# Lexus LM 350h Standard 2WD – Road Test

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**“Sometimes it’s not the first which leaves a lasting impression but the last which comes first in your mind”, writes Robin Roberts (and**

**WheelsWithinWales).**

That’s certainly the case with the Lexus LM350, a rival to the established luxury MPVs from the premium German brands.

In the rarefied ranks of executive people movers chauffeuring between airports and hotels or whisking their occupants to film premieres, the Lexus LM350 hybrid brings a new level of exclusivity, refinement and sophistication, together with remarkable economy.

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Originally announced in 2019 and going on sale in the Far East the following year as a petrol only model, the second generation from 2023 showed up with the petrol-hybrid engine and was sold in more countries including Britain from the end of that year.

As you might expect, the Lexus LM range is quite small because it comes very highly equipped even in the base front wheel drive only model from £94,595, rising to £97,595 for the all-wheel-drive powertrain, and then onto a starting price of £117,595 for the Takumi halo model with 4WD. Each version has a bespoke collection of additional paint and accessories to precisely tailor to a customer’s requirements, including in one instance a 48-inch monitor for the passengers.

Designed very much from the inside-out, all its elements were featured to put the passengers first and in control of their own private space behind the

chauffeur or driver.

The seven-seat “Standard” model we tested had two luxury captains’ seats behind powered side doors with their own individual climate control for warm or cooling air, foot rests, pop-up trays and drinks holders. The passengers can also select their cabin air system, operate blinds and change the mood lighting and reading lights as well as decide on the amount of legroom they want through hand-held devices like mobile phones.

Behind them are two fold down seats with space for three belted occupants and a reasonable amount of legroom remained.

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Top range Takami versions come with fewer seats but a dividing screen behind the front seats and which carries a 48-inch monitor to display full width or split screen information for rear seat occupants and is a work-station for them.

An incredible 21-speaker 3D system with the Mark Levison name really fills the cabin with sound, precisely controlled and finely delivered throughout.

The 14-inch overhead screen for the rear passengers is operated by individual controls for left and right passengers.

The driver and front seat passenger do not suffer much either with cooled and heated seats, a heated steering wheel, full air conditioning and a pair of seats with a lot of adjustment range and excellent support.

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The equipment specification for the seven-seat LM 350h reflects the model's luxury flagship status. Key features include 19-inch alloy wheels, power-adjustable front and middle row seats with semi-aniline leather upholstery with Ultrasuede inserts, twin fixed sunroofs, dual-zone climate control with nanoe-X air quality system and power sunshades.

The infotainment package includes the Lexus Link Pro multimedia system, 21-speaker Mark Levinson 3D Surround Sound audio and a 14-inch monitor for the rear passengers that deploys from the ceiling. For the driver there is a heated, power-adjustable steering wheel with wood inserts, Panoramic View Monitor, Intelligent Park Assist with remote parking function via the Lexus Link app and big head-up display.

All models share the same petrol-hybrid engine which means it never runs out of power so long as it has petrol and tops up the traction battery all the time so you can switch to EV mode in zero-emission zones or to extend the overall range.

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The CVT has normal and sport selection settings. Additional ride responses and refinement can be selected through the touchscreen for normal, eco, sport, individual and occupant comfort.

Secondary controls for washers/ wipers, lights and air conditioning were all convenient, clear and worked very well with particularly bright intelligent anti-

dazzle headlights. Instruments were comprehensive, clear and large, supported by a wide head-up display.


17°C
16:43
0
MPH
P
Drive Info
Average Speed
29 MPH
Total Time
15:26
Total Average
41.1 MPG
2363 mi
READY
169 mi
1/1

There were a few blindspots from the out of sight nose to the thick A-pillars and rear window surround, but a lot of effort has gone into making the Lexus LM350 a very safe car to be in and drive, with numerous active sensors warning of traffic approaching, passing or when parking helped by big selectable screens for manoeuvring.

Oddments room was really plentiful throughout with wide, deep and well placed bins, trays, or recesses.

In four/ five seat mode there was a lot of luggage space but drop down both back seats from their side-hinged location and the only remaining space to the fifth door was about 110 litres (3.88 cu.ft) capacity.

Access into the rearmost seats was a bit of a contortion but once there the leg and headroom was good, while slipping into the captains' chairs was very easy and superbly comfortable with masses of legroom. Climbing into the nicely shaped front seats was fairly easy as well.

Ride comfort was as close to the gliding experience I have enjoyed in a Rolls-Royce, fully insulating occupants with hardly any body roll on bends. You could hear the suspension working hard to insulate occupants.

The very low noise level was down to double-glazed windows and thick floor insulation as well as sound deadening in the roof and bulkhead, and the sleek profile of the Lexus LM. I couldn't detect any wind noise including that around the big door mirrors.

But it’s not completely silent. The hard worked four-cylinder engine has to pull along a 2.3 tonnes car and while it did an excellent job up to medium engine revs, if you press on when overtaking or accelerating the power unit makes itself heard, but in a busy rather than pained performance.

It is not the quickest accelerating but it has a respectable turn of speed, is very smooth, and its long-legged motorway ability is very good, combining with an easy going cross country ability which resulted in an average fuel consumption just above 40 mpg.

VERDICT

It looks dramatic, feels well built and sophisticated, with a very refined nature, immense user appeal and stands out everywhere. For some passengers it’s **L**argely **M**agical.

**For:** Luxurious and very comfortable interior for 5/7 people, very highly equipped, extremely refined, surprisingly economical

**Against:** Extremely small bootspace seven up, road noise over some surfaces with engine noise under hard acceleration, big turning circle and needs large parking space.




## FAST FACTS

**Model:** Lexus LM 350h Standard 2WD 7 seats


GY25 SSO

**Price:** £94,595

**Mechanical:** 247 bhp 4 cyl 2.5 litre petrol-electric,

**Max Speed:** 118 mph

**0 – 62 mph:** 9.1 secs

**Fuel consumption:** 41 mpg

**Insurance Group:** 50

**C02 emissions:** 152 g/km

**Bik rating:** 36%, £1360FY, £620SRx5

**Warranty:** 3 years/ 60,000 miles/ 10 years/ 100,000 miles

**Rating:** 4.5/ 5

**Size:** L 5.13 m (16.83 ft), W 1.89 m (6.20 ft), H 1.94 m (6.36 ft)

**Bootspace:** 110 to 1,191 litres (3.88 to 42.05 cu.ft)

**Kerbweight:** 2,305 kg (5,082 lb)

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