Full stop… Goodbye to the traditional handbrake lever?

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Apparently just

37 per cent of new cars are now fitted with a conventional handbrake lever/manual parking brake...

CarGurus research reveals that just over a third of new cars have a traditional handbrake. Only two mainstream manufacturers offer a manually-operated parking brake on their entire model ranges Premium makers such as Audi, Jaguar and Land Rover have ditched handbrakes in favour of electronic systems.

The research indicates that the traditional handbrake is reaching the end of the road as car manufacturers ditch it in favour of electronic parking brakes.

The online automotive marketplace created by TripAdvisor founder, Langley Steinert, found that just 37% of new cars on sale in the UK today come with a manually-operated handbrake.

Only two mainstream manufacturers, Dacia and Suzuki, have a standard handbrake on every model in the range, with the majority of car makers only offering the component/system on sportier cars or cheaper superminis.

Many premium car makers have completely phased out the conventional set-up and replaced it with an electronic parking brake, while some use a foot-operated parking brake.

The CarGurus investigation found that Audi, Jaguar, Land Rover, Lexus, Mercedes and Porsche no longer have any models on sale fitted with a traditional handbrake.

How an electronic parking brake works

An electronic parking brake is operated via a switch that replaces the traditional mechanical lever. This switch activates a pair of small motors which engage the rear brakes, making a whirring noise as they do so.

The benefits?

Considered a luxury feature, the electronic parking brake requires less physical effort, may hold the car more securely, and doesn't need adjusting like the traditional lever. Most electronic handbrakes disengage automatically when you pull away, plus they often offer an automatic hill-hold assist function, an additional safety benefit. The switch helps de-clutter cabins by taking up less interior space than a chunky lever on the centre console.

Manually-operated parking brake

The lever-operated handbrake might seem much more basic in comparison to its electronic equivalent, but for some drivers it is precisely this simplicity that is at the core of its appeal. Others meanwhile simply enjoy the mechanical interaction it offers, and at the very least a manual handbrake should evoke memories of learning how to successfully perform a hill start.

Speaking about the research, Chris Knapman, editor at CarGurus UK said: "It's official, the death of the handbrake is coming as manufacturers switch to electronic parking brakes in huge numbers.

Within the next few years we expect the number of cars on sale with traditional handbrakes to decline further, likely only to be found on a select number of niche models. Of course, the benefits can't be ignored, but as the latest technology trickles through manufacturer line-ups, many new drivers might never experience one of the most familiar of automotive features. The temptation to attempt flamboyant handbrake turns is soon to be a thing of the past too!"

About the research

Research findings based on analysis of 32 mass-market car manufacturers:

Alfa Romeo, Audi, BMW, Citroen, Dacia, DS, Fiat, Ford, Honda, Hyundai, Infiniti, Jaguar, Jeep, Kia, Land Rover, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, Mini, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Peugeot,

Porsche, Renault, SEAT, SKODA, Subaru, Suzuki, Toyota, Vauxhall, Volvo, VW.

How CarGurus Works

CarGurus helps car shoppers search local car listings and quickly find great deals from top-rated dealers. Every day, the company analyses millions of data points on hundreds of thousands of UK car listings to calculate each car's Instant Market Value (IMV) or fair retail price. This data is used in combination with dealership ratings from other shoppers to rank and rate available cars results based on the quality of the deal: Great, Good, Fair, High or Overpriced. The site also provides transparency on how long the car has been on the forecourt and if it's had a price drop. Consumers can contact dealers directly.

About CarGurus

Founded in 2006 by Langley Steinert (also a co-founder of TripAdvisor), CarGurus (Nasdaq: CARG) is a global, online automotive marketplace connecting buyers and sellers of cars. The company uses proprietary technology, search algorithms and data analytics to bring trust and transparency to the automotive search experience and help users find great deals from top-rated dealers. CarGurus is the largest automotive shopping site in the U.S. based on monthly unique visitor traffic (source: comScore Media Metrix Multi-Platform, June 2018). CarGurus launched in the UK in 2015 and is claimed to be the fastest growing audience among large automotive shopping sites in the UK. In addition to the United Kingdom and the United States, CarGurus operates online marketplaces in Canada, Germany, Spain and Italy.
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Kim adds: Many motorists tell me that they are unhappy about electronic parking brake systems, citing difficulty of operation and uncertainty over whether the brake is actually applied or not, as main reasons. They say that they prefer the positive and unmistakable 'on' or 'off' operation of a traditional handbrake set-up. Indeed some who have bought a new car

in the last few months have said that they specifically rejected from their shortlists any models fitted with electronic parking brakes…