

SEAT IBIZA FROM APR 02

The Ibiza offers reasonable reliability and a stylish design. But it's heavy on fuel and owners say it's noisy, and criticise the poor instrument layout.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.2, 1.4 or 1.8 litre petrol, 1.9 litre diesel
Prices new £7,404 (1.2 Reference 3-dr) to £15,347 (1.9 Tdi PD Cupra 3-dr)
Dimensions 3.96m x 1.70m
CO₂ (g/km) 144 to 192 (ptl), 124 to 146 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	○
Space in rear	○
Loading/storage	☆
Appearance and design	☆
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 58%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 Heating/ventilation components

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	○	-	-
Faults	○	-	-
Niggles	○	-	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	Very high

SECURITY

Theft of car	8/10
Theft from car	3/10

Tested

1.4 SE 16V 5-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

SEAT IBIZA (USED ONLY) OCT 93 TO APR 02

Nowhere near as much fun to drive, or as safe, as the new Ibiza. The best that can be said about it is that it has good heating and ventilation.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.0, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8 or 2.0 litre petrol, 1.9 litre diesel
Prices used up to around £6,900
Dimensions 3.88m x 1.64m
CO₂ (g/km) 161 to 189 (petrol), 135 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	○
Driving position and comfort	●
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	○
Space in front	○
Space in rear	○
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	●
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 44%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Washers/wipers

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	○	-
Faults	-	●	-
Niggles	-	○	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	Very high

SECURITY

Theft of car	n/a
Theft from car	n/a

Tested

1.9 diesel

SAFETY

Overall	Poor
Crash test	3/5

SKODA FABIA FROM MAR 00

It may not be the best-looking car but, apart from a few problems and niggles (petrol models) and poor rear visibility (hatchback models), there's little to criticise. It drives well and is certainly popular with owners.

Body styles 4-dr saloon, 5-dr estate, 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.2, 1.4 or 2.0 litre petrol, 1.9 litre diesel
Prices new £7,432 (1.2 HTP Classic 5-dr) to £12,447 (1.9 TDi Elegance estate)
Dimensions 3.96m x 1.65m
CO₂ (g/km) 144 to 187 (ptl), 124 to 146 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	diesel ★ petrol ☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	☆
Visibility/parking	hatchback ● estate ○
Instrument layout	○
Space in front	○
Space in rear	☆
Loading/storage	hatchback ☆ estate ★
Appearance and design	●
Noise	diesel ○ petrol ☆
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 78%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 None

2000-2002 Cooling system (petrol), engine management system/ECU (petrol), steering

RELIABILITY

Petrol 03-05 00-02 97-99 Diesel 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	○	○	-	Breakdowns	○	○	-
Faults	○	●	-	Faults	○	○	-
Niggles	○	●	-	Niggles	○	○	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	High
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	8/10
Theft from car	3/10

Tested

1.4 Elegance 5-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

SMART FORTWO FROM DEC 99

Safety design is pretty poor, and the driving experience is compromised by poor ride quality and a lack of stability at speed. However, in spite of these pitfalls, most owners would recommend the ForTwo to a friend.

Body styles 2-dr cabriolet, 3-dr hatchback
Engines 0.6 litre petrol
Prices new £6,702 (Pure) to £14,482 (Brabus Cabriolet)
Dimensions 2.50m x 1.52m
CO₂ (g/km) 113 to 136



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	●
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	●
Visibility/parking	☆
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	★
Space in rear	-
Loading/storage	☆
Appearance and design	★
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 73%

TROUBLESPOTS

There were too few survey replies for us to name the troublespots.

RELIABILITY

Overall, Smarts are average for reliability.

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Low
Depreciation	Average
Fuel	Very low

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	1/10

Tested

Cabriolet Passion 0.6

SAFETY

Overall	Poor
Crash test	3/5

SUZUKI WAGON R+ FROM MAY 00

This reliable little car majors on space, value for money, and visibility. But the stiff ride quality and a lack of refinement compromise the overall driving experience.

Body styles 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.3 litre petrol
Prices new £7,903 (1.3GL) to £8,678 (1.3GL auto)
Dimensions 3.50m x 1.62m
CO₂ (g/km) 150 to 174



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	●
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	●
Visibility/parking	★
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	★
Loading/storage	☆
Appearance and design	●
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 57%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Battery

RELIABILITY

Petrol 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	○	-
Faults	-	★	-
Niggles	-	★	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	High
Fuel	Very high

SECURITY

Theft of car	n/a
Theft from car	n/a

SAFETY

Overall	n/a
Crash test	n/a

TOYOTA YARIS FROM MAR 99

The Best Buy Yaris is a brilliantly designed small car. It's roomy, comfortable and a pleasure to drive and has flawless reliability. The only bugbears are a small boot, and poor visibility for parking.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.0, 1.3 or 1.5 litre petrol, 1.4 litre diesel
Prices new £7,642 (1.0 VWT-i T2 3-dr) to £12,672 (1.5 VWT-i T Sport 5-dr)
Dimensions 3.61m x 1.66m
CO₂ (g/km) 129 to 165 (ptl), 117 to 133 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	diesel ☆ petrol ○
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	★
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	☆
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	☆
Noise	diesel ☆ petrol ○
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 83%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 None

2000-2002 None

1997-1999 None

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	★	★	★
Faults	★	★	★
Niggles	★	★	★

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	Low

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	3/10

Tested 1.0 GLS 3-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

TOYOTA YARIS VERSO FROM JAN 00

Highly driveable and without its little brother's problem of limited interior space. Running costs are high but the Best Buy Yaris Verso is still the car most recommended by owners. Sadly, Toyota has decided to phase it out.

Body styles 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.3 litre petrol, 1.4 litre diesel
Prices new £10,272 (1.3 T3) to £12,172 (1.3 T Spirit)
Dimensions 3.86m x 1.69m
CO₂ (g/km) 154 to 165 (petrol), 133 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	●
Visibility/parking	☆
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	★
Loading/storage	★
Appearance and design	●
Noise	☆
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 92%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 None

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	★	-
Faults	-	★	-
Niggles	-	★	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	High
Depreciation	Average
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	7/10
Theft from car	3/10
Tested	1.3 GS

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	n/a

VAUXHALL CORSA FROM OCT 00

There's little to recommend the Corsa apart from good reliability. It's far from roomy or pleasant to drive, and it has poor safety levels.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.0, 1.2, 1.4 or 1.8 litre ptl, 1.3 or 1.7 dsl
Prices new £6,852 (1.0i Expression 3-dr) to £13,202 (1.7 CDTi SRi 5-dr)
Dimensions 3.82m x 1.96m
CO₂ (g/km) 115 to 185 (ptl), 115 to 135 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	diesel ● petrol ○
Driving position and comfort	○
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	○
Instrument layout	○
Space in front	○
Space in rear	○
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	○
Noise	diesel ● petrol ○
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 46%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 Washers/wipers

2000-2002 Washers/wipers, exterior trim

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	○	★	-
Faults	○	★	-
Niggles	★	★	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Average
Fuel	Low

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	3/10
Tested	1.0 GLS 3-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Poor
Crash test	4/5

VW LUPO FROM FEB 99

The Lupo is spacious in the front, but in the back it's a tight squeeze – boot space is limited, too.

Body styles 3-dr hatchback
Engines 1.0, 1.4 or 1.6 litre petrol, 1.4 or 1.7 litre diesel
Prices new £7,737 (1.0 E) to £13,422 (1.6 GTI)
Dimensions 3.53m x 1.64m
CO₂ (g/km) 139 to 178 (petrol), 119 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	○
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	☆
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	★
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	○
Noise	☆
Heating and ventilation	○

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 46%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 None

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	○	-
Faults	-	★	-
Niggles	-	○	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Average
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	7/10
Theft from car	2/10
Tested	1.4S

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

VW POLO FROM JAN 02

The Polo is roomy in the back for a supermini, and reliability has improved radically for more recent models. However, the petrol models aren't great to drive and it's also ridiculously easy to steal from.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.2 or 1.4 litre petrol, 1.4 or 1.9 litre diesel
Prices new £6,852 (1.2 E 55bhp 3-dr) to £14,772 (1.9 TDI GT Sport 5-dr)
Dimensions 3.90m x 1.65m
CO₂ (g/km) 144 to 182 (petrol), 138 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	diesel ☆ petrol ●
Driving position and comfort	○
Ride quality	☆
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	○
Space in rear	☆
Loading/storage	○
Appearance and design	☆
Noise	diesel ● petrol ☆
Heating and ventilation	○

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 43%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 Seat belts
2000-2002 Engine management system/ECU, clutch

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl	03-05	00-02	97-99
Breakdowns	★	●	-
Faults	○	○	-
Niggles	○	○	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	7/10
Theft from car	1/10
Tested	1.2 S 3-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

VW POLO (USED ONLY) SEP 94 TO JAN 02

Fairly reliable, but it's one of the least liked cars in our survey – probably because of the limited space in the rear, expensive replacement parts and high servicing costs.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback, 4-dr saloon, 5-dr estate
Engines 1.0, 1.4 or 1.6 litre petrol, 1.4 or 1.9 litre diesel
Prices used up to around £6,200
Dimensions 3.74m x 1.63m
CO₂ (g/km) 144 to 182 (petrol), 124 to 135 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	diesel ○ petrol ●
Driving position and comfort	○
Ride quality	☆
Visibility/parking	saloon ● hatchback ●
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	○
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	saloon ○ hatchback ●
Appearance and design	○
Noise	diesel ● petrol ○
Heating and ventilation	●

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 34%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Electric windows
1997-1999 Fuel system, immobiliser, ignition system, paintwork chipped/lost shine, light surface rust

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl	03-05	00-02	97-99
Breakdowns	-	○	○
Faults	-	○	○
Niggles	-	○	○

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Average
Depreciation	Very low
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	7/10
Theft from car	2/10
Tested	1.4 CL

SAFETY

Overall	Poor
Crash test	4/5

ALFA ROMEO 147 FROM FEB 01

The 147 hatchback looks great and it's pleasant enough to drive, but it's not very practical. Space in the rear is tight, and it's expensive to run.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.6 or 2.0 litre petrol, 1.9 litre diesel
Prices new £13,462 (1.6 T Spark 3-dr) to £18,842 (2.0 T Spark 5-dr)
Dimensions 4.17m x 1.73m
CO₂ (g/km) 192 to 211 (petrol), 155 to 157 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	★
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	★
Noise	○
Heating and ventilation	○

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 46%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Interior equipment

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl	03-05	00-02	97-99
Breakdowns	-	○	-
Faults	-	○	-
Niggles	-	-	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	High
Depreciation	High
Fuel	Average

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	3/10
Tested	1.6 T Spark 3-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	3/5

AUDI A2 FROM AUG 00

There's decent space for driver and passengers in the smallest Audi, and it's cheap to run and maintain. But it's not all good news: owners' gripes include a tiny boot, an uncomfortable ride and limited visibility.

Body styles 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.4 or 1.6 litre petrol, 1.4 litre diesel
Prices new £12,572 (1.4) to £14,202 (1.4 TDI 90 SE Colour Storm)
Dimensions 3.83m x 1.87m
CO₂ (g/km) 144 (petrol), 119 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	○
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	●
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	★
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	★
Noise	○
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 57%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Non-engine electrics, interior equipment

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	○	-
Faults	-	○	-
Niggles	-	●	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Low
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	Very low

SECURITY

Theft of car	8/10
Theft from car	3/10
Tested	1.4

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

AUDI A3 FROM MAY 03

Owners love the appearance and interior of the A3. It's also praised for its performance and handling. But there are complaints about the limited space in the back, and spare parts and insurance can be expensive.

Body styles 3-dr hatchback, 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.6, 2.0 and 3.2 litre ptl, 1.9 and 2.0 dsl
Prices new £15,327 (1.6 SE 3-dr hatchback) to £26,827 (3.2 5-dr S Line Quattro Sportback)
Dimensions 4.27m x 1.77m
CO₂ (g/km) 161 to 259 (ptl), 143 to 161 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	★
Space in front	○
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	○
Appearance and design	★
Noise	○
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 77%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003-2005 Washers/wipers

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	○	-	-
Faults	○	-	-
Niggles	○	-	-

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Very high
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	High

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	4/10
Tested	2.0

SAFETY

Overall	Good
Crash test	4/5

AUDI A3 (USED ONLY) SEP 96 TO MAY 03

This car offers a quiet, rewarding drive in a neatly designed package. The space in the back is limited, though, and the price of parts and servicing pushes up running costs, despite low depreciation.

Body styles 3-dr or 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.6 or 1.8 litre petrol, 1.9 litre diesel
Prices used up to around £15,000
Dimensions 4.16m x 1.85m
CO₂ (g/km) 170 to 223 (petrol), 135 to 138 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	☆
Visibility/parking	○
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	○
Appearance and design	★
Noise	★
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 63%

TROUBLESPOTS

2000-2002 Immobiliser

1997-1999 Electric windows

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03-05 00-02 97-99

Breakdowns	-	○	○
Faults	-	○	○
Niggles	-	○	○

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall	Very high
Depreciation	Low
Fuel	High

SECURITY

Theft of car	6/10
Theft from car	4/10
Tested	1.6i 3-dr

SAFETY

Overall	Fair
Crash test	4/5

BMW 1 SERIES FROM MAY 04

BMW's new baby car boasts good handling and cornering. Together with its smart (if not roomy) interior, this means it's a hit with owners and well worth considering – though it is pricey.

Body styles 5-dr hatchback
Engines 1.6 or 2.0 litre petrol, 2.0 litre diesel
Prices new £15,807 (116i) to £21,897 (120i SE)
Dimensions 4.23m x 1.75m
CO₂ (g/km) 176 to 190 (ptl), 150 to 176 (dsl)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	diesel ★ petrol ☆
Driving position and comfort	☆
Ride quality	diesel ○ petrol ☆
Visibility/parking	☆
Instrument layout	☆
Space in front	○
Space in rear	●
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	★
Noise	★
Heating and ventilation	○

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 72%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003–2005 None

2000–2002 None

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03–05 00–02 97–99

Breakdowns ★ ○ –

Faults ○ ○ –

Niggles ○ ○ –

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall High

Depreciation Very low

Fuel Average

SECURITY

Theft of car 8/10

Theft from car 4/10

Tested 116i

SAFETY

Overall Fair

Crash test 5/5

CHRYSLER PT CRUISER FROM JUL 00

The PT Cruiser, now available in a cabriolet version, is popular with owners. They like the amount of room in the back and the driving position. But the retro styling means putting up with limited visibility and boot space.

Body styles 2-dr cabriolet, 5-dr hatchback
Engines 2.4 litre petrol, 2.2 litre diesel
Prices new £12,797 (2.4 Classic) to £18,097 (2.4 Cabriolet Limited auto)
Dimensions 4.29m x 1.71m
CO₂ (g/km) 231 to 256 (petrol), 185 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	○
Driving position and comfort	★
Ride quality	☆
Visibility/parking	●
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	★
Loading/storage	●
Appearance and design	★
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	☆

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 67%

TROUBLESPOTS

There were too few survey replies for us to name the troublespots.

RELIABILITY

Overall, Chryslers are average for reliability.

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall Average

Depreciation Low

Fuel Very high

SECURITY

Theft of car 7/10

Theft from car 4/10

Tested Touring 5-dr

SAFETY

Overall Fair

Crash test 3/5

CITROEN BERLINGO MULTISPACE FROM APR 99

As the name suggests, the Berlingo Multispace has lots of space. It's also cheap to run but is poor for interior comfort and refinement, and it has woeful safety and security levels.

Body styles 5-dr estate
Engines 1.4 or 1.6 litre petrol, 1.9 or 2.0 litre diesel
Prices new £9,707 (1.4i Forté) to £11,622 (2.0 HDi 90 Desire)
Dimensions 4.11m x 1.72m
CO₂ (g/km) 175 to 176 (petrol), 152 to 181 (diesel)



OWNERS' VERDICTS

Driving experience	●
Driving position and comfort	●
Ride quality	○
Visibility/parking	★
Instrument layout	●
Space in front	☆
Space in rear	☆
Loading/storage	★
Appearance and design	●
Noise	●
Heating and ventilation	○

RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND 65%

TROUBLESPOTS

2003–2005 Fuel system, non-engine electrics, interior equipment

RELIABILITY

Ptl/Dsl 03–05 00–02 97–99

Breakdowns ○ – –

Faults ○ – –

Niggles ○ – –

EVALUATION

RUNNING COSTS

Overall Very low

Depreciation High

Fuel Average

SECURITY

Theft of car 6/10

Theft from car 2/10

Tested Forté

SAFETY

Overall Poor

Crash test n/a