Kia EV6 – Road Test

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The award winning Kia EV6 GT Line S 77.4kWh AWD...

...Extended drive by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

It's official, Kia's new generation pure-electric EV6 is the top-performing Car of the Year 2022.

Earlier this month it beat 60 other new cars, electric and with internal combustion engines, to the coveted CoTY award judged by 59 motoring journalists from 22 European countries.

It is the first Kia to win the internationally acclaimed award and set a very high standard for the new generation all-electric car built on an entirely new platform, which we'll see developed for other Kia, Hyundai and Genesis models in the near future.

Launched late in 2021, we really liked the car when we had a brief first drive. Now a week with the car has reinforced our impressions and showed what a good all-rounder it is.

What's more important for many is the fact it is not one model, take it or leave it, but a ten-model range in four trim grades with three power outputs to suit particular needs and comes with rear or all-wheel-drive from £40,945 to £58,345.



Under the EV6's bonnet is the electric motor (with a storage box on top!).

Style wise the EV6 is a crossover between an SUV and a family hatchback with a coupé roof line to the rear.



Depending on your charging source it can take as little as 18 mins to power up from 10 to 80% on a 350kW point, 73 mins at 50kW station or with a 16A domestic wallbox about 7hrs 20mins to full capacity. Then, the range depends on how forcefully or gently your push it along and the indicated combined range of 300 miles seemed optimistic when we charged it and got 260 miles on two occasions.

The on-board computer will select the best driving modes to eek out the electricity or press pedal to metal and make it move like a sporting SUV with a good ICE. It’s quick from rest with minimal delay and powers up to the legal maximum in about six seconds, cruises easily along a motorway if you don’t mind watching the range rapidly decrease and its top speed is well above 100 mph where permitted. How far you’d go before needing to recharge at that speed is something we did not discover.



The Kia EV6 is at its best on A-roads and B-roads when the car's recuperation or regeneration system puts back some electricity and modestly extends the available range while going at no more than 60 mph and most likely a maximum 50 mph.

Over a mixture of motorway, main and secondary roads we had a projected range of about 260 miles and that is what many ICE models will achieve but the difference is that it cost us less to do it than before fuel prices started their recent ridiculous climb, a lot less in fact.

You certainly don't lose out in driving enjoyment, with good steering, powerful braking and a very compliant and comfortable suspension setting available. Our car had the slightly larger diameter 20-inch wheels and tyres and they did tend to be noisy on bad surfaces and sometimes jarred the chassis, but generally it was a smooth system.

With grip front and back the roadholding was excellent, it turned in sharply and followed the predicted line through a corner without any drama.

Secondary controls were neatly laid out and quite simplified and some may not like the amount crammed into the infotainment system's massive 12-inch+ wide screen. It's big, very clear and comprehensive once you get used to it.

The Kia's climate control was wide ranging, precise and efficient and filled the cabin with air, aided by powered windows and a really big sunroof.

Oddments room is reasonably good although compartments may be on the small side for some users but there are plenty of them and a multitude of USB are fitted throughout, reinforcing its family friendly design.

Driver and passengers have touchscreen navigation, voice controlled infotainment, Meridian sound system, wireless charging and connectivity, intelligent speed control and advanced safety systems and parking aids.

Access was very good but rear headroom might be tight for taller users. The good-sized dual-floored bootspace was easy to use and an additional space lies under the front bonnet where you might expect the engine to poke up.



The seats infront were particularly comfortable and supporting, slightly less locating in the rear but it’s a five-seater nevertheless. Our test car had heated/ cooling front seats and two rear heated seats.

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Visibility was clear all round with good big windows, effective large wipers and bright LED lights for an EV. You need the reversing sensors and camera however as the broad C-pillars hide some lines of sight.

VERDICT

We have covered the modest noise level and it was the only real distraction in what was a very refined, sophisticated and enjoyable driver's car.

Sometimes you are aware of its over 2-tonnes weight but the Kia EV6 designers and engineers have done a good job in using that to aid roadholding and make it feel extremely well built.

At that rate it's not only Car of The Year but with strong residual values and all-electric drive it's a model for the decade ahead.

For: Stylish and very comfortable, good seating, strong acceleration, engaging handing, reasonable range, long warranty.

Against: Road noise intrusion, low headroom in the back, expensive to buy and insure.



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Kia EV6 GT Line S 77.4kWh AWD

Price: £51,945

Mechanical: 321 bhp twin-motors, 605 Nm (446 lb.ft), 77.4kWh battery, single-speed automatic

Max Speed: 114 mph

0 – 62mph: 5.2 sec

Range: 300 miles (260 miles on test)

Insurance Group: 40

CO2 emissions: Zero g/km

Tax costs: BiK rating 2%, VED First Year £0 then Standard rate £480 annually for 5-years

Warranty: 7 years/ 100,000 miles

Size: L 4.70 m (15.4 ft), W 1.89 m (6.2 ft), H 1.55 m (5.1 ft)

Bootspace: 510 litres (18.01 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 2,090 kg (4,608 lb)