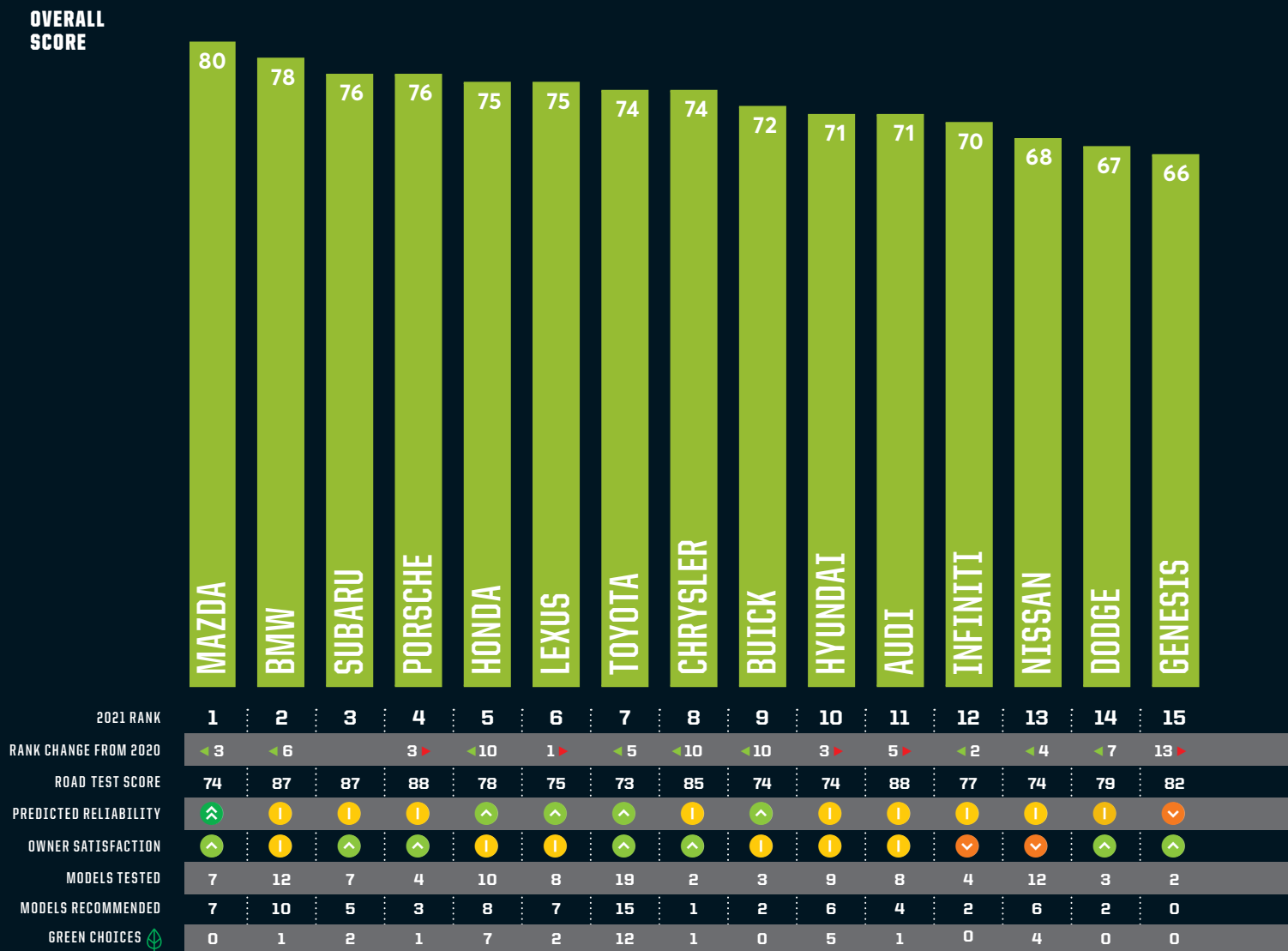


WE RATE THE CAR BRANDS

Our annual report card ranks the brands based on Overall Score

OUR CAR BRAND report card this year saw some significant reshuffling as some brands rocketed up the rankings and others fell. Big moves can usually be attributed to changes in predicted reliability for individual models within a brand's lineup. We determine reliability by asking our members in surveys to report on problems they've experienced with their vehicles.

Mazda, Subaru, and Porsche were again among the top brands. Honda showed the most improvement, increasing 10 spots into the Top 5, aided by improved reliability. (All but two Hondas now have average reliability or better.) BMW also rose this year into the Top 5. A pair of gainers—Chrysler and Buick—made it into the Top 10 because of incremental improvements in their product



lines and downward movement by rivals. The luxury brands Genesis and Lincoln registered the biggest drops, each due to subpar predicted reliability.

We compile the report card by looking at the Overall Score for each model, factoring in road-test performance, predicted reliability, owner satisfaction, and safety. Then we average all of them to come up with a brand Overall Score.

To be included in our report card, a brand must have at least two models that we've tested. Fiat, Maserati, and Ram didn't have the minimum number this year. Fiat was the lowest-ranked brand last year. Alfa Romeo now holds that last spot.

How We Rank Car Brands

The Overall Score for individual models is based on four key

factors: the road test, reliability, owner satisfaction, and safety. For the Road-Test Score, we put the vehicles we buy through more than 50 tests and evaluations.

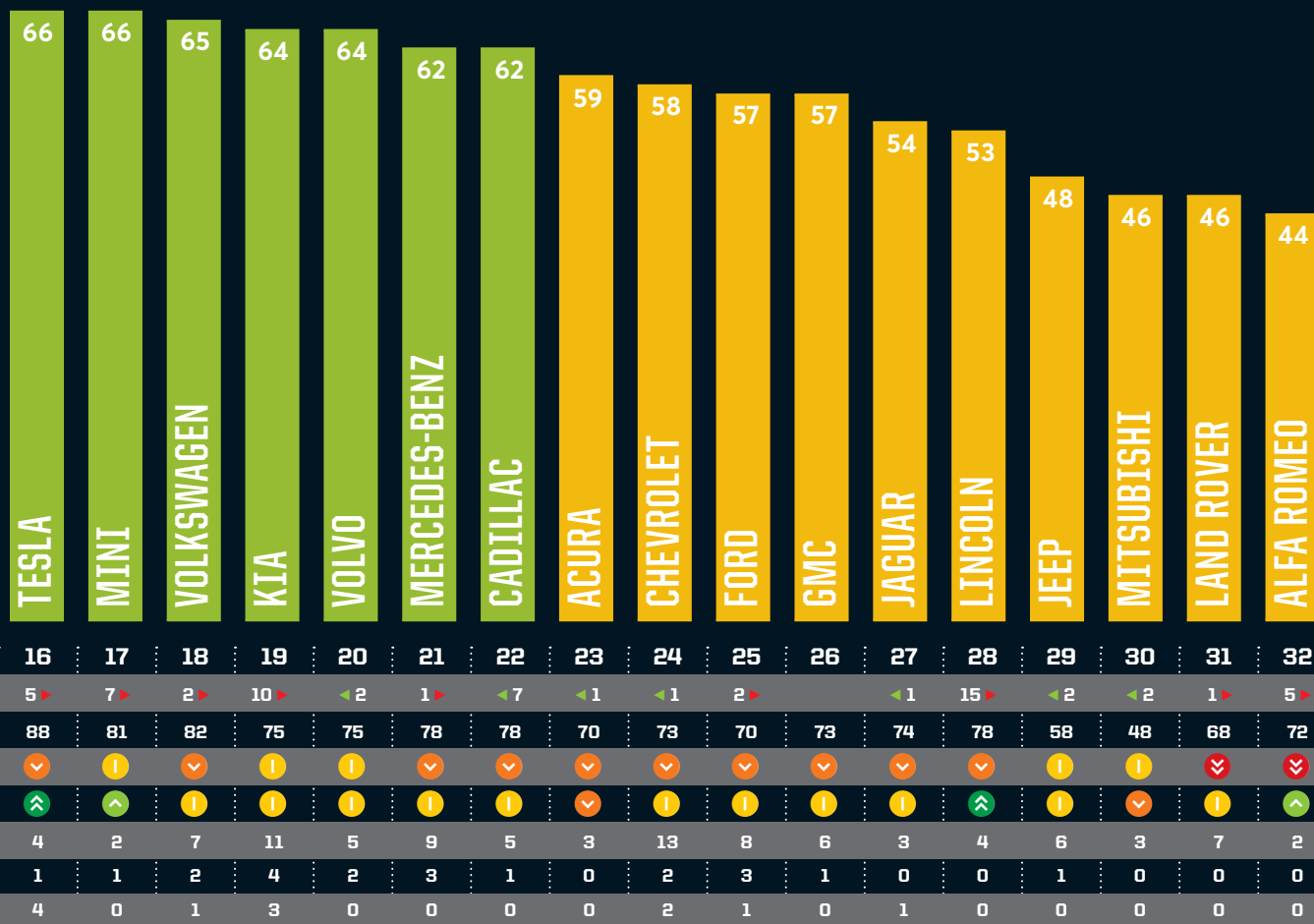
Predicted Reliability ratings are based on the problems reported by members in 17 trouble areas in CR's auto surveys.

Owner Satisfaction predictions are based on whether CR members say in our surveys that

they'd buy the same vehicle again, if given the chance.

Safety includes an assessment of crash-test results and extra points awarded for vehicles that come with proven safety features standard on all trims.

Green Choices reflect how many tested vehicles from a brand earned the Green Choice designation for being among the cleanest, lowest-emitting passenger vehicles.



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