

Model summaries explained

How to get the most from our in-depth model summaries

5 Security

Our 'thieves' break into 24 new models every year, scoring each car in two key areas. **Theft from** scores are out of a maximum of 100 per cent and show how easy it is to steal items from the cabin and boot. Many cars score poorly, as standard toughened-glass windows are easy to smash. However, we give credit for features such as alarm systems, vehicle-specific stereos and lockable storage areas. **Theft of** scores are out of a maximum of 100 per cent and show how easy it is for someone to drive away with the car. Electronic immobilisers make life hard for thieves but we test their effectiveness. We also check how strong steering locks and door locks are, and look for individually marked parts, which make cars harder to sell on illegally.

6 Ownership

This shows the percentage of owners who would definitely recommend the car to a friend. We also show the number of owners who responded in our 2006 *Which? Car* survey.

7 Reliability

Reliability ratings are drawn from our 32,550-strong owners' survey, and reflect each car's reliability record in the last year. We give ratings for three different age groups for the following aspects of reliability. **Breakdowns** indicates how often the car failed to start or broke down. It doesn't include accidents, punctures and batteries that go flat as a result of leaving the lights on. **Faults** shows how often parts needed to be replaced or repaired. We've excluded parts that are routinely replaced and those that are changed following an accident or misuse. **Niggles** shows how often those annoying, but non-critical, problems occur – such as loose trim, squeaky seats and broken interior lights.

Ratings can be compared across car classes. A ★★★★★ rating means the car is above average for that age group; ★★★ means it is average; and ★ means it's below average. A dash (–) shows the car wasn't sold at that time or we don't have enough replies to rate it.

8 Troublespots

These are particular problem areas that owners have told us about. For something to be listed as a troublespot, owners must have reported it in higher-than-average numbers. These are worth looking out for, especially when you're buying second-hand.

1 Prices and scores

Which? road test score is our percentage score for the car, based on its performance in our independent road tests. It combines ratings for driving, performance, comfort and practicality and is comparable only with other cars in the same category.

Price is the range of on-the-road prices from the manufacturer's price list. For used cars, we give the range of current used values, from the oldest model to the most recent.

2 Road-test summaries

This is an overview of our road-test findings. We drive every car hundreds of miles on public roads and on test tracks. Our professional road-testers compare notes on performance, handling, comfort and practicality. We also measure combined (town and country) fuel economy to see whether it matches carmakers' claims. Finally, we assess visibility, using lasers to imitate the driver's line of sight, and also the effectiveness of in-car heating, by putting the car in a big freezer at -10°C.

3 Details

This summarises the key choices available, whether you're buying the car new or used. **Engines** shows which petrol, diesel or other options are available. **Gearbox options** shows the choice of manual or automatic transmissions.

Body styles tells you the body types available, such as hatchback, saloon and estate, and with how many doors. For MPVs and off-road vehicles we also show the number of seats (if more than five). **Dimensions** gives the car's length and width, including mirrors where stated. Figures refer to the smallest model in the range.

Insurance groups shows which bandings the car falls into – from 1 (low risk) to 20 (high risk). **Running costs (per mile)** indicates the range of pence-per-mile running costs for new cars, over three years and 36,000 miles. Costs include fuel, depreciation, servicing, tax and insurance.

4 Safety

We give two safety scores: the first is from our own expert assessments, and the second is the Euro NCAP crash-test rating. The safest cars score well in both tests. **Which? safety score** shows how well the car protects occupants in a wide range of crashes. Our safety experts inspect more than 50 safety-critical areas of each car and award a points score for overall safety design (shown in brackets). There is no upper points limit but, to make it easier to compare cars, we also give a star rating out of five. Ratings can be compared across classes; so small, light cars often score poorly, while big, heavy cars tend to score well. **Euro NCAP crash test** ratings, out of five, cover how well the car protects adult occupants in front and side-on crashes. You can compare cars only with others in the same vehicle class.