IN SOME CARS, shorter drivers may struggle to reach the pedals and steering wheel while maintaining good visibility. In others, taller drivers may feel cramped. That’s why CR puts testers of several heights—from just about 5 feet tall to over 6 feet—behind the wheel to evaluate access, driving position, front-seat comfort, and visibility. We even found some models that both tall and short drivers can share comfortably.
THE AVERAGE NEW car costs upward of $38,000, but the vehicles below are available for much less. They boast solid reliability and a high CR road-test score, plus standard forward collision warning (FCW) and automatic emergency braking (AEB). Blind spot warning (BSW) either comes standard on these models or as an option that doesn’t push the overall price above $30,000.
... URBAN DRIVERS

Many city dwellers need vehicles that are small enough to park in tight spots but big enough for a road trip or weekend shopping excursion. We narrowed our list down to new cars with a tight turning radius for maximum maneuverability, strong city gas mileage, and a ride that absorbs potholes. All of our picks, shown at right, have standard automatic emergency braking (AEB) with pedestrian detection.

... VALUE-MINDED BUYERS

Popular cars don’t always offer the best value. Some struggle in our reliability or satisfaction surveys, lack key safety features, or fall short in our tests. Here are CR-recommended alternatives, including new cars with better Overall Scores, and more reliable used cars.

THE POPULAR CHOICE

THE BETTER CHOICE

THE POPULAR CHOICE

THE BETTER CHOICE

Small Car

Compact Car

Compact SUV

Compact SUV

Three-Row SUV

Used Luxury Car

Used Midsize SUV

Used Compact Luxury SUV

Volkswagen Jetta

Nissan Sentra

Toyota Tacoma

Honda Ridgeline

Nissan Rogue Sport

Subaru Crosstrek

2015 BMW X3

2015 Acura RDX

Ford Escape

Mazda CX-5

2014 Jeep Grand Cherokee

2017 Lincoln MKX

Ford Explorer

Kia Telluride

2015 Audi A6

2014 Lexus GS

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