

## Vauxhall Zafira MPV

### WhatCar? verdict



#### For:

The Zafira is as roomy as any mid-sized MPV, but it's better to drive than most

#### Against:

The one-piece rear bench means the cabin isn't as versatile as it should be



### On the road verdict

#### Performance



Lots of choice, and every engine is good

The smallest petrol engine, a 104bhp 1.6, can struggle a bit when the car is fully loaded, but most of the time it's fine if you're not in a hurry. The rest of the petrol engines, which include a 138bhp 1.8, a 148bhp 2.2 and two turbocharged 2.0s with 197bhp or 237bhp, all give strong performance. The smart money will be spent on the smooth, punchy diesels, though. Both are turbocharged 1.9s with either 118bhp or 148bhp.

#### Ride and handling



Firm, but fun to drive

The Zafira handles pretty tidily - body control is tight, and strong grip and direct steering mean you can also have fun when you leave the nippers at home. However, the firm suspension does mean the ride can be jiggly at times.

#### Refinement



Wind noise and gearshift are only issues

Overall, the Zafira is quiet. Road noise is particularly well contained, something that's often hard to achieve with a big, open-plan cabin. Most of the engines are pretty hushed, too, although the diesels can be a bit louder than the petrols under load. Wind noise is present on the motorway, though, and the gearshift is imprecise.

### In the cabin verdict

#### Behind the wheel



Comfy, but visibility not great

All versions have two-way adjustment for the drivers' seat and steering wheel, so any driver will have an easy time getting comfy. The dash layout is mostly clear, too, except for stereo controls that are fiddly and confusing. Visibility isn't a strong point, either - small

### Ownership verdict

#### Buying



Cheap with reasonable running costs

Prices aren't high to start with, and Vauxhall dealers are always willing to entice buyers with a sizeable discount. Running costs aren't steep for the class, either. Resale values are reasonable, but not as strong as some rivals such as the VW Touran.

#### Quality



Should prove dependable

The Zafira's cabin isn't exactly a plush environment - there are too many dull, grey plastics on show for that. It feels far from low-rent, though, and the materials are sturdy and dependable. Vauxhall usually achieves mid-table respectability in our reliability surveys, so the mechanicals should prove hardy.

#### Safety and security



Lots of airbags; no stability control on base cars

All versions come with curtain airbags that cover the first and second rows. That's in addition to twin front and side airbags that have already helped the Zafira to a five-star crash test rating from Euro NCAP. Only the more powerful versions come with standard stability control, though. Deadlocks and an immobiliser are standard.

front quarterlights mean it's tough to see some corners.

### Space and practicality



Fallen behind newer rivals for versatility. There's a plenty of space in the Zafira's front five seats, but the rearmost seats are only suitable for children. The seats aren't clever enough, either. The one-piece rear bench can be folded in half and slid up against the front seatbacks; in some rivals, however, you can slide, fold and recline each chair individually. At least there's a decent boot.

### Equipment



Low-end models are sparsely equipped. All Zafiras come with air-conditioning, a CD player, remote central locking and electric front windows, but on low-end Expression, Life and Exclusiv models, you don't get much more. Design versions add alloys, powered rear windows and rain-sensing wipers. Elite models have leather upholstery, cruise control and an MP3 socket, while SRi versions have sporty styling touches and a sports suspension.