

HERE 4 MOTORING

Suzuki Swift Sport

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"Great things can come in small packages". It's a well used phrase and one that unquestionably suits the Suzuki Swift Sport.

The five-door 1.6 version I drove costs £14,499 (the three door is £500 cheaper) and, let me tell you, you'll get a lot for your cash if a supermini is the sort of motor that toots your horn.

I got to drive the Swift Sport on a mix of minor roads and motorways for a week, and I was suitably impressed. The car has control, it's fun and it has relatively low emissions. But the best thing about it is that a sixth gear is present – something woefully lacking in past incarnations.



The Swift Sport looks great from the rear; a wind diffuser and twin tailpipes give it an appearance similar to a Renault Clio Sport. The front is less intense but, from the side, the car has a low-slung stance which immediately distinguishes it from a standard Swift. 17 inch alloy wheels also add to the chunkier, more compelling, image.

Behind the wheel, the Suzuki is quick off the mark, thanks to an output of 134bhp. The sixth gear also helps pace and gives the speedy Swift a sporty gear change. The leather clad steering wheel and the front sports seats add to the athletic feel of the Japanese car. The seats grip you when the Suzuki is flung around corners. Don't get me wrong; the Swift Sport is never going to give you an adrenaline overdose – but it's fun enough to stand up to fast little numbers like the Citroen DS3 and the MINI Cooper.

With seven airbags, Suzuki's pocket-rocket is safe as well as sprightly. It offers the same control and peace of mind as the standard Swift, which earned a five-star rating in the European New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP). Standard safety equipment includes anti-lock braking with electronic braking-force distribution, and an Electronic Stability Programme (ESP). Of course, no supermini is ever going to have a huge boot. But the Swift Sport doesn't really have much of a load area at all - it's more like a rectangular slot.

It's deep though, which is enough to fit a couple of biggish bags in, and, if you're a new parent with a penchant for small, quick Japanese cars, then the tiniest buggy in the world might just about squeeze in as well. Regardless of this, the rear seats are big enough to install two child seats. Without them a couple of adults can fit in the back, but legroom is limited.



The Swift Sport will most likely appeal to motorists in their early 30s, but I suspect buyers won't be looking at the Suzuki as a practical option. It'll be the single girls and guys with a limited budget and a need for speed who'll be heading to Suzuki dealerships throughout 2015.

PROS 'N' CONS

- Quick ✓
- Safe ✓
- Fun ✓
- Petite Boot X

FAST FACTS

Max speed: 121 mph
0-62 mph: 8.7 secs
Combined mpg: 44.1
Engine: 1586 cc 16v petrol
Max. power (bhp): 134 at 7000 rpm
Max. torque (lb/ft): 118 at 4400 rpm
CO2: 147 g/km
Price: £14,499 (five door version)