

New Hyundai i20



By Tim Barnes-Clay, Motoring Journalist - tweeting @carwriteups

Cool, calm and collected, is the best way to portray the fresh i20.

The Hyundai steers agreeably, feels poised and planted and is nicely polished; highlighting the lengths the South Korean car company has gone to in terms of engineering.

Choose the right little lump under the bonnet and, on a motorway jaunt, it's as hushed as a Volkswagen Polo.

It's the oil-burners that are smoother and more muted than the petrol engines. There are two available: a 75hp 1.1-litre three-cylinder and a 90hp 1.4-litre four-cylinder. The larger capacity engine has more thump, but both rev melodiously with engine clatter nicely shut away.

If you're going to be cruising longer distances then the 1.4 is the one to go for, but if you'll spend most of your time zipping around town then the 1.1 still has enough pace. Both are joined to a six-speed manual gearbox that's upbeat and featherlike – exactly what you need in a super-mini. You can even get an especially 'green' 1.1 that emits just 84g/km CO₂.

On the topic of emissions, and in contrast to the diesels, the 1.2-litre petrol (on offer in 75 and 84hp guise) and the 100hp 1.4-litre petrol engine release between 112 and 127g/km CO₂ respectively. That said; driving naturally aspirated engines is a reminder of just how fine modern, petite petrol units are.

Even on the entry-level i20 model you get a decent level of equipment. Features include lots of electronic safety gear, including six airbags. There's also remote central locking, USB connectivity and electric front windows.



You'll have to fork out £12,725 for the 1.2 84hp i20 SE - the most recent test car I've had from the line-up. Kit on this petrol model consists of 16-inch alloy wheels, voice-activate Bluetooth, lane departure warning, all-round electric windows, parking sensors and cruise control with speed limiter fitted as standard. It's not a lot to pay for such a well decked-out car, and this is where the i20 range starts to come in to its own.

At the top of the pole is the £15,725 i20 Premium, which along with everything else, gets heated seats and steering wheel, a panoramic sunroof and front parking sensors.

Hyundai has class-leading levels of space thanks to a longer wheelbase over its forerunner, and I have to say, along with the latest Skoda Fabia, the new i20 is the most capacious super-mini on the market.

It's not come at the sacrifice of load space, either. Plump for one of the lower three models and there's 326 litres of luggage room – the variable height boot floor means it's only a tad less roomy on higher spec cars.

The cockpit design is flawless and there are some pleasing soft-touch surfaces. It's a noticeable step up from the outgoing i20 and the more premium image interior fits with the well-groomed exterior aesthetics.

A five-year unlimited mileage warranty shouldn't be unobserved, either. That's a considerable chunk of value right there.

Fast Facts (1.2 84hp i20 SE)

- Max speed: 106 mph
- 0-62 mph: 13.1 secs
- Combined mpg: 55.4
- Engine: 1248cc 4 cylinder, 16 valve petrol
- Max. power (bhp): 83
- CO₂: 119 g/km
- Price: £12,725