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Mazda MX-30 (fully electric) – First impressions

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ALL ELECTRIC NEW MAZDA MX-30 news and first drive views by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency)

Making its move into the electric generation of modern cars, the Mazda MX-30 lands squarely in the middle-ground of the market.

Based on the stable-mate CX-30 crossover which costs about £2,500 less, the MX-30 has a 35.5 kWh lithium-ion traction battery which has added weight to the platform, but Mazda has kept this as low as possible and not utilised a larger battery as in some rivals.

Significantly, the range is being introduced just as HM Government cut its BEV grant to



cars under £35,000 and capped it at a lower £2,500 so the newcomers just slip into the revised scheme. It could also boost their sales as buyers take a closer look at the Mazda MX-30's package and practicality.

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Last year, the MX-30 was awarded five stars after crash tests by the European New Car Assessment Programme and was praised for its adult occupant protection.

The new Mazda MX-30 is available in three trim levels plus a first edition special of just 350 examples. The SE-L Lux opens the range at £25,545, the Sport Lux is £2,000 more and the GT Sport Tech is £29,845 while the First Edition is pitched from £27,495.





Standard equipment SE-L Lux includes 18-inch silver alloys, grey cloth seats, parking sensors and reversing camera, LED lights and cruise control. The Sport Lux adds among other things navigation, smart key and rain sensing wipers while top GT Sport Tech comes with powered sunroof, Bose surround sound system, driver monitor, front wiper de-icer and heated steering wheel. The exclusive First Edition models have intelligent headlights, FM/DAB radio, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto / Bluetooth, parking sensors and camera together with cruise control, heated front seats and powered driver seat.

The MX-30 models use a common E-Skyactiv 145 PS/ 107 kW electric motor driving the front wheels with a single speed automatic transmission, a 35.5 kWh battery and give a range of approximately 124 miles from a full charge, depending on driving characteristics.



Mazda supply both domestic three-pin and rapid charge Type2 cables for users' convenience



so the MX-30 can be fully charged over 15 hours or up to 80% battery capacity in just 36 mins – and the home wallbox rapid charger is included.



A five-mode regenerative braking system worked by column paddles allows the drive to extend the range or performance and this is part of the sporting edge the engineers wanted to give the car and reflect its links to the MX range.

Clever electronics in the steering provide more grip to the front tyres when entering a bend and to the rear pair when leaving so the handling is good for an SUV. In a further nod to its MX heritage the suspension is firmer than you might expect in a family car so it feels taut but it was also jiggly over anything but the smoothest road.

Power delivery is instant and regeneration is strong and variable through the paddles and



you can get a useful range out of the battery with some judicious use of the throttle, brakes and paddles, and it's all very enjoyable.

The MX-30s other nod to performance is the use of rear hinged Freestyle doors seen on the RX-8 two decades ago, which include the B-pillar in the rear pair and ease back seats and front seats access.

Room in front is assisted by a good range of adjustment, powered on most versions of the MX-30, but the legroom is very short in the back and suitable possibly only for a child or teenager.

Visibility is generally good but you need the sensors when reversing as the C-pillar and high tail block sightlines.

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The sporting nature of the MX-30 is evident in its pickup which is brisk once it gets going and moving the 1.6 tonnes car and on main roads it can adequately keep up with traffic.

Inside, the instruments are simple with a speedometer and power meter to show how the electricity is being used or generated and the remaining distance available before recharging.

Using any power grabbing features will reduce that range of course and Mazda point out that even ambient temperatures can influence the distance.

There is no doubt that the Mazda MX-30 is probably going to be a useful second car for many and will adequately be a first car for those who do not need to cover long distances each day or who can use the MyMazda app to plot a journey using available charging points along the way.



VERDICT

Like the rest of the market, the Mazda MX-30 will find a niche in its price range and its attractive interior and fittings give it a lift over some rivals, possibly persuading existing owners of Mazda city-cars to make the move towards the electric future with a brand they know and like.

For: Responsive, good handling, comfortable front seats, easy to drive, convenient controls, well equipped, mechanically quiet, Freestyle opening rear hinged rear side doors.

Against: Jiggly ride with firm suspension, road noise, very tight rear legroom and access, limited rear visibility.



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

Mazda MX-30 GT Sport Tech.

Price: £29,845.

Mechanical: 107 kW motor, 35.5 kWh battery, single forward speed auto, front wheel drive.



Performance: 87 mph, 0 - 62 mph 9.7-seconds.

Driving Range: 124 miles, 36 mins to 15.8 hours charging time, CO2 0g/km.

Insurance Group: 19

Tax costs: £0 VED road tax, 1% BiK company car tax.

Warranty: 8 years battery/ 3-years / 60,000 miles mechanical cover.

Size: L 4.40 m (14.44 ft), W 1.80 m (5.91 ft), H 1.56 m (5.12 ft), 5 doors / 5 seats.

Boot space: 366 to 1,171 litres (12.93 to 41.35 cu.ft).