

Stand out from the



Crowd

Ian Lamming drives the new Honda CR-V

Fact File

Honda CR-V 1.6i-DTEC SR 2WD
Engine: 1.6 litre turbo diesel
Power: 120PS
0-62mph: 11.2 secs
Top speed: 113mph
Combined miles per gallon: 62.8
Transmission: six-speed manual
Insurance: 24A
CO2 g/km: 119

It doesn't take much; just one little feature can make one vehicle stand out from the rest.

Without it there's the danger the car can slip into the morass of also-rans, particularly in the fiercely competitive sector of sports utility vehicles.

Honda's CR-V has existed in this class quite successfully for many years but the latest incarnation has definitely moved up the ranks thanks to a couple of important features.

Firstly, the six speed manual gearbox is exceptional, not just adequate, nor merely good, but truly outstanding. It has the precision, weight and feel of a sports car and it makes the CR-V an absolute pleasure to drive along roads that require frequent cog-swapping.

When you consider how many changes we make in our driving lives having a decent box is absolutely essential yet we often make do with less than satisfactory. No need in the CR-V as the six-speeder is a beauty.

Secondly, there's a new engine. At 1.6 litre, surprisingly, the diesel is smaller than you might expect in this size of SUV where 2.0 or even 2.2 litre are the norm. But its apparent lack of CCs is of little consequence as the new motor is creamy smooth, with a lusty power delivery, boasting incredible levels of refinement and stunning

economy. It's an engine that moves the goalposts.

The rest of the CR-V has become familiar enough and remains a very appealing and tidy package. The dash and trim are smart and practical, there is plenty of equipment and nice touches, such as the way the rear seats release and drop forward.

CR-V is big and accommodating with large, well-shaped boot and bags of space for passengers. It also looks good with bold nose and modern rear end; there really is nothing to fault.

Virtually every manufacturer offers the discerning buyer an SUV and many come with a high degree of hype – even awards. That doesn't necessarily mean they are the right vehicle for you and the only way to tell is to get behind the wheel and have a go yourself.

One thing is for certain, the latest CR-V should be on any potential buyer's shopping list because it does stand out from the crowd.