

First drive

BMW takes on Mercedes' SLK with its sturdier new Z4

Z for all seasons



BMW Z4

The big news about BMW's new Z4 convertible is that it features a folding metal roof – just like its arch rival, the Mercedes-Benz SLK. It's now better suited to all-weather driving

and resisting vandal damage than the old soft-top Z4.

It comes with six-cylinder power across the range. The £28,650 'sDrive23i' is the entry-level car using a 2.5-litre straight-six with 204bhp. If you can stretch your budget, there's

the option of 3.0-litre power, either with (£37,065) or without turbocharging (£32,665).

On the road, these smooth engines translate into a nostalgic BMW driving experience, with plenty of aural appeal. You do have to work the gearbox to get the most from them – this, along with a stiff manual gearshift, can make the Z4 hard work in town. Buy it as a car for A- and B-road blasts and you won't be disappointed, though.



The sDrive23i is the pick of the range – it's lighter and more nimble than the costlier models.

Save yourself at least £4,000 by opting for this version.

All-new Prius looks set to win even more followers

Green king

TOYOTA PRIUS

Toyota has overhauled its iconic hybrid car, the Prius, which is now into its third generation. It may look similar to the last model, but a lot has changed – except the prices, which still start at £18,370.

With a larger 1.8 petrol engine alongside a revised battery system, the new Prius is easier to drive on the motorway. Power output is up 24%, yet CO2 emissions have fallen to just 89g/km – lower than any other mainstream new car.



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Toyota boasts the new Prius can return up to 72.4mpg – also better than its predecessor. We've yet to fully test the claim, though our initial drive confirms you can top 75mpg if you go very carefully.

The ride and handling are better than before, so, bar a bit of road and engine noise at speed, the Prius feels pleasant and refined overall. With a roomier cabin, it's also a genuine choice for family buyers.

VERDICT The Prius retains its 'best hybrid' crown, and puts Honda's Insight (above right) in the shade.

This month

Visit www.which.co.uk/cars to view video test drives for important new models from Honda and Volvo, and read our full first impressions for dozens of new cars.



Honda Insight

The Insight may undercut the Prius by nearly £3,000, but does it deliver where it matters – on the road and at the pump? Get up close and personal in our new video review at www.which.co.uk/hondainsight.

Volvo XC60

Volvo's 'baby' 4x4 makes much of its safety credentials, including its City Safety system, designed to automatically brake when it senses an impending low-speed smash. Watch the video at www.which.co.uk/volvoxc60 to see what happened when we drove it at a wall to see if City Safety works.



Ford Focus RS

£25,745 is an awful lot of money for a Focus. But, fortunately for Ford, the Focus RS is a very special car indeed. Racey, raucous and not for the faint-hearted, has the Focus RS become Britain's best hot hatch? Find out more at www.which.co.uk/focusrs.



Peugeot 3008

The Peugeot 3008 is the French carmaker's first 'crossover' – a blend of MPV, SUV and family hatchback. Packed with technology and promising greater quality, could the 3008 be the car you've been waiting for? Find out at www.which.co.uk/peugeot3008.