWxH 4370x1790x1435 Kerb weight 1340kg					
1.6 VVT-I Hybrid	122	111	9.2	57.6-62.8	102-112
1.0 VVT-I Hybrid	180	111	7.5	53.3-57.6	111-120

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Corolla Touring Sports 5dr estate £31,830-£37,890 ★★★★★					
More practical estate bodystyle proves just as capable with hybrid power. LxWxH 4650x1790x1435 Kerb weight 1440kg					
1.8 VVT-I Hybrid	122	111	9.2	56.5-62.8	103-113
1.0 VVT-I Hybrid	180	111	7.5	53.3-56.5	112-121

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Prius 5dr hatch £24,890-£35,400 ★★★★★					
Better all round compared with its predecessors. Challenging looks, though. LxWxH 4540x1760x1470 Kerb weight 1375kg					
1.8 VVT-I Hybrid	120	112	10.6	58.9-67.3	94-109

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Prius Plug-in Hybrid 5dr hatch £32,645-£34,745 ★★★★★					
Plug-in version is clever and appealing. Seems more comfortable in its skin. LxWxH 4645x1760x1470 Kerb weight 1530kg					
1.8 VVT-I Hybrid	120	101	11.1	188.3-217.3	29-35

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
Yaris Cross 5dr SUV £25,500-£34,875 ★★★★★					
A credible compact SUV, buoyed by good driving dynamics and efficiency. LxWxH 4180x1765x1595 Kerb weight 1175kg					
1.5 Hybrid	114	106	11.2	56.5-64.2	100-112
1.5 Hybrid AWD	114	106	11.8	55.4	115
1.5 Hybrid 130	128	na	10.7	na	116

	Power (mm)	Top speed (mm)	0-60 (2/30min)	Economy (mpg/100mi)	CO ₂ (g/km)
C-HR 5dr SUV £31,290-£43,540 ★★★★★					
Coupe-shaped crossover certainly turns heads and impresses on the road. LxWxH 4360x1795x1565 Kerb weight 1320kg					
1.8 Hybrid	119	105	1		

SLIDESHOW

Controversial car engines

Among the vast number of internal combustion engines created to power passenger vehicles, some have been more controversial than others. Some have undoubtedly been bad from the off, while others have been perfectly competent but flawed in some way, used in the wrong car or introduced before the world was ready for them. Here are 10 of them.

DAVID FINLAY



Volkswagen EA189 2009

There was nothing wrong with the basic design of Volkswagen's EA189 diesel engine, known to customers as the 2.0 TDI and fitted to many of the VW Group's cars, including utterly inoffensive - and indeed forgettable - ones like the Jetta. Indeed, at first it was extremely successful, delivering zestful, refined performance (for a diesel) and impressive economy. But it hid a dark secret that would cost its creator more than £30 billion: it housed a cheat device that reduced its emissions - especially pernicious nitrogen oxide - when being tested. The ensuing Dieselmot scandal led to similar revelations about other engines produced by several firms, but the mud has stuck more tenaciously to the EA189 than to anything else. It also showed that VW's focus on diesel had been a costly cul-de-sac, and the firm abruptly converted to EV evangelism.



NSU Ro 80 1967

The NSU Ro 80 was a brilliant and innovative car in many ways, but it was powered by a twin-rotor Wankel engine, which, for a few years after its 1967 launch, was miserably unreliable. It turned what should have been one of the most admired European cars of its era into one of the most controversial. Enormous warranty claims virtually bankrupted NSU and forced it into the arms of Volkswagen. The car survived for a decade, but the NSU name was dropped in 1977.



Triumph V8 1970

Triumph's 3.0-litre V8 was a derivative of the company's slant four, and it made its debut in 1970 in the only production model to which it was ever fitted: the Stag. The car's reputation was trashed from the off, because the V8 could fail spectacularly and was dizzyingly expensive to repair. Yet none of this had to happen. The V8's problems are now understood and can be avoided, and current owners of well-maintained Stags report that they run reliably.



Oldsmobile diesel 1978

Oldsmobile's diesel was based a bit too closely on an existing petrol V8. The designers failed to take full account of the greater cylinder pressures (diesels have a far higher compression ratio), which led to ruinous reliability issues. Changes were made and a related V6 was much better, but public perception was so bad that production was abandoned in 1985. The Olds V8 has since been blamed for American motorists' long-term refusal to accept diesel engines in cars.



Chevrolet small-block 267 1980

The Chevy small block is regarded by many as a wonder of the world, but it's hard to find anyone with a good word to say about the 4.4-litre 267 version. This adaptation of the famous engine was intended to give decent economy and acceptable emissions. It wasn't good in either respect: as fitted to the 1980 Camaro, it was rated at a mere 120bhp, only 5bhp more than the 3.8-litre V6 at the bottom of the range.



Rover K-series 1989

The K-series first appeared in the Rover 200 in 1989, and it was later used in many Rover and MG cars. It was light and could be tuned to produce high outputs for its size, but it had a tendency to blow head gaskets. Gasket replacement is difficult because the cylinder head bolts extend a long way down into the engine, which therefore has to be disassembled to a greater extent than usual in order to reach the gasket.



Ford 6.0 Power Stroke 2002

Ford's 6.0-litre Power Stroke turbocharged diesel V8, initially designed by Navistar, proved to be exceptionally expensive for its maker. It allegedly accounted for just 10% of the firm's engine production but 80% of engine warranty payments - and around 25% of warranty claims overall. Ford lost even more money compensating customers of Super Duty trucks, Econoline vans and Excursion SUVs in a series of lawsuits.

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