

Have a Blast



Ian Lamming has a blast in the new Toyota Avensis

Fact File

- Toyota Avensis
- Engine: 1.6 diesel
- Power: 110BHP
- 0-62mph: 11.4 secs
- Top speed: 115mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 67.3
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- Insurance: 12E
- CO2 g/km: 109

COMING up fast in the mirror, the speeding vehicle caught my eye. I have to admit, at first, I wasn't quite sure what it was, so I took a hard look as it sped by.

Quite striking but a bit embarrassing...I was driving the same car!

Well winter is like that. You leave in the dark, you arrive back in the dark and even during the day, your head is normally down as you bend into the rain and gale force winds.

Truth is, this time of year, you barely look up, let alone stand and gaze and I hadn't really had time to admire the Toyota's futuristic lines, until one whizzed by.

New Avensis is smart, distinctive and very modern. It shares the Toyota gene pool and couldn't really be anything else, which makes it appealing.

I wouldn't describe it as pretty but it is striking. The interior is brand new too and the Business Edition Plus has all manner of infotainment touch screen gubbins that you might like to ask the salesman how to work if you fancy one.

Satnav is brill; you see I managed to get that going. Who says I'm a Luddite?

Avensis would be the businessman's dream for other reasons too.

The 1.6 litre diesel is refined, powerful and economical, the ride comfortable the cabin ambiance relaxed.

That's a combo that makes Avensis a supreme mile-eater.

Sharp handling and a torquey motor also make it good fun cross-country and the six-speed manual and light clutch make driving a pleasure.

I can see why the lady in the other Avensis blasted past me – they are deceptively quick.

This particular Avensis is a four-door saloon. Remember those?

That means it has a boot lid rather than a hatchback. The opening looks narrow but it is fine and swallows luggage aplenty without any fuss.

All in all this latest Toyota four door is a solid, dependable, economical and spirited model that is well worth a look – especially when it is standing outside your house or blasting down the motorway.