

First drive

Hyundai's new i20 is a well-rounded budget supermini


Korea development



HYUNDAI i20

The Hyundai i20 slots into the Korean marque's range between the i10 city car and the i30 medium hatchback. Starting at £8,195, it offers a budget alternative to superminis such as the Ford Fiesta and VW Polo.

You can choose between 1.2-litre 77bhp or 1.4-litre 99bhp petrol engines, or there are two 1.4 diesels, 74bhp or 89bhp, both of which will cost you just £35 a year in road tax. It's also worth noting Hyundai's excellent five-year, unlimited-mileage warranty.

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The i20 won't win any design awards, but it's comfortable, handles predictably and is easy to park. The 1.2 petrol engine revs sweetly, while the 1.4 model suffers from a harder ride. We haven't tried the diesels yet, but their economy figures look impressive.

Standard kit is generous, including air conditioning, electric windows, iPod connectivity and six airbags. Cars produced from February onwards also get electronic stability control (ESC). The boot holds a decent 295 litres, or more with the rear seat folded.

Predicted resale values are very good, so if you can look past the bland styling and limited badge kudos, we think the i20 has a lot going for it.

Hyundai claims impressive fuel economy of 64.2mpg from the 1.4 diesel i20. But the 1.2 petrol model returns only 10mpg less and is £1,000 cheaper. Driving 12,000 miles a year at current fuel prices, it would take 27 years to recoup the diesel's price premium.



The new Avensis has a tough act to follow

Estate of the art

TOYOTA AVENTIS

Toyota's previous Avensis was a Which? Best Buy, so expectations are high for this distinctive new UK-built model, which offers more angular styling along with greater practicality.

New 'Valvematic' petrol engines promise up to 20% more power and up to 26% lower CO2 emissions. Advanced 'common rail' injection means the diesel engines are also more powerful and greener than before. The 124bhp 2.0 diesel is officially capable of 55.4mpg, while the entry-level 143bhp 1.8 petrol returns 43.5mpg.

Handling lags behind the likes of the BMW 3 Series, but there's still plenty of grip on offer, and the Toyota delivers a softer ride. Boot space and

passenger room are limited, but there's a long list of standard equipment; even the base-spec T2 gets air-con and seven airbags.

VERDICT: We criticised the previous Avensis for lacking character – and the new car fares little better. However, it's extremely competent and likely to be one of the safest and most reliable cars in its class. With good predicted resale values and low insurance rates, the Toyota looks like a very safe bet.



This month

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Mini Convertible

The funky new drop-top Mini certainly looks the part, and it's cleaner and faster than before. But has losing its roof compromised the Mini's much-vaunted dynamic prowess? Find out online.



Honda Insight

The new Insight promises to be the UK's most affordable hybrid car when it goes on sale in March. Combining petrol and electric engines, average fuel economy is a claimed 64.2mpg. Look out for our full verdict at www.which.co.uk/cars.



New LR Freelander

Land Rover's new Freelander TD4_e is the world's first SUV with stop-start engine technology. Its maker says fuel economy in town is improved by up to 20%. Does it deliver? Log on to the website to learn more.



Greener driving tips

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