

Welcome to the



21st Century

Ian Lamming test drives the Honda CR-V

FORGET power to weight ratio, that's sooo last century darling.

This is the 21st century, when the Polar icecaps are on the wane and fresh air is full of hydrocarbons.

Today's buzzword is power to consumption ratio and the new Honda CR-V boasts the best in the world.

Fresh-faced and smart, the latest version of Honda's popular SUV packs a more powerful 160PS two-stage turbo diesel. The old 120PS was smooth, powerful and economical. The much-developed 1.6 litre now packs greater punch without sacrificing cleanliness or economy – quite a feat and a symbol of the emphasis Honda places on technology.

If that's not impressive enough, the auto features nine ratios, up from five, or there remains a more conventional six-speed manual. There are 2WD and 4WD variants, of course, to suit your lifestyle. Launched in 1997 and now in its fourth generation, more than 750,000 CR-Vs have graced the tarmac in the UK and Europe making it fundamental to the success of the brand outside Japan.

On top of the obvious benefits to driving dynamics, including performance and ride, technology has also been employed to boost safety and improve connectivity.

The new infotainment centre offers the usual DAB/FM/AM but also internet radio, Bluetooth, web browsing, satnav and rear view parking.

A seven-inch display screen will have a familiar tablet feel.

Cameras and radar should help avoid the lovely paintwork being dented by those who love to cut in.

Styling changes are minimal but incredibly effective at freshening the CR-V's face making a good looking SUV more sleek and contemporary. At the back the LED lamps have been redesigned to give them a 3D effect. The interior also gets a useful makeover with the dash giving easy access to the pinch, swipe and tap touch screen.

CR-V has always been a great SUV and the latest looks set to depose its predecessor as it moves the sector bar even higher. Now that definitely is this century darling.

Fact File

- Honda CR-V 1.6i-DTEC SR 4WD
- Engine: 1.6 litre turbo diesel
- Power: 160PS
- 0-62mph: 9.7 secs
- Top speed: 113mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 57.8
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 129

