

Kia's new sporty hatch offers great value for money

Pro_cee'd with pleasure

FIRST DRIVE

Kia is not known for its sporting pretensions, but this car could be the first to change all that. The Pro_cee'd is a leaner, meaner-looking three-door version of the impressive Cee'd hatchback.

It may be a daft name – and Kia has confusingly opted to badge it as 'Cee'd' on the tailgate – but this car looks good inside and out, is well finished and feels impressively solid.

Alloy wheels and air conditioning are standard – as is the incredible seven-year, 100,000-mile warranty.

List prices undercut its main rival – the Vauxhall Astra Sport Hatch – typically by around £2,000 on similar models. Prices start at £12,295 for the entry-level 1.6-litre petrol version, but this will soon be joined by a cheaper 1.4.

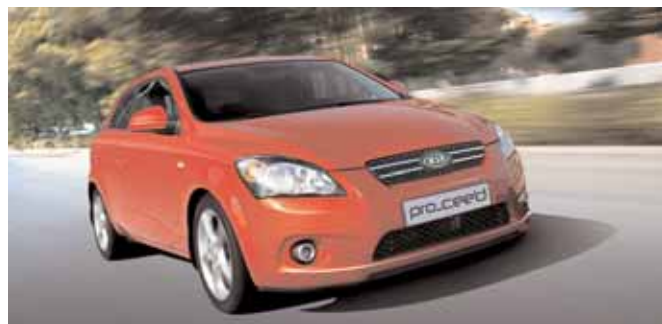
The priciest version is the 2.0 diesel Sport, but the two 1.6 turbo-diesels look better value. We drove

the higher-powered version, which outputs 113bhp and claims to deliver 58.9mpg average fuel economy (50mpg is more likely in real life). It's nippy in town and accelerates well for overtaking on the motorway. Once warmed up, it's also quiet and refined.

The Pro_ceed's suspension is firm, so you'll notice bigger potholes and bumps. For more comfort, you may prefer the normal Cee'd, which also has better outward visibility.

In the back, adults have plenty of legroom, but six-footers will find their head touching the sloping ceiling. The cabin is unfussy, with easy-to-use controls, a driver-angled centre console, and standard iPod dock. Add the decent-sized boot, and you've got a surprisingly practical three-door hatch.

VERDICT The new Kia exceeds expectations, especially on value for money, backed up by the seven-year warranty.



Daft name, but the Pro_cee'd is a delight to drive

Please wait for the latest Denon

WIRELESS AUDIO SYSTEM

The shoebox-sized Denon S-52 costs around £450, so what impressive features does it have to justify that price tag? Incredibly, this single product contains a CD player, DAB/FM/AM/internet radio and iPod docking station, and can play music files on devices connected via wired or wireless networks or USB. Oh, and it has an alarm clock, too.

The sound quality is impressive – as good as our Best Buy DAB radios – although the bass can be overpowering (you can't change sound settings). It was easy to

control an iPod in the dock with the remote control.

At this price, we'd also expect advanced radio features, such as an electronic programme guide, and the ability to pause and rewind and to record onto USB devices. We got none of these.

And its standby

power

consumption

is a hefty

18W, unless

you switch off

the device entirely.

The final nail in the coffin was usability. The small screen

and scroll wheel were not very intuitive and were slow to respond, with the screen often displaying 'Please wait' for up to a minute. We connected to a home wireless network quite easily, but it could take minutes to scroll through large numbers of MP3 files stored on a computer.

VERDICT

Promises a lot, and delivers... slowly. Wait to see if a future software upgrade solves some of the usability problems.



Pricey but stylish

Bee is for buggy

PUSHCHAIR

Aimed squarely at funky fathers, the £359 Bee is the latest release from high-fashion pushchair brand Bugaboo. Bugaboo pushchairs haven't fared well in previous Which? tests, but the Bee changes that. It impressed our testers, who found that it's a dream to manoeuvre in most situations, feels light and comfortable to push, and is fairly compact for a car-seat compatible pushchair.

It's quite heavy for a buggy, weighing in at 9.6kg, but you can also use it as a travel system by buying adaptors (which cost £30) for the Best Buy Maxi Cosi Cabrio child car seat. Although it reclines to five different positions, we found that the seat unit is not suitable for newborn babies, because it doesn't let them lie flat.

Drawbacks? Our testers didn't like the lack of leg rest to support children whose feet don't reach the footrest, and the seat is rather narrow and short and the hood too close to the chair for older children. The storage basket is a good size but difficult to reach – you have to scabble between the child's legs from the front. We also found it tricky to activate the folding mechanism initially, but after that it's easy to unfold the pushchair.

The Bee comes with a rain cover and hood, and there are also nearly £400-worth of optional accessories, including a footmuff, nappy bag and sun canopy.

VERDICT A pricey but stylish choice for fashion-conscious parents who want a sturdy and practical pushchair.

13%

the amount emissions from new cars
have fallen by since 1997

SOCIETY OF MOTOR MANUFACTURERS AND TRADERS

25%

early-stage pregnant women who
have bought a pushchair and car seat

NURSERY INDUSTRY

Watch out for these mobile phones later this year

Smart, swift, stylish

MOBILE PHONES

For a sneak peek at the latest handsets due to go on sale this year, Which? attended the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona earlier this year. There, more than 1,200 exhibitors demonstrated the latest features, technologies, style and innovation in mobile phones.

Touchscreen phones were popular, aping Apple's iPhone. But it wasn't just about style – substance was added with handsets including satnav GPS technology for on-the-go personal mapping. Below, we list our pick of the pack. All should be available later this year.

Nokia N96

The feature-packed N96 tops Nokia's N-series range of smart-phones, replacing the popular N95. The phone's internal memory capacity has doubled to 16GB, and you can watch live TV, thanks to its mobile digital TV receiver (assuming you are in a mobile TV coverage area). The improved assisted GPS satnav system allows you to navigate both in car and on foot.

The N96 retains the N95's 2.8-inch screen, its unique dual-slider design (slide one way for the keypad



From left to right: Nokia N96, Samsung Soul U900 and Sony Ericsson Xperia X1

and the other for the music control keys) and the 5Mp camera. This is a 3.5G, wireless-enabled phone that runs the Symbian S60 operating system.

Sony Ericsson Xperia X1

The Xperia X1 is the flagship handset in Sony Ericsson's new Xperia range. It's a Windows Mobile smartphone with a 3-inch touchscreen that features Xperia 'panels' – essentially customisable buttons to give you quick access to your favourite applications.

There's also a full Qwerty keyboard that lies beneath an ergonomic 'Arc slider', which means

that the Xperia X1 curves when it opens, supposedly to give a better typing position. The back features a 3.2Mp autofocus camera. It's a quad-band phone, so you can use it around the world, and 3.5G and Wi-Fi capabilities give you fast internet access.

Samsung Soul U900

The elegant Samsung Soul U900 is a slim, dual-screen slider phone with a distinctive touch-sensitive navigation pad, which Samsung calls its 'Magic Touch'. The unique pad's icons change depending on what function you're using.

This stylish mobile is only 12.9mm thick, with a metal finish. But it still includes a 5Mp camera with autofocus, flash, image stabilisation and face detection, bringing it in line with standalone digital cameras. There's also an integrated MP3 and FM player. The Soul is 3.5G, which means you can download data and access the internet quickly.

For more on our latest tests of mobile phones and the best deals, turn to p70.

GARMIN'S FIRST PHONE ON THE WAY

Garmin, better known as a satnav manufacturer, is launching its first mobile phone

The Garmin Nüvifone is aimed at people who don't want a separate phone and satnav device. It features a 3.5-inch touchscreen, and in navigation mode is the same size as a standard satnav unit.

The candy-bar phone includes a 3Mp camera and MP3 player. The Nüvifone is also 3.5G, which means you can download data and get fast online access.



Just out

Canon Digital Ixus 970 IS

£299

The 5x optical zoom lens is the longest-ever zoom in the Ixus range. Features include motion detection and face detection technology, which help reduce blur and allow you to select a single face from a crowd. It's widely available.



Polaroid Mobile Photo Printer £99

Polaroid claims its new printer produces high-quality 2x3-inch peel-off sticky-backed images in less than 60 seconds, and needs no ink cartridges or ribbons. It launches in June in black, but will be available in a range of colours later.



Hotpoint WMD940 Ultima

Hotpoint's new 1,400rpm washing machine has a capacity of 8kg, and comes with AAB rating, 24-hour start delay, super silent and fast washes, and an economy function. The LCD panel shows the spin speed, temperature and a countdown to the end of the wash cycle.



Electrolux Cyclone Power £60-£80

The funky new Cyclone Power range of compact, lightweight vacuum cleaners from Electrolux features large wheels and comes in shocking magenta, orange and deep blue. Both the 1900W and 2000W models have an additional turbo nozzle, which Electrolux says will help with stubborn threads that get stuck in carpets, as well as shifting pet hairs from stairs and upholstery. Available from Argos and online.

