

Pay Attention

Ian Lamming pays less attention than he should to the latest brilliant SUV from Hyundai

IT was only when I came to write the spec panel that I suddenly thought 'what's the car again'?

Strangely, it wasn't that it was forgettable, quite the opposite in fact, it was stand-out excellent.

The thing about Hyundai's latest Tucson is that it is actually too good to guess; let me explain. Tucson is the latest SUV from Hyundai. It is exceptionally smart looking from the front, sides and back, beautifully proportioned, fabulously well-built and specified.

Driving the Hyundai couldn't be better. It is quick off the mark, powerful through the mid-range and grips like a 4x4 should...except it isn't one.

I had to ask the press office which model this was because I could not have guessed. There are three diesels to choose from, a 1.7 and two 2.0 litres.

The power delivery is so good that I thought it must certainly be the 138PS 2.0; in fact it was so impressive it might well have been the 186PS 2.0.

So you can imagine how surprised I was to be told it was actually the entry level 1.7 with, on paper at least, a relatively modest 116PS – no way!

This thing flies and never fails in its forward direction no matter how steep the gradient or heavy the payload. Being a 1.7 litre also offers benefits of economy – 61.7mpg on the combined cycle. Nicely done Tucson, nicely done.

Whizzing up our stony track or down any gravelly road – yes highways are leaving ball bearings around every corner at the moment – the Hyundai grips like an all wheel drive, except this model only powers the front wheels. How good must the 2.0 AWD be?

Inside, the Tucson is just as impressive with loads of space, comfy seats and decent load bay.

The dash and dials are spot on, the driving position perfect and the spec has everything you could possibly need, from satnav to cruise and aircon.

Tucson is a cracking vehicle in every way but if you decide to pop into a dealership to try one it might be worth listening carefully to the salesman to see which model you are actually going to drive – I wish I had.

Fact File

- Hyundai Tucson 1.7 CRDi 2WD
- Engine: 1.7 diesel
- Power: 116PS
- 0-62mph: 13.7 secs
- Top speed: 109mph
- Combined MPG: 61.7
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 119

