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WELCOME

...to Which? Car 2005/2006, our no-nonsense annual guide to choosing the safest, most secure, and most reliable cars



Each year, research for *Which? Car* begins when 80,000 questionnaires drop through readers' letterboxes. What you tell us forms the heart of our exhaustive research – and there are some interesting results.

First, Ford has continued to improve its reliability. It's now the only non-Japanese or non-Korean maker turning out cars with the highest level of reliability – roughly half as many Fords break down as did in 2000.

Second, Mercedes-Benz's reliability has plummeted. Three years ago, it was up there with the

Your reports on the everyday experience of living with your car make our ratings true to life



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Which? was a founding member of the Euro NCAP tests. We use the results of its crash tests as just one part of our extensive safety analysis

Our experts try all the latest tricks used by real car thieves

best; now it's languishing around the bottom of our reliability ratings. Mercedes-Benz claims it's investing tens of millions of pounds to solve the problem, but the results are yet to be seen.

Third, the Toyota Yaris Verso has turned out to be the most popular car. No doubt that will cause much scoffing among certain pundits, but that's the thing about *Which? Car* – it doesn't matter if you've driven a Maserati faster than sound, you'll never know as much as the people who've lived with a car day-in and day-out for years on end.

UNIQUE TESTS

We back up our survey with hundreds of hours of unique tests on safety and security, and an in-depth analysis of running costs and depreciation rates. As with all *Which?* tests, we acquire the cars for ourselves so manufacturers can't influence the results.

Like most car magazines, we publish the results of crash tests carried out by Euro NCAP (in fact,

Which? was a founding member of Euro NCAP). But we go further, using our own expert analysis. We look beyond front- and side-impact crash tests – our experts also examine what would happen in other types of accident, such as roll-overs, and assess risks such as the possibility of fire. The Audi A8 is the safest car to drive overall – take a look at p4 for details of other safe cars currently on sale.

You'll also find our awards for the most secure cars of the year. Our experts try all the latest tricks used by real thieves to see which cars are the most difficult to steal or break into. All new cars have immobilisers these days, so we're especially looking for cars that make it hard for thieves to steal your personal belongings. The most secure car on that front is the Lexus LS430.

We hope all this hard graft makes it easy for you to find a safe, reliable and enjoyable car. If you have any suggestions about the guide, we'd love to hear from you at the addresses below.

Reproduction Icon Reproduction **Printing** St Ives (Peterborough) Ltd
Email which@which.co.uk **Post** PO Box 44, Hertford X, SG14 1SH
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