Latest Mitsubishi ASX – Road Test

Published: January 3, 2020

Author: David Miles

Online version: https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/latest-mitsubishi-asx-road-test/



A FRESH FACE AND A NEW HEART FOR REJUVENATED MITSUBISHI ASX SUV…

….By David Miles (Miles Better News Agency).

The 2020 model year Mitsubishi ASX compact SUV has received a significant makeover for New Year sales with prices starting from £20,295 on-the-road.

The first generation ASX went on sale in 2010 and has accumulated an impressive 1.36 million global sales and over 31,000 of them found homes in the UK's new car market. This makes the ASX Mitsubishi's third best selling passenger car range accounting for 22.6% of

overall UK sales.

The ASX is the starting point in Mitsubishi's SUV model line-up. It is followed up the ladder by the similar sized but more modern Eclipse Cross, the Outlander large SUV which includes the best selling PHEV plug-in hybrid versions, and topping the line-up is the heavyweight, durable and rugged Shogun Sport.

Throughout its lengthy current lifetime the ASX has offered 1.6 litre petrol and diesel engines plus a 2.2 litre diesel, most with 4WD and some with automotive transmissions. For the revised and simplified 2020 model year line up, the only engine on offer is a 2.0 litre, four cylinder MIVEC normally aspirated 150 hp petrol unit mated with a five speed manual gearbox – but only with 2WD. However, and strangely given Mitsubishi's heritage of providing 4WD models, the latest ASX only offers this engine with 4WD and a six speed CVT automatic transmission combination which carries the range-topping price of £25,945. There is the choice of Dynamic and Exceed spec levels for the 2WD manual models and Exceed only for the 4WD auto.

The constituents of both spec levels, together with the enhanced safety driving functions, are higher for the latest and probably last generation ASX models. We already know that whatever model replaces the ASX compact SUV will actually be smaller and will have lower capacity engines and will share many of the components such as the platform and powertrains, under the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi Motors Alliance, with the new Renault Captur and the just launching Nissan Juke.

The downsizing of the future ASX replacement is logical because it is more or less the same size as the newer Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross, which offers a 1.5 litre turbo petrol engine with 163 hp with 2WD manual and 4WD CVT auto models, priced from £22,100 through to almost £30k.

The latest ASX is 4,365 mm (14.32 ft) long, 1,810 mm (5.94 ft) wide and 1,640 mm (5.38 ft) high, with a wheelbase of 2,670 mm (8.76 ft). The boot space is 406 litres (14.34 ft) with the

rear seats in use and 1,193 litres (42.13 cu.ft) with the rear seat backs folded down. As before it has five doors and five seats and is covered by a five years/62,500 miles warranty. Its competitor models are numerous but the most obvious by price are the Suzuki Vitara, new Skoda Kamiq, Citroen C3 Aircross and lower spec Nissan Qashqai models.

Styling wise the refreshed ASX has a new front end from the A-pillars forward. There is a higher clamshell bonnet, squarer front wheel arches, Mitsubishi's latest signature 'Dynamic Shield' grille, square indicator lights, new front and rear bumpers, rear LED lamps and new front and rear skid plates.


GG CI 420



Inside it’s a logical layout, not plush but with upgraded qualities for the cloth and leather trimmed elements These are complemented by a black cloth headlining and small detail changes such as the new ergonomic air-conditioning, and heater controls which are now finished in piano black and silver. The centre instrument panel also benefits from a piano black finish and now incorporates a new larger 8-inch Smartphone link Display Audio system, increased from the previous 7-inch version. The new system features smartphone connectivity including Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and DAB radio. In the Exceed model the system benefits significantly by having a proper integrated TomTom sat-nav system rather

than the unfriendly linked to your mobile phone function on the Dynamic spec level.





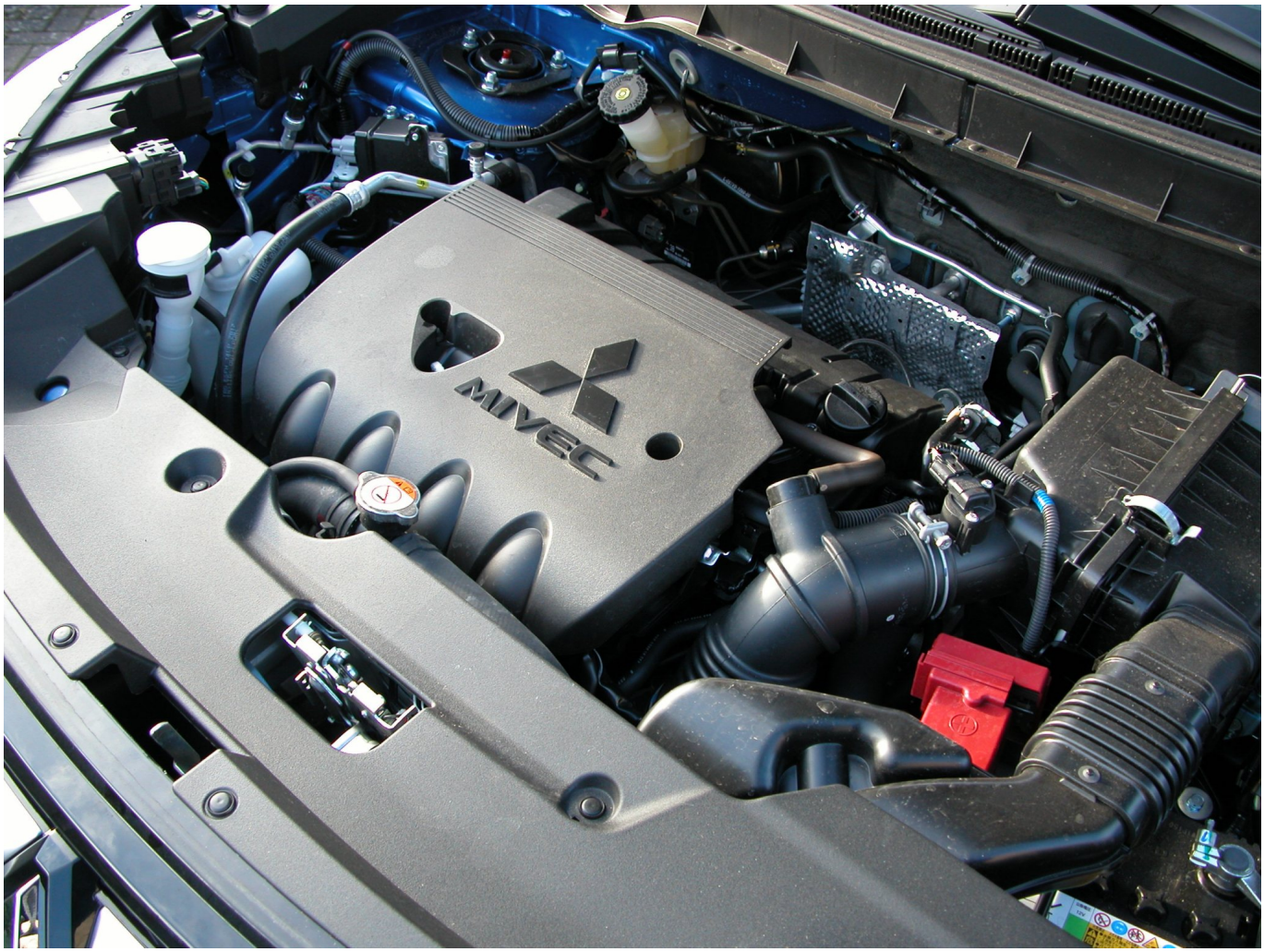




Exceed versions also have Blind Spot Warning with Lane Change Assist and Rear Cross Traffic Alert. Other Exceed spec upgrades include a panoramic glass sunroof, leather upholstery, electric adjustment for the driver's seat and LED front fog lights. All versions have 18-inch alloy wheels, air-con, cruise control, LED headlights, automatic lights and wipers, daytime driving lights and reversing camera.

But the ASX main new specification change is the use of a 2.0 litre, four cylinder non-turbo petrol engine, whilst it has been used in the past in other Mitsubishi models including the Outlander large SUV, it isn't the latest in down-sizing engine technology but it is robust, reliable and of course retuned to meet the latest WLTP emission regulations. With 150 hp

that is a modest amount of power and the torque is almost modest at 195 Nm (144 lb.ft), not bad in itself, but it is developed from a relatively high 4,200 rpm. That means full use has to be made of the five speed manual gearbox to keep it in its most responsive powerband zone. Also having only five gears is a drawback at motorway cruising speeds when you just feel and hear it needs another sixth cog.



That didn't seem to affect the fuel economy though for my five speed manual test drive model which returned 43.2 mpg overall for my week's motoring. The official WLTP Combined Cycle figure is 37.7 mpg so for fuel economy the latest ASX petrol manual version is a good performer. Not so good are the CO2 emissions of 171 g/km so First Year VED road tax is a high cost £855 followed by the usual £145 Standard rate charge. Company car

drivers will pay a high 36% Benefit-in-Kind tax. Insurance is Group 24E.

As for performance top speed is 118 mph and the zero to 62 mph acceleration time is 10.2 seconds, modest but workmanlike.

Ride comfort is no better than average, impacts from potholes make themselves felt and heard on even average quality road surfaces.

Its agility is good and safely capable during direction changes despite its SUV taller ground clearance. Much of that is because it uses a more costly multi-link rear suspension system which is better than a cheaper and now widely used beam axle layout.



VERDICT

For loyal Mitsubishi SUV customers the sharp-looking ASX can still be a good ownership proposition. But it's just unlikely to tempt conquest buyers to the brand because a lot of all-new competitor models just offer that bit better overall package of 'reasons to own one'.

For: Good real-life fuel economy, sharp refreshed exterior styling, upgraded interior, roomy for a compact SUV, well priced, agile handling.

Against: Only top spec model has an integrated sat-nav, high tax costs, only a five speed manual gearbox not a six speed unit, no 4WD manual option, significant road noise and impacts from potholes transmitted to the cabin, faces strong sales competition in a congested market sector.



Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec.in Brief:

2020 Mitsubishi ASX 2.0 Dynamic, manual 2WD compact SUV.

Price: £20,295.

Engine/transmission: 2.0 litre, four cylinder, non-turbo petrol engine, 150 hp, 195 Nm (144 lb.ft) at 4,200 rpm, five speed manual, 2WD.

Performance: 118 mph, 0–62 mph 10.2 seconds.

Fuel consumption: WLTP Combined Cycle 37.7 mpg (43.2 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 171 g/km, VED road tax £855/£145, BiK company car tax 36%.

Insurance Group: 24E.

Warranty: Five years/62,500 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,365 mm (14.32 ft), W 1,810 mm (5.94 ft), H 1,640 mm (5.38 ft), wheelbase 2,670 mm (8.76 ft), boot/load space 406 to 1,193 litres (14.34 to 42.13 cu.ft), braked towing weight 1,300 kg (2,866 lb), five doors/five seats.