



Honda's latest Jazz – Road Test

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2020 Honda Jazz & Jazz Crosstar

Honda's Jazz EX Mark 4 generation put through its paces by Robin Roberts (and Motoring Milestones).

You get more than you expect with the Honda Jazz. Two decades after the first model went on UK sale it still provides unrivalled practicality and versatility in the family compact hatchback market sector.



It's the Tardis of transport thanks to its really clever Magic Seats which take three passengers in the rear but can also completely flip flat to turn it into a van-like carrier, or their bases can be folded up to take tall items lodged in the footwells. No other rival can do that.

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The latest Mk4 version comes in five models, three trim levels and standard or slightly taller Crosstar body from around £19,000 to £24,600.

Wisely, Honda has chosen to build on the Mk3's attributes and not start from scratch while it sits on the latest platform and benefits from the company's highly sophisticated petrol-



electric self-charging powertrain.



Only the taller Jazz Crosstar more SUV styled version takes it into a new direction, but mechanically they are the same.

So they get the very latest suite of advanced safety features to alert drivers to dangers around them and monitor speed limits and tiredness but also work with mobile phones and pads through integrated entertainment technology to deliver a relaxing environment for driver and passengers.

Our EX top trim included remote locking and starting, traffic monitoring and reversing camera, heated leather steering wheel cover and front seats, 16-inch alloys and Garmin



navigation through a 9-inch central touch-screen.

The power train matches an electric motor for urban use with assistance for the 4-cylinder 1.5 litre petrol engine when needed and because it's self-charging there is no need to plug in a cable to recharge the traction battery which takes its power from the car's movement.

Together, they can offer impressive range and the driver can push up the recharging by selecting an extra Boost button on the continuously variable transmission together with the eco-mode button. We saw an overall fuel average of mid-50s but for mostly mixed road driving with frequent recuperative power it was into the 60s without any problem.

The brakes were up to their task and with just modest pressure on the pedal the Jazz quickly slowed under full control while an electric parking brake comes with a hill-hold facility.

Power steering did not impart great feedback but the turning circle was good, it did not suffer from unwelcome vibrations and we liked the reach and rake adjustment of the wheel, ideal if different drivers use the car on a regular basis.

The secondary controls grouped on the two wheel spokes were clearly marked, worked well and were supported by the twin column-stalks for lights and wipers. [Thankfully, Honda has chosen to put the climate controls in a row below the central touchscreen so changes can be instantly made with minimum distraction.](#)

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The system worked well for output, distribution and temperature range and we liked the effective heating for front seats and wheelrim also on buttons adjacent to the climate control.

The Apple and Android compatible infotainment system had a large 9-inch display and [it was easy to select any features with separate buttons for telephone, navigation etc. Again minimising distractions and an object lesson to other car-makers who pile everything into a](#)



single touchscreen needing a lot of attention to pull up desired displays.

Oddments room was very good for a family car with lots of trays, boxes and pockets throughout, including under the loadbed floor and those Magic Seats would be welcome by any gardeners who've had to move shrubs and small trees from nurseries to home with room to spare if the loadbed floor was extended as well for bags of compost or chippings.

The modest engine size and tuning of the Jazz is assisted by the electric motor and it gives reasonable, not head-turning acceleration, yet easily maintains motorway speed. However, it also lets you know how hard it's working with the ever-present road rumbles and suspension bump-thump being joined by an excited engine note and whirring transmission under load.

That said, the Jazz's handling was surefooted and safe although there was just a small amount of body roll with pitching and dipping under braking or acceleration.

Suspension soaked up most bumps without shaking occupants too much.

On open roads or as a city car it could be very precisely placed through corners or into parking spots thanks to the good turning circle, reversing camera and sensors. Roof pillars were slim, windows deep and the lights and wipers did a good job.

VERDICT

The Honda Jazz is first and foremost very practical, the versatility of its seating and loadspace exceptional, its performance is respectable and its seating comfort is in a class above with location, adjustment and support.

Perhaps it's that practicality of purpose which has justified a very plastic finish to the interior, which I think does let it down but also possibly explains why it's such good value.

For: Immensely practical interior, excellent seats and controls, comfortable, economical, very good visibility, easy driving, self-charging hybrid.



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Against: Modest performance, noisy engine/transmission when stretched with background road rumbles, lots of plastic trim.



Mini Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief: Honda Jazz EX



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Price: £22,735

Mechanical: 4-cylinder, 107 PS, 1,496cc petrol-electric self-charging hybrid, automatic

Performance: 108 mph, 0 - 62 mph 9.5 seconds, Combined fuel consumption 56 mpg, CO2 104 g/km

Tax costs: BiK company car tax rate 24%, VED First Year road tax £150 then £145 Standard rate

Insurance Group: 20

Warranty: 3-years/90,000 miles



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Dimensions/capacities: L 4.05 m (13.29 ft), W 1.97 m (6.46 ft), H 1.53 m (5.02 ft), boot space 304 - 1,205 litres (10.74 - 42.55 cu.ft), 5-doors/5-seats