

When size Matters

Ian Lamming finds himself in a tight spot

SQUEEZING out of the tightest of car parks it suddenly strikes me that this SUV is considerably bigger than I remember.

Metal post one side, railings the other and a big rock in front makes the manoeuvre tricky to say the least but is a salutary reminder of the CX-5's girth.

In silver it doesn't appear particularly large and I'd actually pigeon-holed it into a smaller category of SUV. But the Mazda is actually a sizeable vehicle and one that is most accommodating.

Size does matter especially if you have a family because partners and children come with gubbins galore.

CX-5 is nice and roomy all over its well finished and equipped cabin and the boot space is huge.

A couple of storms are a scary reminder of just how quickly our roads flood nowadays and having a big SUV, that can wade up to its waistline, is a great comfort.

The 2.2 litre diesel is immensely strong offering controlled and useful spreads of power to get you out of any tricky situation. It makes the Mazda a rapid mover, a supreme vehicle in which to overtake and an easy car to pilot around town.

Dynamically it is strong too; it rides and handles with confidence and aplomb. The steering is well-weighted offering bags of feel and it grips more like a saloon than an SUV. It's just a great and exhilarating drive and very relaxing on long hauls.

Mazda also offers exceptional levels of build with great care given to make every piece as good as the next so the overall effect is one of high quality.

A day seldom goes by without another SUV hitting our roads, swelling the ranks of a burgeoning and now dominant sector. It is easy to get caught up with the new and forget about stalwarts like the CX-5 which remains as impressive as ever, even in the tightest of places.

Fact File

- Engine: 2.2 diesel
- Power: 150PS
- 0-62mph: 9.2 secs
- Top speed: 126mph
- Combined MPG: 61.4
- Transmission: Six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 119

