

Clever Engineering

Ian Lamming makes some noise about the virtues of the new Skoda Kodiaq

CLANG! The resounding thwack, clunk and knell of metal on metal reverberates around the car park.

In the red corner is a resultant divot, a car park battle scar to be worn with shame. In the silver corner is a rear door, the edge of which is skinned of paint, the culprit teenager in the back oblivious to the carnage he has caused. If only his parents had been driving a Skoda Kodiaq.

From a manufacturer who relishes the simple but brilliant comes its latest invention. Skoda invented door-mounted umbrellas, under-parcel shelf hooks from which to hang your plastic shopping bags to stop your vittles swilling around the boot and now door edge protection.

Ever conscious of shrinking car park spaces and increasing automotive girth, the Kodiaq has plastic protectors which pop out of nowhere when you open the door and store away like magic as soon as you close them again.

Their purpose is two-fold. They protect the paintwork of the door edge but also minimise the impact on neighbouring vehicles should the occupants fail to anticipate their own strength or lacking in general spatial awareness – sheer genius and one of myriad reasons to invest in a Kodiaq.

Skoda's latest SUV makes its presence felt in so many ways. Firstly, it looks big, very big, imposing, bold and purposeful. While that's great for scaring away the opposition and other road users, it also means passengers (seven if need be) have bags of room to stretch, while luggage is equally spoilt for space. It's huge.

While the door protectors involve good old fashioned engineering, Kodiaq also boasts the very latest in Bluetooth, infotainment, touch screen and digital cleverness. It's as awesome as it is intuitive to use.

All round cameras, radar and sensors protect its crystalline shell from all directions and the general public from its mass and momentum. It's so clever.

And even when you reduce its all encompassing smartpanthness to the basics of engine, handling and transmission, it excels in every quarter.

The 2.0 diesel is incredibly powerful making performance easy, sprightly, yet economical.

The chassis is sharp and involving making the Kodiaq fun to drive, not to mention confidence-inspiring.

The DSG automatic gearbox moves at the speed of a slight-of-hand magician, is super smooth and responsive. It's simply the best.

Kodiaq is Skoda's first proper attempt at a big 4x4 and it is an absolute beauty. Thanks to its excellent design the car park cacophony you will hear will be just metaphorical as its many plaudits are celebrated at the top of everyone's voices.

Fact File

- Skoda Kodiaq Edition 2.0 TDI 190PS 4x4 DSG
- Engine: 2.0 diesel
- Power: 190PS
- 0-62mph: 9.1 secs
- Top speed: 129mph
- Combined MPG: 49.6
- Transmission: Seven-speed DSG auto
- CO2 g/km: 151

