

## Honda Civic Hatchback

### WhatCar? verdict

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#### For:

The Civic has space-age looks inside and out, and it offers fine performance and a vast boot.

#### Against:

The car is let down by a jiggly low-speed ride, a poor dash layout and awful rear vision.



### On the road verdict

#### Performance

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A strong range of engines

The 1.8-litre petrol engine is responsive and eager to rev, providing strong performance and plentiful pulling power. The 2.2-litre diesel has lots of grunt, too, but its power arrives in a rather sudden mid-range surge. Even the entry-level 82bhp 1.4-litre petrol offers decent performance, as long as you're prepared to work it hard."

#### Ride and handling

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Adequate, but no match for the best

The Civic handles well enough, but it's not as composed or grippy as the best cars in this class. The steering responds quickly and is usefully light around town, but it's frustratingly short on feel at higher speed. The suspension thuds rather noisily over patchy urban roads, but it's settled at motorway speed.

#### Refinement

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Smooth engines, but some suspension and road noise

The Civic isn't as quiet as the most refined cars, but it's a decent cruiser, with little wind noise intruding at speed. There is some road noise over poor surfaces, however, and the suspension clunks over bumps around town. The petrol engines are smooth and quiet; the diesel wheezes and whistles when worked, but it's easier on the ear than many rivals.

### In the cabin verdict

#### Behind the wheel

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Futuristic cabin is too compromised

### Ownership verdict

#### Buying

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Pricy, but good residuals and low running costs

The Civic is competitively priced and, although discounts are small, it holds on to its value well. Fuel economy is another strength, whichever engine you choose, but insurance groups are comparatively high. Company car drivers with an eye on their tax bill benefit from impressively low emissions.

#### Quality

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Hard plastics, but the build is solid

There's a wide range of plastics in the Civic's cabin; many are hard to the touch, but it all feels built to last. The mechanicals should prove equally durable, because Honda has a superb record in reliability and customer satisfaction surveys.

#### Safety and security

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Superb in both areas

Every Civic is equipped with twin front, side and curtain airbags, as well as a stability control system to prevent skids. SE models and above have active head restraints that move to minimise whiplash injuries in the event of a rear-end shunt. An engine immobiliser, deadlocks and an alarm are standard across the range to prevent theft.

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As with the exterior, you'll either love or loathe the Civic's cabin. Its three-dimensional instruments look futuristic, but they reflect onto the windows at night. Smaller drivers have to lower the steering wheel as low as it'll go to see the speedo, while the switchgear is funky, but overly complicated. Rear vision is appalling because a spoiler slices across the screen and there's no rear wiper.

### Space and practicality



Disappointing headroom, but otherwise excellent

The Civic provides vast legroom for those in the front or rear seats, but headroom is rather tight - especially in the back. At 485 litres the boot is massive and a split-level floor boosts versatility. The rear seats fold to leave a long, flat load area and they can also be flipped up like cinema seats to create a second load area in the rear footwell.

### Equipment



Kit ranges from pretty good to plush

Entry-level five-door is well equipped, with climate and stability control, electric windows and six airbags and, on all but the 1.4, alloy wheels. Sport trim features larger alloys and xenon headlights, while ES includes a glass roof, cruise control, and automatic headlights and wipers. EX versions have a satellite-navigation system, Bluetooth and rear parking sensors. Three-door models come in Type S or Type S GT trim, which add sporty suspension and styling tweaks to SE and ES specs.

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