



Hyundai i30 (2007 - 2012)

Special Offer

Review | It seems as if the marketing men at Hyundai have been studying their thesaurus of sales patter. When the Hyundai i30 was exhibited during Geneva Motor Show for the first time, they told us that the i30 stands for inspirational, intelligent, innovative, and international. They couldn't find the words in any language to describe the driving characteristics and other specifications. Fortunately the car is now available for a telling test.

Let's start at the beginning. This is possibly less obvious than it perhaps sounds. Many car manufacturers use the basic model as bait by placing it at the top of the price list. Such a basic model is in reality rarely deliverable or so basic that no-one ever chooses it. To prove that Hyundai can effectively deliver a complete and full car for £10,995 with the i30, this model was test driven.

The test car has been spray painted in the latest colour: white. However it's not only here that Hyundai is keeping up the latest trends. There are many other characteristics from other cars to find in the i30's appearance. The nose resembles the Vauxhall Astra, the profile is reminiscent of the Mazda3 and the rear has a little something of the BMW 1-Serie. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. The i30 is far from the ugly duckling after all.



Basic finish

The interior has been well thought out with even the basic model being complete. The Comfort Version which was test driven has electric windows, six airbags, central locking and heated side mirrors. The standard audio system (with steering wheel mounted controls) sounds very good and is even equipped with a well functioning iPod connection. This is particularly

unique to this segment.



Moreover Hyundai has thought of everything: two 12v sockets, an abundance of holders and compartments, sunglasses holder, as well as cup and bottle holders. It is only on two accounts that the i30 has missed the mark: above the bottle holders in the doors there is so little space, that it is in fact almost impossible to store a bottle; and the steering wheel is adjustable in height however not in the distance from the driver.

The Korean manufacturers have even thought about the taller European driver. The space in front is generous. The headrests of the front seats can be adjusted sufficiently that they do actually make a contribution to the safety of the driver and passengers. In the back, the i30 has above average space for a car of its size due to the long wheel base. Also the luggage space at 340 litres is quite considerable.

Engine

The i30 is available with three petrol and three diesel engines. The test driven basic model had the basic engine. The 1.4 litre four cylinder petrol engine, which produces 109 bhp / 137 Nm.



Consequently, the i30 feels particularly at home in the city. The i30 1.4 is agreeably quiet and extremely smooth. The engine is lively; the smallest movement of the accelerator ensures a direct response. As a result, the car feels rapid.

This does however remain just a feeling. When the pedal is pressed in deeply, there is little more than the engine noise and barely anymore performance. On the motorway, this light i30 does keep up without a problem with the rest of the traffic. However any overtaking manoeuvre which requires you to move as quick as lightning is not on this car's agenda. Mountainous regions or trailers really show where the performance doesn't come up to par.



Partly for this reason Hyundai expects that the 1.6 litre (122 bhp / 154 Nm) petrol engine will be the most popular choice. It provides exactly that little bit of

extra horsepower that the basis engine is missing in the mountains or during mid-accelerations. With the 1.6 litre engine the i30 is a smooth mid-sized car that feels at home everywhere. However on the other hand this heavier engine does have a higher consumption and on top of that isn't as quiet as the lighter engine. The 1.6 engine does require more revs to deliver results which can be tiring on a long trip.



Performance

The Hyundai i30 shares both its floor panel and engine with the Kia Cee'd. Both manufacturers have however built on these basic parts in their own way, which is subsequently very noticeable in the road handling. Hyundai choose for a longer, more gentle suspension travel which makes the car more comfortable. At the same time the steering is not so light, that all the feeling is lost in the front wheels.

When the car is put in difficult situations, the i30 does tend to lose it's grip quicker than its more expensive competitors such as the Ford Focus, Toyota Auris. In

sharp bends, the limit is reached much sooner; during sudden (swerve) manoeuvres, the balance is disturbed much more quickly.

It is only in this extremes situation that the car has noticeably been economised. In every other situation, the i30 does feel exceedingly good. The car drives, brakes, changes gear and steers very well. The friendly price tag makes the driver feel as though they are sitting in the front row for a thrupp'ny bite. Even this objective test report has turned into a publicity shot ...



Conclusion

The i30 is the first of a truck load of new models from Hyundai. Apart from this i30 hatchback there is also an estate, an MPV and even possibly a coupé convertible.

This first from the new generation Hyundai's is more than capable of setting itself apart from the competition. The driving characteristics are good, but in borderline cases not as good as those of similar cars from more expensive manufacturers. This is the only point where the i30 is unable to hold its own against the competition. The i30 deservedly scores well with its interior space, not just in the front but the back too. Even in the basic model, the car has a rich and particularly modern standard finish. The basis engine 1.4 is economical, quiet and performs well.

In spite of its competitive price the Hyundai i30 doesn't feel like a budget car, the absolute basic

model inclusive. Retrospectively it's easy to understand why the marketing men at Hyundai got so bogged down with sales jargon: they've got a cast-iron new model on their hands! ■



Specifications

Hyundai i30 (2007 - 2012) 1.4i CVT HP Comfort

Size and weight



Length x width x height	425 x 176 x 148 cm
Wheelbase	265 cm
Kerb weight	1.168 kg
Trailer	550 kg
Trailer - braked	1.200 kg
Fuel capacity	53 l
Luggage space	340/1250 l
Tyre size	185/65R15

Engine and performance



Capacity	1396 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	109 PS @ 6200 rpm
Max torque	137 Nm @ 5000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	12.6 secs
Top speed	187 km/h
Average mileage	6.1 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	7.6 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.2 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	145 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 10,995
Price base model	Â£ 10,995