CR Road Test Results

The Crosstrek is Subaru’s pseudo-SUV. It’s essentially an Impreza hatchback with a raised ride height and some rugged visual cues. Since it’s based on the already-good Impreza, it has that model’s smooth ride, good fuel mileage, easy-to-use controls, and nosy rear seat. As a result, it’s nestled at the top of our subcompact SUV standings. Subaru also offers a plug-in hybrid version, which contributes to the Crosstrek’s appeal, but doesn’t deliver enough of a mileage improvement to make it a good value.

Both versions have a comfortable and controlled ride that stands head and shoulders above the competition. Its handling is responsive, though it isn’t fizzy when driving through sharp turns as the Mazda CX-3; for example. Subaru’s standard full-time all-wheel-drive system is appealing and, combined with the Crosstrek’s ample ground clearance, gives the SUV the ability to handle slippery pavement, a muddy trail, or rough dirt roads.

The standard 1.52-hp, 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine has just enough power for most situations, which is on par with its rivals. But it sounds strained and noisy when hard acceleration is needed. Uplevel versions get a more powerful 2.5-liter engine. The continuously variable transmission (CVT) mostly avoids revving the engine by mimicking the shifts that a traditional automatic transmission would make. But there are still times when engine drone is intrusive. We measured 24 mpg overall in our tests, which is commendable for an all-wheel-drive vehicle.

The plug-in hybrid version can cover only about 17 miles on electric power but even then, it’s a challenge to drive solely with the electric motor. Any moderate pressure on the accelerator and the gas engine kicks in.

Once past that semi-electric portion, we got 33 mpg overall in average driving, which is the same as the Hybrid’s. The Hybrid’s appeal.

Road Test Results

Performance

Acceleration
0 to 60 mph (sec.)
10.2 sec

Transmission
4/5

Braking
5/5

Emergency Handling
4/5

Comfort/Convenience

Ride
4/5

Noise
4/5

Survey Results

Reliability History

Owner Satisfaction

How to Read the Ratings

Recommended vehicles, indicated with a check mark (✓) are the models with the highest Overall Scores that meet the criteria in their rating category. Make + Model reflects the vehicle we tested and its engine displacement.

Overall Score reflects a vehicle’s performance in our road tests, latest results from the reliability and owner satisfaction sections of CR’s extensive Annual Auto Surveys, the in-depth evaluations of our reliability experts, and our expert assessments of how vehicles handle today’s most pressing concerns (including forward collision warning, a leading safety feature) and their traditional attributes, such as comfort, fuel economy, and ergonomics and interface design. The energy efficiency of every vehicle is also factored into the overall rating.

Overview reflects the vehicle’s performance in our road tests, latest results from the reliability and owner satisfaction sections of CR’s extensive Annual Auto Surveys, the in-depth evaluations of our reliability experts, and our expert assessments of how vehicles handle today’s most pressing concerns (including forward collision warning, a leading safety feature) and their traditional attributes, such as comfort, fuel economy, and ergonomics and interface design. The energy efficiency of every vehicle is also factored into the overall rating.

Over the years, we’ve added new tests to our ratings. We do this to help consumers make better decisions in an increasingly complex marketplace. The results of these tests are used to determine overall scores. We also tie certain features to a vehicle’s overall score. For instance, the Highway Fuel Economy & Emissions test is tied to the Hybrid’s appeal.

Best Version to Get

For the best value, we think the 2.0 Premium is the right choice for most buyers. EyeSight is a worthwhile option which can be had on all trims except for those equipped with the manual transmission.

Notable changes:

For 2021, Subaru added a new Sport trim level, and a more powerful 2.5-liter engine on high-end versions. The upper-level engine comes on the heels of 2020 updates which brought on an available rear-seat reminder system, standard automatic door locks, and standard automatic climate control.

The 2022 model remains mostly unchanged.

To read the full road test, visit www.consumerreports.org/cars/subaru/crosstrek/road-test