Suzuki Swace (updated) – First Impressions

Published: May 5, 2023

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Online version: https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/suzuki-swace-updated-first-impressions/



Kim Henson briefly samples the latest, updated version of Suzuki's British-built Swace estate car…

When I road-tested the first generation mid-size Suzuki Swace, in 2021, I rated it highly for

its interior space, comfort, practicality and cost-effective economy of running (achieving nearly 60 miles per gallon in almost 500 miles of ‘real life’ motoring). I also enjoyed it dynamically; the Swace felt sure-footed and I liked the easy way in which the standard-fit self-charging hybrid drivetrain worked seamlessly and effectively.

However, nothing stays the same for long in the car world, and Suzuki’s latest, second generation version of the British-built Swace has been significantly enhanced in terms of power output and performance, without sapping fuel consumption or adversely affecting emissions to any meaningful degree.

The new 2023 model, already on sale, now features a new line-up of Motion and Ultra versions, priced at £28,999 and £30,799 respectively.

Of particular note is an improvement in the Combined maximum power output from the petrol and electric motors, to 140 bhp (from 122 bhp), courtesy of a higher output electric motor, fitted in conjunction with a larger capacity traction battery pack.

Powering the car is a 1.8 petrol engine delivering 97 bhp @ 5,200 rpm, plus an electric motor producing 70 Kw (previously 53 Kw).



The WLTP CO2 emissions figure is 102 g/km, and the WLTP Combined fuel consumption figure is 62.7 mpg.

When operating in EV mode the car can be driven for short distances just by electric power. For motoring in ‘Normal’, ‘Eco’ and ‘Sport’ modes the hybrid system seamlessly self-adjusts to use petrol and electric power together, in varying degrees between the two according to the mode selected and driving style.

This model is a self-charging hybrid, so there is no need nor facility to plug in the vehicle to charge it; the traction battery is recharged from operation of the petrol engine and through

regenerative power developed during deceleration.

This set-up avoids the concern that can arise with pure battery EVs in terms of available driving range between recharges.

The latest Swace provides upgrades to safety and equipment specification levels, also in the area of digital and multimedia features, together with revisions to the styling and lighting.

Standard fittings on both versions include: Emergency Driving Stop system, LED rear lamps, seven airbags, Dual Zone automatic air conditioning, eight-inch colour LCD information screen, heated front seats, heated steering wheel, Smart phone link for wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto device connectivity, rear parking camera, a new digital instrument cluster with three display modes, type C USB port and Dynamic Radar Cruise Control.

The new range-topping Ultra model additionally features: Updated Bi-LED projector headlamps, Safe Exit Assist, Smart Door Locking, front and rear park distance sensors, Blind Spot Monitor, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, interior ambient lighting, and a centre console tray with wireless charger.

Better still on the road than its predecessor…

During my necessarily brief test drive of the updated Swace (in Ultra guise), it was immediately apparent that performance had been improved, compared with the original model. Personally I felt that the first series Swace drove well, but in terms of lively acceleration this new car is definitely better still…

According to Suzuki the acceleration time from rest to 62 mph has been reduced from 11.1 to just 9.4 seconds; significantly quicker. The car feels accomplished when accelerating on the move too.

I liked the way that the newcomer rode and handled during some time on twisting country

lanes, and the manner in which it cruised easily and quietly at speed on faster sections of road.

Space galore

The Swace is a purpose-designed estate car, which to me in many ways makes more sense than an SUV unless you are especially keen on SUV-type styling. For me, the low stance of the Swace is a plus point, and within the sleek five seater bodywork is a spacious interior for up to five adults to travel in comfort, with generous head and leg room throughout. Notably, rear seat leg room is considerably better than in many cars of comparable size.



Additionally there is a huge load space, which with the rear seats folded is 1,860mm (73.23 in) long, and has a capacity of 1,232 litres (43.51 cu.ft) in this situation or 596 litres (21.05 cu.ft) with the rear seats in use.



Verdict

A stylish, highly practical estate car that offers excellent performance and economy of operation, spacious accommodation for passengers and luggage, and the convenience of a self-charging hybrid system that needs no charging from external sources.

I am hoping to bring you a full road test on the new model, in due course.



WHEELS-ALIVE TECH. SPEC IN BRIEF:

Suzuki Swace Ultra Hybrid estate

Price: £31, 399 (including £600 for metallic paintwork).

Engine: Four cylinder, 16 valve 1.8 litre (1798cc), petrol, Euro 6d compliant.

Power: 102 PS @ 5,200 rpm.

Torque: Total 142 Nm (105 lb.ft) @ 3,600 rpm.

Electric motor: 70 kW, 185 Nm (136 lb.ft).

Transmission: CVT automatic; front wheel drive .

Performance:

0 – 62 mph: 9.4 seconds

Top speed: 112 mph.

Fuel consumption (‘Official’ figures):

WLTP figure: Combined, 62.7 mpg).

Fuel tank capacity: 43 litres (9.46 Imperial gallons).

Approximate range on full tank at our WLTP mpg: 593 miles.

CO2 Emissions, WLTP: 102 g/km.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles (but five years/60,000 miles for the hybrid drivetrain components).

Dimensions: Length 4,655 mm (15.27 ft), Width 1,790 mm (5.87 ft), Height 1,460 mm (4.79 ft), Wheelbase 2,700 mm (8.86 ft), Ground clearance 135 mm (5.31 in.). Kerb weight 1,420 kg (3,131 lb), Luggage capacity 596 to 1,232 litres (21.05 to 43.51 cu.ft).


HYBRID