

AUTO
2022
ISSUE

10 TOP PICKS

WHEN YOU'RE seeking the perfect car for you and your family, there's an overwhelming selection to choose from. To help you zero in on the best options, Consumer Reports presents its annual 10 Top Picks: the best cars, SUVs, and trucks our experts recommend without hesitation.

To be in this group, a vehicle must have an Overall Score among the highest in its category, factoring in road tests, predicted reliability, owner satisfaction, and safety. Top Picks also must come

standard in all trims with forward collision warning (FCW) and automatic emergency braking (AEB) with pedestrian detection—safety features we consider critical because they have proved to save lives.

New this year: We are requiring Top Picks to have highway-speed AEB. We also now add 2 points to a vehicle's Overall Score if it has an active driver assistance system that includes an adequate driver monitoring system. The Ford Mustang Mach-E is the only one of our Top Picks this year that received the

added points because the Mach-E's active driver assist system has effective driver monitoring that gives appropriate warnings when the driver looks away from the road for too long.

Several high-scoring vehicles, including the BMW X5 and Hyundai Tucson, were not eligible this year because they don't have highway-speed AEB as standard equipment on all trim levels. This year's Top Picks don't include any large trucks because they lack key safety features on base models or have below-average reliability.

THESE ARE THE BEST of the best. Each car, SUV, and truck here outshines its peers by excelling in our tests and Annual Auto Surveys. Our picks also have key standard active safety features.

BY JEFF S. BARTLETT

500,000

miles are logged each year on cars we purchase for testing, giving us experience on the track and in the real world.

230

vehicles in our new car ratings were considered in selecting our 10 Top Picks.



SMALL CAR

Nissan
SENTRA

77
OVERALL SCORE

1 RELIABILITY

32 MPG

THE SHARP-LOOKING SENTRA is a low-cost, high-value sedan that feels more premium than its rivals, especially when comparing higher trims. The 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine makes the car pleasant to drive, aided by a rather refined continuously variable transmission. Acceleration is among the best in the class, with power coming on smoothly. Plus, the Sentra has a comfortable ride and nimble handling. The cabin is nicely appointed for the price, with a more upscale look and feel than in most competitors. The infotainment and climate controls are a model of simplicity, and all versions come with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay capabilities. The real clincher is that the comprehensive Safety Shield 360 is standard, packing a lot of key safety features.

SMALL SUV

Subaru
FORESTER

90
OVERALL SCORE

1 RELIABILITY

28 MPG

MARKING ITS NINTH consecutive Top Picks appearance, the Forester received a light freshening for the 2022 model year, updating its looks while adding a more adventurous Wilderness trim. The secret to the Forester’s success has been its efficient, spacious design; strong fuel economy; focus on safety; great road-test performance; and strong reliability history. It is hard to overstate the importance of design. The Forester’s upright shape provides greater access, cabin space, and cargo room than its competitors. The tall roof and large windows provide fishbowl-like outward visibility, giving a wide view of the road and surroundings. And responsive handling and a supple ride further enhance the driving experience. The latest EyeSight suite of safety features is standard.

SUBCOMPACT SUV

Nissan
ROGUE SPORT

77
OVERALL SCORE

1 RELIABILITY

26 MPG

GOOD THINGS can indeed come in small packages, as evidenced by the Rogue Sport. It feels more mature and substantial than most of the subcompact SUVs it competes with, thanks to a composed ride and a quiet cabin for the class. Front access is a snap, and the driver is treated to an elevated seat height that aids visibility and offers abundant headroom. The powertrain doesn’t live up to the “Sport” moniker, but it gets the job done. A commendable predicted reliability adds to the appeal. And despite the low entry price, the Rogue Sport has a roster of safety equipment that puts pricier models to shame. Beyond FCW and AEB, the Rogue Sport comes with a full suite of safety features, including rear automatic braking, as standard equipment.

HYBRID

Toyota
PRIUS

79
OVERALL SCORE

1 RELIABILITY

52 MPG

PRIUS PRIME

PLUG-IN HYBRID

79
OVERALL SCORE

1 RELIABILITY

50 MPG

25 ELECTRIC RANGE, MILES

A PERENNIAL TOP PICK, the aerodynamic Prius continues to set the standard for fuel-efficient transport. It not only achieves a phenomenal 52 mpg overall in our tests but also shines for its consistent reliability and owner satisfaction. If you want more electric-only driving, the Prius Prime plug-in hybrid has a bigger battery, providing 25 miles of electric-only range before switching to regular hybrid operation. The regular and plug-in versions offer an epic 590-mile range between fill-ups. Both versions are pleasant to drive, with a comfortable, steady ride and secure handling. The cabins have a high-tech feel, especially when fitted with the large 11.6-inch center screen. A number of competitors are edging into this space, but the practical Prius remains the benchmark.



MIDSIZE SEDAN

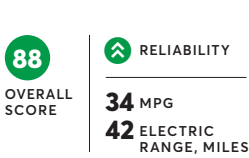
Honda
ACCORD



THE ACCORD IS the definitive family sedan, with generous interior space, a pleasant ride, ample power, and impressive efficiency. Three powertrains are available, scaling from thrifty transportation to a prudent alternative to a luxury car, outfitted with leather and all the trimmings. Most impressive is the hybrid, which delivers 47 mpg overall without sacrificing acceleration. The Accord balances ride comfort and handling acumen, making it as delightful to drive as it is to recline in the passenger seat. The cabin is spacious and well-finished, with nice touches, such as soft surfaces and faux wood trim, adding to the ambience. And it comes with all the key safety features, plus adaptive cruise control. For families that choose to buck the SUV trend, this sedan has a lot to offer.

TWO-ROW SUV

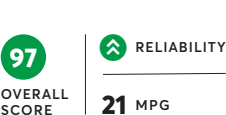
Toyota
RAV4 PRIME



THE RAV4 PRIME transforms the laudable RAV4, endowing it with more power, greater efficiency, a comfortable ride, and a hint more coddling in the cabin. This plug-in hybrid boasts 302 hp—much more than any other mainstream small SUV—and can sprint to 60 mph in 6.3 seconds. Plus, it has an impressive 42 miles of electric-only range, meaning local errands and commutes can be accomplished without firing up the gas engine. On gas only, the RAV4 Prime still gets 34 mpg overall—3 mpg less than a regular RAV4 Hybrid. Other enhancements throughout the vehicle—including a more supple ride and soft-touch interior materials—give the RAV4 Prime a more premium feel than a regular RAV4. Yes, the RAV4 Prime carries a higher price than other RAV4s, but the cost is offset by a federal tax incentive and ongoing savings at the pump.

MIDSIZE, THREE-ROW SUV

Kia
TELLURIDE



THE TELLURIDE HAS SET the standard for the popular midsize three-row SUV market since it stormed onto the scene for the 2020 model year. In fact, it has been a Top Pick for each of its three years on the market. The Kia does everything well: Its road-test score of 97 is almost perfect, and it received top ratings for predicted reliability and owner satisfaction. This is a roomy SUV with a comfortable ride; it's easy to access and enjoyable to drive. It uses a V6 engine that delivers strong, linear power via a smooth-shifting eight-speed automatic. The boxy shape ensures plenty of room for the driver, passengers, and cargo. The controls are simple, and storage is abundant. In an age of gimmicks, Kia's straightforward approach is refreshing, and we appreciate the thoughtful details throughout.

COMPACT PICKUP TRUCK

Honda
RIDGELINE



THE RIDGELINE IS the Swiss Army knife of pickup trucks. It's engineered more like a modern crossover SUV than a traditional body-on-frame, old-school pickup truck. As a result, the Ridgeline offers rarefied refinement in a pickup body style, with ride, handling, and interior comfort more akin to the Honda Pilot than a typical work truck. It uses a smooth 280-hp V6 engine and a nine-speed automatic, adding to the polished driving experience. Plus, it has a few clever tricks, such as a tailgate that can fold down or swing to the side, allowing easy access to a large, lockable storage box under the bed. This American-made pickup has redefined what a truck can be. It is well-suited for the commuter, family chauffeur, and weekend warrior, as well as the active lifestyle driver who is all those things.



ELECTRIC VEHICLE

LUXURY MIDSIZED SUV

Ford **MUSTANG MACH-E**

82
OVERALL SCORE

RELIABILITY
270 RANGE, MILES

THE MUSTANG MACH-E borrows styling cues from the venerated Mustang muscle car and applies them to a versatile electric crossover with four doors, a convenient hatchback, elevated ride height, and available all-wheel drive. The Mach-E stands out in this emerging category for being enjoyable to drive, with quick acceleration, agile handling, and a well-mannered ride. The Mach-E stable goes from tame pony at 266 hp to wild stallion at 480 hp. Our extended range Mach-E Premium galloped from 0 to 60 mph in 5.3 seconds and has a 270-mile range. Other configurations are even quicker or can extend range to over 300 miles. This well-executed new model catapults Ford into the burgeoning market with its first purpose-built EV that blends being green with character and driving fun.

Lexus **RX**

81
OVERALL SCORE

RELIABILITY
22 MPG

HYBRID

83
OVERALL SCORE

29 MPG

THE RX PIONEERED the midsize luxury SUV back in the late 1990s, and it continues to be the exemplar for this popular segment. The winning formula is its blend of comfort, performance, safety, and reliability. These virtues are wrapped in a chiseled body that continues to look modern, despite being on the market for six years with limited design changes. Ongoing refinements, including to the suspension and the infotainment system, have kept the RX line fresh. Behind the striking trapezoidal grille is a 3.5-liter V6 coupled to an eight-speed automatic in the RX 350. This power-train delivers the effortless, quiet performance expected from a premium SUV. The hybrid RX 450h feels quicker, with abundant torque generated by its electric motors, plus it returned 7 more mpg overall in our tests, giving it the fuel economy of a small SUV. It is easy to see why the RX is the most popular Lexus model.