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Kia Niro EV 2 – Road Test

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The new KIA Niro EV 2 – all electric Crossover/SUV plugged in and test driven by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

Kia has been in the forefront of the modern drive towards electric cars and its highly successful Niro compact Crossover/SUV/Hatchback is the latest aimed at the mass market.



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It completes the latest generation Niro line-up which started with petrol models and then progressed to petrol-hybrids before adding the pure electric model this autumn. These latest models are slightly longer, wider and taller with stretched footprint. It is the second biggest selling Kia UK model series and comes in three trim levels.

The latest Niro model year 23 UK prices start at £28,295 for the petrol hybrid versions, £34,075 for the petrol plug-in hybrid variants and from £36,795 for the Niro all-electric versions.





Using all its experience gained with the urban runabout Soul and at the other end of the market, the EV6 luxury coupé, Kia has come up with a very useable car for the modern motoring world. It's not cheap, but it's very well made and highly practical, with a sensible range for frequent commuting or longer journeys taken at a stretch.

A choice of charging cables mean it plugs into a domestic supply, dedicated quick charger at home or public shared spaces and the boost comes fairly quickly on the fastest superchargers. It can be fully charged on domestic point in about seven hours.





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With Kia's experience of this mushrooming technology the Niro driving experience is simple, sophisticated and satisfying.

The switch on and go takes just a few seconds and you have a choice of modes using the recuperative system to maximise economy or performance or just settle for something between.

Pickup is very brisk, extremely smooth and eerily quiet. Overtaking is usually straightforward and quick and zip past a vehicle in traffic should the need arise.

Motorway cruising is near silent but like all evs, the Niro really rewards the user on main and minor roads when it's not constantly emptying its battery but recharging up and down



hills or when braking.

Matching the powertrain is a really nicely balanced steering with no vibration, good feel and a reasonably compact turning circle for urban use. It also had precision when pressing on through countryside.

Brakes are well up to their task but set the regeneration level too high and it really becomes a single-pedal drive as lifting off throttle dramatically drags down the speed and it will even stop without the need to use the brake.

Thanks to the low positioned weight of the battery pack, the roadholding is very good, the car responds faithfully to steering inputs and was not put off line by mid-corner bumps. Handling was fairly neutral as well but press hard mid-way through a bend the nose could run wide.



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The Niro EV has fairly simple and expected secondary controls apart from the powertrain settings and they are all close to the driver around the wheel and over the fascia, lights are bright and the wipe/ wash system is effective.

Instrumentation can be subtly altered yet remains very clear despite sparse marking of the dials. Heating and ventilation controls are straightforward and quickly warmed the interior but you can see its effect on the remaining power so needs careful use in colder weather, or presumably the cooling air conditioning on warmer days.



Oddments provision is good for a family car albeit the compartments are small but plentiful. Power and USB points are fitted and the infotainment system is comprehensive and readout very clear.

Access to the cabin and boot with a small lip under the fifth door are both unrestricted and the space inside the car and the luggage area is reasonable for shopping or cases, and the back seats easily fold down to more than double the volume.

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I found it charged to about 80% on a medium rate charging point in under an hour, enough when visiting a sports game or shopping, watching a film or at play, but you can shorten the



cycle if needed and the higher power charger is there to be used.

Niro EV is a comfortable car most of the time but the ride quality is not as good as the larger Sportage stablemate and you can hear the suspension struggling over bad surfaces as well because there is hardly any source coming from the motor. Wind and other noise are very low too, so that only serves to exaggerate the road and suspension rumbles and bumps.

Inside, the fit and finish is of a very high quality and the car certainly looks a lot more luxurious than you might expect at this price. The seat adjustment is good in front and they are nicely padded and supportive for bad roads and quick cornering while those behind have to compromise a little on legroom but not headroom.

VERDICT

With the comfort and convenience of the Niro EV you have a very good car for the modern family and it comes with a long warranty to let you make the most of it. In my eyes it is a tall Crossover hatchback and not really a sporting model but it does a good job and nothing badly.

For: Easy to drive, good range, sophisticated systems, mechanically quiet, excellent seats, very long warranty, quality finish.

Against: Some road rumbles and stiff ride at times, occasionally bumpy at low speed, poorly marked instruments, small oddments compartments, more expensive tax costs due in 2025.



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KIA Niro EV Grade2



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Price: £37,390

Mechanical: 150 kW/ 201 bhp motor

Max Speed: 103 mph

0 - 62mph: 7.8 sec

Range: 235 miles

Insurance Group: 28/ 29

VED/C02 emissions: Zero



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Bik rating: 2%

Warranty: 7 years/100,000 miles

Size: L 4.42 m (14.50 ft), W 1.90 m (6.23 ft), H 1.59 m (5.22 ft)

Bootspace: 475 to 1,392 litres (16.77 to 49.16 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,739 kg (3,834lb)