

auto BIOGRAPHIES

ŠKODA Rapid 1.6 TDI Elegance

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THIS MOTOR is more budget than bling; but that in itself is no problem.

The new hatchback from ŠKODA has space for five-up and, in 1.6 TDI guise, can extract up to 64.2mpg out of a tank. Also, with emissions of just 114g/km, the car is cost-effective to run as a company vehicle.

When it comes to thrills and spills the ŠKODA Rapid isn't really quite as speedy as its name suggests. The oil-burner under the bonnet of the Czech-made motor powers it from rest to 62mph in 10.6 seconds and upwards to 118mph. It's fairly slow going, and with only five gears it's annoyingly easy to crunch the gearstick up into a non-existent sixth cog.

As well as the less than prompt performance the Rapid feels skittish at motorway speeds and the steering is too light to inspire confidence. The plastic trim is disappointing compared with, say, the more executive-focused ŠKODA Superb but, in its favour the flagship 'Elegance' grade, on test here, does come stacked with kit.

Key features include cruise control; electrically heated door mirrors, multi-function steering wheel controls, Bluetooth and air conditioning. It's easy to get comfortable behind the wheel



too; the height adjustable seating and adaptable reach/rake steering column makes this possible.

If you opt for the Elegance model you'll also benefit from 16-inch alloys, cornering front fog lamps, rear electric windows, and chrome interior detailing. But no matter which variant of the Rapid you drive, you'll find access to the boot easy and the load space square and practical in this, the seventh car in ŠKODA's award-winning range.

Crucially, With Benefit in Kind (BIK) ratings from only 14 percent, the ŠKODA Rapid is expected to provide a shot in the arm to the brand's rapidly growing fleet sales. On-the-road pricing starts from £12,900 for the Rapid 1.2-litre 75PS in entry level S trim, rising to £17,850 for the Rapid 1.6 TDI CR 105PS in flagship Elegance spec.

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 118 mph
- 0-62 mph: 10.6 secs
- Combined mpg: 64.2
- Engine: 1568 cc 16 valve 4 cylinder turbo diesel
- Max. power (bhp): 103 at 4400 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 184 at 1500-2500 rpm
- CO2: 114 g/km
- Price: £17,850 on the road

PROS 'N' CONS

- Economical V
- Stacked with kit V
- Practical load area V
- Less than 'rapid' performance X
- Interior plastics X