

Mazda CX-5 2.2 Sport Auto AWD

By Tim Barnes-Clay, Motoring Journalist

Follow on Twitter: @carwriteups Visit: www.carwriteups.co.uk

THE ALL-NEW CX-5 from Mazda packs a punch with a 2.2D 173 bhp engine under the bonnet.

0-62 mph comes in 9.4 seconds and top speed is 127 mph. That's not at all bad given that this is an all-wheel-drive Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV).

The diesel powered motor is attractive in a chunky sort of way and it looks quite different to many other vehicles on the road. In the flagship model, on test here, you get all the trimmings, including leather seats, climate control, MP3 connectivity and so on. But, being an adoring parent of two tiny kids, what really impressed me is that it's officially one of the safest cars in the world. That

makes any parent commuting with fragile human beings feel instantly reassured.

The CX-5 achieved top marks in all categories of the demanding Euro NCAP tests. Its grades for adult occupant protection, child occupant protection and safety assist systems (94 percent, 87 percent and 86 percent respectively) were well above the 80 percent, 75 percent and 60 percent thresholds required in each category to collect the maximum five star safety rating.

The first of a new generation of Mazda models, the CX-5 is also the first equipped with the innovative SKYACTIV body. With the aim of developing the ideal car body, Mazda's engineers went back to the drawing board, rethinking the fundamental principles of structure, materials and manufacturing methods. As a result, high-tensile steel, which is incredibly strong, not to mention lightweight, comprises 61 percent of the body. The Mazda CX-5 therefore not only delivers superior crash safety, but is also extremely light. Mazda says it plans to use the SKYACTIV body in all of its new-generation products.

Behind the wheel, the driving position is good and the seating is comfortable. The Mazda's six-speed automatic gearbox is smooth and the CX-5 grips the road well. In fact the AWD model features

variable torque distribution and ultra-precise slip detection, giving a front/rear torque split ranging from 100/0 to 50/50 percent.

The Mazda CX-5 has generous front and rear legroom and a spacious boot (463 litres) plus a high quality feel, superior functionality and low noise levels for an enjoyable ride. Easy-to-use features include the three-piece 40/20/40 split folding rear seats with release levers in the cargo area and an advanced tonneau cover that opens and closes with the tailgate.

In many ways this is a car without compromise. It's the perfect solution for motorists with young families, thanks to its best-in-class luggage space and flexible seating arrangement as well as class-leading CO2 emissions and respectable fuel economy. It's also a fantastically accomplished towing vehicle and will haul up to 2000 kg.

The only drawback for this particular model is the price-tag. You won't get a lot of change out of £30,000 if you buy the CX-5 2.2 Sport Auto AWD from a dealership. But safety comes at a price, and I, for one, would rather have an SUV like this to negotiate the rural routes to school, nursery and work than, say, a similar priced, showier, German luxury marque.



PROS

- Safety
- Comfort
- Grip
- Space

CONS

- Price

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 127 mph
- 0-62 mph: 9.4 secs
- Combined mpg: 51.4
- Engine: 2191cc 4 cylinder 16 valve turbo diesel
- Max. power (bhp): 173 at 4500 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 309 at 2000 rpm
- Max. towing weight (braked) 2000 kg
- CO2: 144 g/km
- Price: £28,395 on the road