

## Suzuki Swift Hatchback

### WhatCar? verdict



**For:**

The Swift gives you lots of power and kit for the money. It's fun to drive and stylish, too

**Against:**

There is limited luggage space and air-con isn't an option on the 1.3-litre models



### On the road verdict

#### Performance



Sprightly petrols; refined diesel

The 91bhp 1.3-litre petrol engine provides good performance, even if it does get a bit thrashy at times. The 100bhp 1.5-litre is gutsy and provides more pace than many more expensive rivals. The Sport version uses a 123bhp 1.6 that feels very quick, but the 1.5 is fast enough, and is considerably cheaper. The 1.3 diesel engine is also surprisingly speedy and refined - great if you do lots of miles a year.

#### Ride and handling



Neat and tidy handling; jiggly on rougher roads

The Swift feels nimble around town, although the steering could do with a little more feel. On faster roads it handles and grips keenly, but it's ultimately not as composed as the class leaders. The ride isn't as supple as the best, either, and larger bumps thump through the cabin. The Sport model has firmer suspension and, although it's fun, it's not as focused as some rivals.

#### Refinement



Intrusive suspension noise over broken surfaces

Wind noise is present at cruising pace, but road noise isn't too much of a distraction. The petrol engines are raucous when pushed hard, though, and drone a bit at speed. The diesel is smooth. A short, accurate gearshift and well-weighted pedals help take the strain out of driving around town or in heavy traffic.

### In the cabin verdict

#### Behind the wheel



### Ownership verdict

#### Buying



List price undercuts many rivals'

Considering the power and equipment that it offers, most Swift models undercut their rivals by quite a margin. Discounts from the list price aren't as big as some, however, and the 1.5 engine pushes up insurance costs. The 1.3-litre diesel engine is extremely frugal. All petrols return mid-40s mpg, except the Sport - so it's even harder to justify the initial extra expense of that model.

#### Quality



Some shiny plastics, but fairly solid construction

The Swift's cabin is stylish and solid throughout. The plastics are hard - unlike the soft-touch finish on some rivals - but close-fitting panels, slick controls and plenty of thoughtful touches give the feel of a product that's built to last. Like most Suzukis, we expect the Swift to be reliable.

#### Safety and security



Performs well in a collision

The Swift scores highly in this section, and even the base model comes with twin front, side and curtain airbags. Anti-lock brakes are standard, but only the Sport has traction and stability control. The Swift earned four stars in Euro NCAP crash tests and all trim levels have deadlocks to help thwart thieves.

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Comfy, but no steering wheel reach adjustment

The Swift's driving position is good and all-round visibility is excellent, but unlike many superminis, the steering wheel doesn't adjust for reach. The backrest adjuster is also a little fiddly, and although the dashboard is simple and well laid out, the central digital display can be hard to read in strong sunlight.

### Space and practicality



Good space for four, but luggage space is limited

It's not the most spacious car in its class, but the Swift provides decent room for four, plus a boot capable of coping with a couple of suitcases. Added flexibility comes from rear seats that split and fold 60/40, and tumble forward behind the front seats to boost load capacity.

### Equipment



Well specced for the money

Entry-level 1.3 GL models come well equipped for the money with power steering, electric front windows and remote central locking. Moving up to the 1.5 GLX adds air-conditioning, keyless entry and start-up, plus alloy wheels. The Sport adds climate control, stability control and an MP3-ready stereo.

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