



Subaru Impreza Ugly Duckling

Car review | On a beautiful lake not far from here, there once lived a family of ducks. One day, a new duckling was born. This was a very different duckling to all the other ducklings. In no time at all, this new addition was called ‘the ugly duckling’ and became the brunt of everyone’s jokes. However, the ugly duckling not only grew into a swan but also one of the most beautiful creatures on the lake. Now, what has this fairy story to do with the new Subaru Impreza? Read on.

The Subaru Impreza always stood for sportiness and sheer horsepower. However, in this time of climate change and environmental awareness, this is no longer acceptable as it is. Consequently, Subaru has changed tack. Although there is also a fast version of the new Impreza in the pipeline, the new generation is for the most part intended as a business car.

Ugly?

The outward appearance has seen a radical break from the past. Previous generations were available as saloons and estates; the new Impreza is a strange mix of the two.



Fortunately, the interior is convincing in its beauty. The dashboard's large undulating forms encompass the driver and their passenger. That half-baked feeling of the 80s, which continued to pervade the Impreza despite its innumerable updates, now belongs definitively to the past. The new interior is strongly designed and logically arranged. The only strange

element is the interior mirror which has been stuck unusually low onto the windscreen.

As optional, Subaru provides a good navigation, audio and computer system. The graphic design is well chosen with a multitude of possibilities. The controls can sometimes be a little bit confusing as some functions are controlled with knobs and others with a touch sensitive screen. Moreover the system can also be controlled with paddles on the steering wheel.



Space

With its refined exterior size, the new Impreza offers a lot of inside space. With the sports seat in the furthest position, even tall drivers are unable to reach the pedals! Conversely the steering wheel is adjustable to the bare minimum. It can be positioned in all directions, yet only moves over such a short distance that it rests at knee height all the time.

The space in the rear is above average, with a boot that is large even for a car from this segment.



Boxer

However, the Impreza really knows how to distinguish itself from the masses due to its special technology. However, this technology isn't just there to be different, it offers great, practical advantages. Developments which were previously installed to maximize performance have been used in the new Impreza to ensure maximum safety.

Let's start with the boxer engine. This engine is not only simpler in design than a traditional engine; it can also be installed so that the weight lies lower in the car. The simple set-up makes the car reliable. The lower centre of gravity improves the road handling.



The new Impreza has the characteristic boxer rumble. The clutch has an extreme biting point; when it is released even slightly the car shoots off. The brake pedal has justifiably a very long stroke, which does take a little getting used to.

The 2.0 litre four cylinder engine of the test car is an evolved version of the old Impreza engine, which has been adapted so that it delivers more power at a lower rev count. Consequently the car is automatically more economical. Moreover the character elicits a quieter and more comfortable drive.

When it is required, this new 150 bhp Impreza delivers a fine performance, whereby its sporty past won't be forgotten. With its sharp price, the Subaru Impreza provides an unprecedented combination of comfort and performance.



All-wheel drive

Subaru would not be Subaru if the Impreza didn't have Symmetrical All Wheel Drive. With this clever form of four-wheel drive, the car's centre of gravity remains low, with traction guaranteed under all circumstances. Sports cars from the past used this to deliver sublime performances; the new Impreza business car uses it to ensure masses of active safety. Airbags and crunch zones (passive safety) are wonderful; accident avoidance is always so much better.

Even so the road handling is less impressive than that of the sporty Imprezas. The suspension of this business car is relatively soft, whereby the car can eventually unbalance under intense swerving movements. The feeling in the steering wheel is also completely different to that in a sports car, whereby the new Impreza has really become a comfortable

business car.

Tow Car

The Impreza still has one last trump card to distinguish itself from the masses: low gearing. Easily explained the Impreza has two gear boxes: one is for normal use; the other makes the car slow but extremely strong. This strength can be used simply to drive away on a slope with a heavy trailer. This all-road vehicle technology is unique in private cars and turns the Impreza into a tow car which is better than many an SUV!

Conclusion

So what has the new Subaru Impreza to do with the fairy story about the ugly duckling? Subaru has dared to stick its neck out to make itself a little bit different. After many a generation of public roads rally cars, the new Impreza is a very special company car. If you look a little deeper, you will see that there is a lot of fine technology hidden away.

With the boxer engine, the Impreza delivers fine performances making the car completely trustworthy. Four-wheel drive ensures masses of active safety, as well as turning the Impreza into a great tow car. ■



Specifications

Subaru Impreza 2.0RX

Size and weight



Length x width x height	442 x 174 x 148 cm
Wheelbase	262 cm
Kerb weight	1.330 kg
Trailer	unknown
Trailer - braked	1.600 kg
Fuel capacity	60 l
Luggage space	538/1257 l
Tyre size	205/50R17

Engine and performance



Capacity	1994 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	150 PS @ 6400 rpm
Max torque	196 Nm @ 3200 rpm
Drive	four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9.6 secs
Top speed	193 km/h
Average mileage	8.4 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	11.1 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	6.9 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	199 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 17,495
Price base model	Â£ 12,495