Suzuki SX4 S-Cross – Revised Models for 2017 – First Impressions

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Updated Suzuki SX4 S Cross Models – Tom Scanlan tries 'em out!

The British [illegible] seems to be in a [illegible] and car [illegible] are booming.

Among the smaller manufacturers as far as we are concerned is Suzuki.

[illegible] of money on advertising and results show that it [illegible]

Now, on sale next month (October) is what Suzuki describes as a 'major facelift' of their SUV, the SX4 S-Cross.

It's not just a facelift, however. Under the bonnet behind the new grille and headlamp design are a choice of three engines new to this model. There are the 1.4 Boosterjet and three cylinder, 1.0 litre Boosterjet, along with a 1.6 litre diesel.

Suzuki achieved very good reviews of the little 1.0 litre, engine when it appeared earlier this year in the Baleno saloon, also in the Vitara (and our own Wheels-Alive reviews were also full of praise).

What's it like in the SX4? Outstanding! Yes, this is a 111 PS three cylinder engine that deserves to win accolades like Ford has done with its similar engine.





Driving the Suzuki so powered was a most enjoyable experience. It is such a willing performer and it whizzes you up to breaking the 70 mph limit all too easily. Strange then that it apparently takes 11 seconds to get to 62 mph… but just wants to GO! Neither is it noisy. You might expect that when the foot goes down hard the engine would let you know, but it as smooth, if not smoother, than any other three cylinder unit and not fussed in the slightest at being asked to work hard.

Yes, but what about the fuel consumption? Although these engines have improved their consumption figures over the years, there can still be a premium in unimpressive consumptions if the car is driven hard. The official combined cycle consumption figure for

this car is 56.4 mpg, so I was please to record a figure not too far off that, on a reasonably testing test route around beautiful North Wales, of 50.6 mpg, according to the trip computer.

The car was fun all round, with a pleasant five-speed manual gearbox, and all of the main driving functions were well-sorted out, so steering, handling, braking and the (for me) all-important ride comfort could not be faulted. The car felt refined and unfussed and, at 70 mph on the dual-carriageway, there was negligible noise. This car will cost only £30 per year in road tax.

In comparison, the 1.4 litre, 140 PS engine felt immediately even more responsive and lively and at least as refined, probably more so, as its little brother.

The test car was fitted with a full automatic gearbox (not the automated manual found in other Suzukis) that provided almost seamless changes throughout. Paddles behind the steering wheel are there, but the 'box did everything I wanted in any case, at least on first impressions. The consumption was recorded at 47.6 mpg, compared with the official combined cycle figure of 49.5 mpg, so a that was another satisfactory result. Like the three cylinder unit, this engine also significantly outperforms the no-longer available 1.6 litre in all departments: economy, emissions and acceleration. VED band D means £110 per annum.

A quick 15 mile drive on mainly easy roads in the 1.6 diesel (120 PS, 236 lb/ft of torque from 1,750 rpm, VED band B £20 per annum) was also impressive. Yes, there is the usual diesel clatter at low speeds, but it is less pronounced than in some other cars and, with the engine already warmed up by a previous driver, the mpg return was an indicated 73.4 mpg, which compared very well with the official extra urban 74.3; in fact, had I not done some tight car park manoeuvring at the end of my trip, my figure would have been 74.9 mpg. Colleagues who had driven the whole route that I had done in the two petrol cars recorded 70 mpg in the diesel (official combined 68.8 mpg).

So how about the 'major facelift'? Ground clearance is a little higher but the main, obvious

change is to the radiator grille. This now has eight vertical shiny metal bars replacing the previous two horizontal strips. The headlamps sit in the same front orifices, but, as it were, fit in them differently. At the rear, you get LED combination lamps.

Six new colours are there to choose from, but only one of them as not an optional extra.

On the higher-spec'd versions, there are new seat fabrics, but all new SX4s have a new soft-touch dashboard top.

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Suzuki prides itself on offering generous levels of equipment; generally, speaking, this covers everything from safety to driver-aids, comfort and convenience and infotainment (DAB radio is now standard across the range) and connectivity. As ever, it is worth exploring how best to get what you want by comparing these with what the competition offers. Suzuki is confident of beating them, depending on which 'grade' you choose: SZ4, SZ-T or SZ5.

Prices start at £14,999. Emissions are as low as 106 g/km but there will always be something to pay the government every year with whichever SX4 S-Cross you go for.

The test 1.0-litre Boosterjet SZ-T was £19,499 before options; the 1.4-litre Boosterjet SZ5 Allgrip was £24,199 before options; the 1.6 DDIS SZ-T was £21,429.

VERDICT

All very good, then, from Suzuki…but please can we have a full-size spare wheel? There is not even a space-saver. People do still get punctures, don't we… only last month in my case.

(Note from Kim: We have been advised by Suzuki that in fact they do offer a space saver spare wheel as an accessory which costs £147 including VAT).

PLUS, NOW, OUR FULL ROAD TEST…

Kim says: “Following Tom’s ‘First Impressions’ of the new SX4 S-Cross, my full road test on the 1.4 Boosterjet SZ5 ALLGRIP Auto version is now on this website; to read this, please CLICK HERE!”



Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Suzuki SX4 S-Cross 1.0 Boosterjet, Prices: From £14,999 to £21,299. (Test car price, before options, £19,499)

Engine: 988cc 12 valve three cylinder.

Transmission: Five speed manual (Optional six speed automatic). Two or Four wheel drive.

Power: 111 PS @ 5,500 rpm.

Torque: 170 Nm (125 lb.ft) @ 2,000 to 3,500 rpm.

Performance (manual, two wheel drive):

0-62 mph: 11.0 sec.

Top speed: 112 mph.

Fuel consumption (manual): Official Combined, 56.4 mpg (on test, 50.6 mpg).

CO2 emissions: 113 g/km.