



## Lexus UX300h – Road Test

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Author:

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It's been a bad 12 months for the British car market, but not for Lexus, writes Robin Roberts (and WheelsWithinWales).

The luxury Japanese brand has just enjoyed a 4.5% rise in sales in 2024, mostly due to a strong surge in its electric models.

But wisely, Lexus has decided to keep a wheel in both tracks of development, one set in the electric mode and the other in the hybrid highway. And it's worked so well for them, their customers and dealers.

Even the brand's entry level UX300h has undergone a major revamp with a much more powerful electric motor to boost power and enhance economy as well as give it all-wheel-drive, extended safety packages and completely revised digital instrumentation.

It's a very good introduction to the brand which has built a remarkable reputation for reliability and quality and has evolved from the UX launched at the 2018 Geneva motor show as their smallest SUV or Urban Explorer.

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The powertrain is well up to its task, smoothly integrating petrol and electric power with driver selectable settings to get maximum benefits for any conditions, be that low emission urban zones or in more carefree countryside.

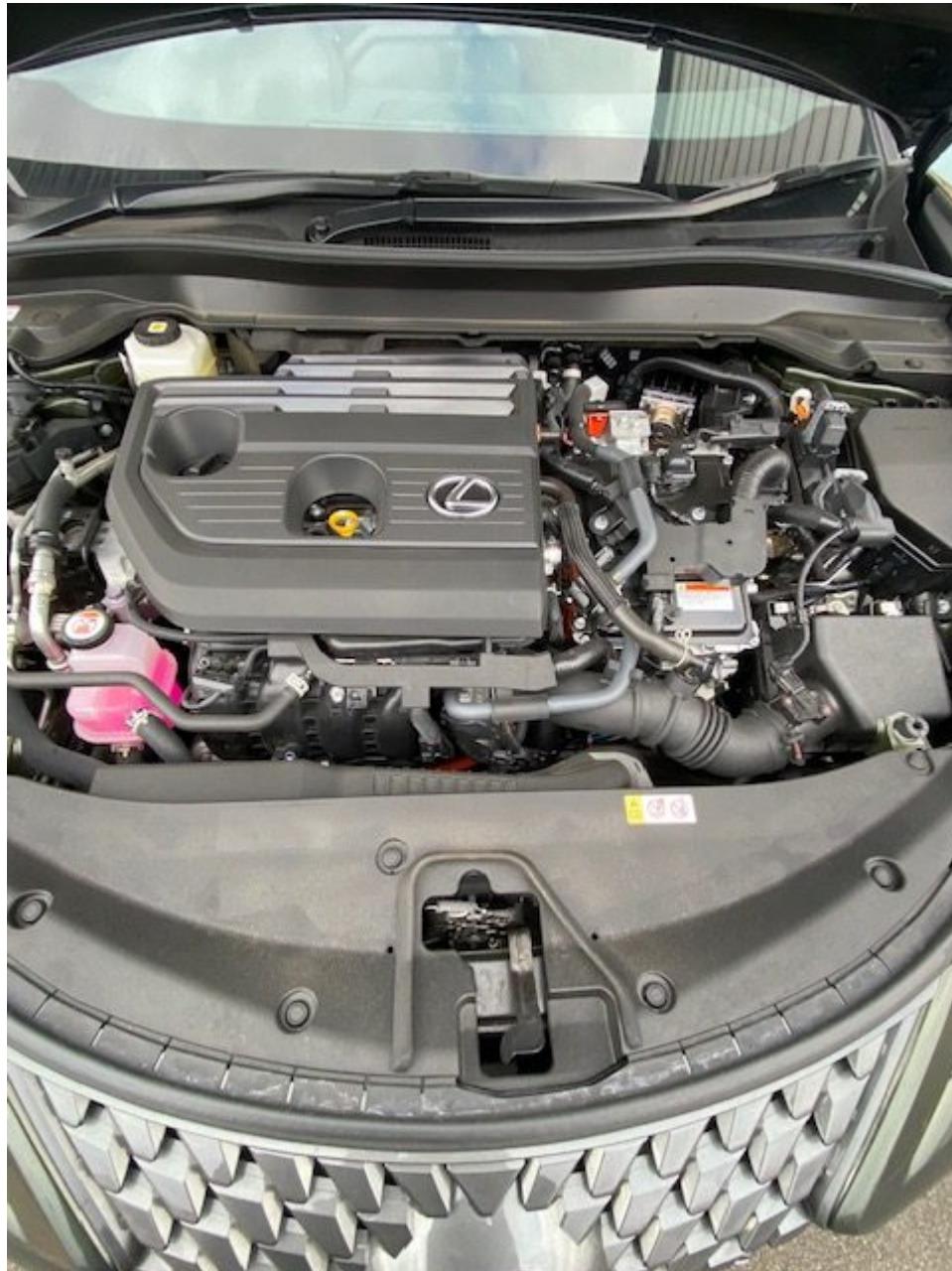
We mixed both and averaged 50 mpg overall with over 60 mpg at times and all without having to consciously ease off the throttle at any time.

In fact, the smoothness and ease of use as well as the combined power delivery might make you think it was a much bigger engine than the 2.0 litre four-cylinder under the bonnet.



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The electronically controlled transmission is one of the smoothest you will find anywhere with instant response, very strong pulling power and a really long-legged economy on



motorways and main roads.

Underfoot, the brakes had a beautiful balance with effort and effectiveness, rapidly slowing the car with the lightest touch and a powerful parking brake for slopes or when in traffic.

The way into unlocking any car's performance is the steering and the Lexus UX300h opens the door in a rewarding way, easy in town, accurate on country roads and sensitive at speed on motorways. The turning circle is good but not too twitchy when you need precision.

Secondary controls were all close to the wheel as well, on the spokes or behind on stalks and adjacent on the fascia or console.

The new digital instrument display is really impressive with its size, clarity, content and ease of use but my advice is to prioritise what you want to see before you set off as the menu is very comprehensive and could be distracting when driving. But it is a good set up.



The interior climate controls were also wide ranging and delivered excellent distribution, a steady temperature and filled the cabin as chosen by occupants, backed up by powered windows.

For a family car, some may find the oddments spaces short on capacity whether in front or behind. Nor was the luggage space generous, but helped by an offset split rear seat which quickly dropped flat to nearly double room.



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It was easy to load the boot and also get into the cabin with a decent amount of room as well for four people, a squeeze for five, and the seats were supportive and very comfortable with



useful adjustment on the front pair.

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The car's ride quality was generally good but it could jiggle about on poorer surfaces and it was firm nearly all the time.

Handing was responsive and surefooted however, with sharp turn-in, good grip and forgiving nature if you have to apply more power or ease off the throttle.

It was quick in a straight line with little lag when starting off or overtaking and it proved completely relaxed at motorway speed.

Most of the time the mechanical noises were very low but under acceleration or moderate speed they were more noticeable and the road rumbles and suspension were always present. This was the only feature to spoil the car's refinement and otherwise sophisticated character.

## VERDICT

Behind the wheel, the Lexus UX300h felt and behaved like a



much bigger luxury car and really lacked nothing you could reasonably want, and delivers a lot at a surprising price. However, it attracts the higher road tax for five years in Britain.

**For:** Powertrain, handling, ride, comfort, sophistication, room, economy.

**Against:** Some road and suspension noises, aerodynamics attracted dirt, modest oddments' space.

## Lexus UX300h

### FAST FACTS

Model: Lexus UX300h

Price: £42,595

Mechanical: 196 bhp 4cyl 2.0 litre petrol-electric, e-CVT, 4WD

Max Speed: 110 mph

0 - 62 mph: 8.1sec

Combined MPG: 50

Insurance Group: 26E



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C02 emissions: 117 g/km

Bik rating: 28%, £210FY, £590SRx5

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

**Size:**

L 4.50 m (14.76 ft), W 2.08 m (6.82 ft), H 1.54 m (5.05 ft)

Boot space: 320 litres (11.30 cu.ft)

Kerb weight: 1,620 kg (3,571 lb)

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