



Mazda CX-80 seven seater – Road Test

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The new flagship Mazda CX-80 is poised to make a big impression in the luxury multi-seat SUV sector, writes Robin Roberts (and WheelsWithinWales).

New car sales went and are going through a tough time but it must be said



that in 2024 Mazda did better than most.

Mazda UK sales director Laura Brailey told us global registrations for the brand rose 11% last year to a record 1.4 M and in Britain it intended to lift its current 117 dealership outlets to about 126 by filling open points by 2026.

“We have seen a downturn in private sales but we know more people have moved to pcp and lease deals with businesses and charity groups so the usual 40/ 60 split is now fairly even at 50/50.”

Compared to some brands it has a more compact model line up well aimed at specific buyers and wants to attract new users to the brand with the CX-80, offering six or seven seat configurations alongside the five-seat CX-60 SUV it introduced in Spring 2022.

Both CX-60 and CX-80 share the same platform which has been given new rear suspension under both models for 2025 to sharpen handling while the emphasis is also on high levels of standard equipment at prices which undercut rivals from Germany and Korea.

With a 25 cms (9.8 in) longer wheelbase and 2 cm (0.8 in) higher roofline, the CX-80 stretches to include a third row of individually folding drop-down twin seats. The stretched profile of the CX-80 is different to its shorter stablemate to emphasise the additional seating.

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To appeal to buyers with differing needs, the CX-80 will have five trim levels



with options to specify one of three mid-seat configurations from a traditional bench, two captain's seats with a walk-through gap or a fixed centre console.

The options are intended to appeal to buyers differing requirements and lifestyles in a bespoke package to fit into or around their lifestyles. It will also appeal to private hire fleets.

Powered by the same engines as the Mazda CX-60, there is a choice of plug-in hybrid combining a Skyactiv-G 2.5-litre four-cylinder petrol engine with a 129 kW electric motor producing 327 PS and a 17.8 kWh high-capacity battery – or Mazda's advanced in-line six-cylinder 254 PS 3.3-litre e-Skyactiv D diesel engine. Across both powertrain options, the Mazda CX-80 is exclusively matched to all-wheel drive.

It is also the first Mazda to feature Amazon's Alexa in-car voice controls for infotainment and apps, so it's always listening to you.

The arrival of the new CX-80 and reworked CX-60 shows Mazda's intention to offer purchasers a range of power options and it will not take a headlong rush into the pure electric powertrain but rather develop key models to meet buyers' wishes and needs up to 2050.

That is a wise move which rival manufacturers have now said they will emulate as they put the brakes on new battery electric vehicles in the face of slowing sales and slow roll-out of a public charging points infrastructure.

There are 172 countries worldwide who will demand petrol and diesel cars for



decades, according to Mazda research.

The new Mazda CX-80 PHEV range costs between £49,670 and £56,420 while the diesel models are priced £52,205 to £59,165. The latest CX-60 models come in from £45,420 to £49,520.

Sitting behind the wheel of the CX-80 you immediately appreciate it is a big car when you look down on other traffic and then have to park it in a supermarket bay.

It overhangs front and back and there're just inches to spare either side so you begin to learn and look for bays which are further away from where you're going to get the space to open the big doors and slip out or back in.

Those were the first impressions to strike me about the new Mazda CX-80, the largest model ever sold by the brand in Britain, and which should do very well in the US if it can overcome the tariff troubles which have erupted this Spring.

Access was very good to the front and middle seats of our seven-seater test car but you needed to be fairly agile to reach the rearmost pair of seats which tilted and then slid forward a few inches or centimetres. The pair could be dropped down with pull-straps located on the back of them and reached through the big high lifting fifth door.

With rearmost seats used, the nominal luggage space is a modest 258 litres (9.11 cu.ft), just enough for a couple of suitcases or a bit trolley-load of



shopping, but it gradually extends to a maximum 1,971 litres with the front seats only used.

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The seats were very deeply shaped and soft except for a thinner covering on the rearmost pair and legroom was good even for an adult in the three-seat middle row with a bit more restricted space in the last two for legs and headspace.

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The proven powertrain with eight-speed automatic box was extremely smooth shifting and easily changed modes from normal which selects upon start up, into sport, EV and Off-road.

On A and B-class roads it had good pickup, with a noticeable sharper response in sport mode, and effortlessly cruised main roads and motorways.



Selecting different modes changed the driver's instruments display to emphasise each and highlight various aspects of its performance.

Overall, we found the CX-80 returned about 40 mpg most of the time but engage the EV-mode with its 38 miles range and it would rise up to close to 50 miles average as the petrol and electric systems seamlessly merged functions to give the boost when needed and utilise the self-charging under deceleration. Annoyingly there was no standard charging cable for domestic systems which are still used by some motorists, but they are available from good electrical shops if you look around and carefully choose a good brand.



You have a right hand port for electric charging and left side for petrol.

Matching the responsive transmission, the engine had a good power spread although it became a bit noisy with a rough edge at higher revolutions and once or twice it seemed indecisive about the right gear.

For a big car, the steering was easy and smooth at any speed with a reasonable but not tight turning circle when parking, and it had no vibrations or vagueness.

Underfoot, the brakes really hauled down speed in a very easy and controlled manner and the auto parking brake was easily set and released in traffic or on slopes.

The Mazda engineers have done a very good job balancing the needs of a family holdall of varying capacity with tautness at speed when you want good responses, a smooth ride and reassuring roadholding.



Most road bumps were covered and controlled so they did not shake up the driver and passengers yet it did not roll about in a sickening manner either. We were unable to vary the suspension absorption settings however.

Minor controls grouped around the steering wheel worked well although they were hidden by the thick spokes which also carried communications and speed setting buttons.

The display directly in front of the driver was big and very clear with its changing appearances depending on chosen modes and selected information.



Backing them up was a very comprehensive package contained within the large central infotainment screen in the middle of the fascia and underneath were heating and ventilation buttons for an extremely well equipped comfort pack, including variable heated front seats, steering wheel and air conditioning.

The three-zone A/C was near silent, with excellent directional control, temperature range and strong output backed up by powered windows all round and a £1,000 sunroof optional extra.

Oddments space was excellent with lots of places to put items throughout the cabin, a real favourite with families in mind, but the glovebox was not particularly large.

Driver and passenger in front have excellent seat adjustment range and even the second row seats can be adjusted to suit various leg lengths. Steering wheel reach and rake ability completed the set up together with adjustable memory settings.

Apart from that sometimes busy engine note the noise level in the cabin was low unless you had a bad surface for the suspension to cope with. Wind noise was absent.

VERDICT

The new Mazda CX-80 is a very imposing car, with versatile seating options, lots of room and good equipment at a price which undercuts many rivals, even adding the £1,950 convenience and driver assistance pack.



For: Roomy, comfortable, highly versatile, equipment levels very good, powertrain good with long range potential

Against: Big to park in some locations, road noises, restricted rear seats access, average warranty.





FAST FACTS

Model: Mazda CX-80 2.5 Takumi

Price: £56,730

Mechanical: 327 PS 4 cyl 2.5L petrol-electric PHEV, 8 speed AWD

Max Speed: 121 mph

0 - 62 mph: 6.8 secs

Combined MPG: 34 to 176 mpg

Insurance Group: 38A

C02 emissions: 35 g/km

Bik rating: 13%, £165FY, £620SRx5

Warranty: 3 years/ 60,000 miles/ 8 years battery

Size: L 5.0 m (16.40 ft), W 1.89 m (6.20 ft), H 1.71 m (5.61 ft)

Bootspace: 258 to 1,971 litres (9.11 to 69.61 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 2,314 kg (5,101 lb)



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