



Vauxhall Corsa (2006 - 2014)

An Extra Size

Review | With the new Astra, Vauxhall has vision. From an unassuming medium sized car, the manufacturer has built a beautifully shaped car with modern technology and outstanding driving characteristics. Now Opel introduces the new Corsa and has applied the same strategies. The Corsa is more attractively shaped than ever, offers technology which has usually been kept for more expensive cars and promises considerably improved driving characteristics. It's time for an introduction.

The scene of this introduction is the East German city of Dresden: a city which has developed into a blooming cultural and artistic centre from an underprivileged area. Impressive monuments and modern architecture are placed next to each other. The newly designed Corsa does not look out of place. Moreover this car unites two different tastes. The 3-door Corsa is a quick and desirable car, whereas the 5-door model is solid and practical.

More room

Inside, the difference between the three and the five-door is even more evident. The new Corsa has grown considerably in comparison to its predecessor. The 3-door offers thus a lot more room; even taller drivers have plenty of space. The space in the rear is moderate.

In the five-door Corsa the front seats are very upright, which gives a lot more legroom in the rear. The roof line of the five-door Corsa is higher than the three-door, giving more headroom in the back.



This set-up is characteristic for the new Corsa: there clearly has been a lot of thought about all the component parts, and where possible the car has become much smarter and modern. Another example is the "FlexFix" bicycle rack, which can be fixed to the rear bumper. Tow hooks, loose parts or tools are no longer necessary. With a few simple actions, a strong bicycle rack slides out, along with an extra sets of rear lights as required by law.

Less revolutionary, but also standard, is the double floor in the boot. All available space is used to the maximum. It also allows for more delicate baggage to be separated from larger pieces. Unfortunately this construction comes apart quite easily and can make a right mess.

Greater safety

Even in the field of luxury and safety, the Corsa goes a step further than usual in this market. ABS has now become commonly accepted, but Vauxhall has combined the ABS with technology to make the car more controllable in critical situations such as braking in a turn or on a poor road surface. These adjustments from an existing system make the car no more expensive but a lot safer.

Also very practical are the steering linked headlamps which greatly improve visibility. This option makes night driving much less tiring and also safer. Usually adaptive headlights are combined with expensive xenon lamps; Vauxhall uses halogen lights making it a much more affordable option.



More luxury

Luxury starts with the appearance of the car's interior. For the most part, the car is recognizable as a standard Vauxhall interior made up of standard Opel components. The compact Corsa is furnished in a much more fun and cheerful fashion than the larger Opel. Depending on the chosen model, the top of the dashboard has the same colour as the car. This is particularly attractive in the blue Corsa. It is also possible to have the panel of the central console finished in black piano varnish; unfortunately it attracts dust from the very first instance.

If it is a question of appearance, the relatively simple "Expression" model is the favourite. The other models are much more chic, but this particular model is original and frivolous, which goes with Corsa's image. For the lovers of design: an Vauxhall designer in a moment of madness has hidden an effigy of a shark in the interior. A little hint: open the mouth and look at it from the other side ...

Luxury also translates into electronics. Part of which is just ticking the boxes. Heated seats and steering wheel are not really essential in our climate. However an audio system which can also play mp3's, would be of more use and is fortunately standard in the "Expression" model.



Very special in this class is the "intelligent key". The car's details can be stored in the car key. Think about the radio channel preferences, the temperature of the climate control system or the volume of the warning signals. Whoever shares the car with someone else, always has these properties ready thanks to their own key.

Greater driving pleasure

Although for some time now the Corsa has no longer been merely a simple urban car, restricted to the city, the car still feels very much at home in the traffic. The Corsa is comfortable on poor road surfaces but yet at the same time feels great and has outstanding road handling.

In the "Sport" model, the Corsa offers in fact a lot more than that and knows how to differentiate itself from the competition. In sports garb, the car has been lowered by 0.7 inches at the front and 0.6 inches at the back, the suspension has been set more tightly and the steering is a lot sharper.

However it is not just about subtle adjustments, but the difference is immediate even in the first mile. The Corsa "Sport" reacts more directly to each order, challenges in seriously quick turns and threads its way lithely through the traffic. Like the Astra, the Corsa does not have a sport switch to shift between

these modes. The Corsa Sport is always ready, the less athletic Corsa are always comfortable.



More engines

In the new Corsa the same engine is used as in the old Corsa. The diesel engines are equipped with a soot filter and have either a 1.7 litre or 1.3 litre engine capacities. Dependent on the model, the latter delivers 75 of 90 hp.

The 1.3 litre model with 90 hp is not particularly refined, but the performances are good. It makes the Corsa into a fluid city car and a road maniac on the motorway. This is partly due to the sixth gear, which keeps the revs and the fuel consumption pleasantly low. The 125 hp strong 1.7 litre CDTi is noticeably even stronger and quieter. The well earned performance of the 1.3 CDTi does not make the 1.7 CDTi any more value for money.

The petrol engine supply starts with the most efficient 1 litre three-cylinder. This technology is a guarantee for the high reliability and low fuel consumption.

Above the three-cylinder there is also a 1.2 and a 1.4 litre four-cylinder. This latter car was driven the most and has a definite must-have quality. Vauxhall offers the choice between a normal gearbox and a so-called "close ratio" gearbox. With the normal gearbox, the car is efficient and relatively quiet. The "close ratio" gears follow each other very closely, which allows the engine to maintain the revs. Opel manages to achieve good results from this

modest car with this technology. It appears as if the power source is precisely a size larger than what Opel aimed for with the new Corsa.



Conclusion

Vauxhall has applied the already proven recipe of the new Astra to the new Corsa. The same effect has been achieved. The new Corsa has definitely climbed out of the unassuming middle bracket and now scores with its attractive design, dynamic road handling and advanced technology. At the same time Opel has remained realistic and the car hasn't become prohibitively expensive. Corsa is no longer Johnnie's (no-)mate; Opel is everyone's mate. ■



Specifications

Vauxhall Corsa (2006 - 2014) SXi 1.4i 16v

Size and weight



Length x width x height	399 x 171 x 149 cm
Wheelbase	251 cm
Kerb weight	1.040 kg
Trailer	500 kg
Trailer - braked	1.000 kg
Fuel capacity	45 l
Luggage space	285/1050 l
Tyre size	195/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	1364 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/
Max power	90 PS @ 5600 rpm
Max torque	125 Nm @ 4000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	12.4 secs
Top speed	173 km/h
Average mileage	6.2 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	8.1 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.1 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	149 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 10,800
Price base model	Â£ 7,495