



## Hyundai i20 (2008 - 2014)

### Set priorities

Car review | Bleak stories are all over the news. The financial markets are reined by panicky feelings and low-spirited sentiments. Mass lay-offs take place at car manufacturers. The industry as a whole shows a downward trend, but at Hyundai the sun is shining. As a matter of fact this make continues to introduce new models unceasingly. They even state that now is the perfect time for the new i20. Could this be misplaced optimism or is the i20 indeed the car everyone has been waiting for?

According to Hyundai it is all about setting priorities. The manufacturer argues that it is more than ever important to listen carefully to customers and to build a car that truly matches their needs. Therefore, the i20 has been designed and engineered in Europe.

This allows for previous mishaps to be avoided. Up to a few years ago, Korean cars were built to fit Koreans which made it very hard for Europeans to fit in. In addition, Koreans seem to prefer cars that steer extremely light and have a soft suspension, which in turn seems to be less appealing for European drivers.



### Priority on reliability

The i20 has been designed in Hyundai's European design centre in the German town of Rüsselsheim. That is why the i20 has a European look. The i20 incorporates influences of various European cars and

the Vauxhall Corsa seems to have been used in particular as a reference for inspiration. The i20 is perhaps not the most originally designed car, but this brand new model already has a familiar touch to it, which is exactly what Hyundai aims for in these troubled times.

From the interior it can be deduced that this is a car of our generation. The materials used are of a much higher quality than were current a few years ago. The overall level of finishing is fine.

## Priority on functionality

The i20 is meant to be the successor of the Getz and has grown quite considerably in comparison to its predecessor. The chassis has been elongated (approx. 2.8 inches) which transpires into additional interior space. The space at the front is fine, also for tall drivers. The seats are sufficiently adjustable and the steering wheel can be adjusted in angle as well as in distance to the driver.



The rear seat space is average for a car of this size. This means that with a little effort adults can be seated at the back, but foremost it is meant for children though. The boot capacity is way above average and can hold up to 370 litres. Loading and off-loading is somewhat hampered though through quite a substantial lifting threshold.

The priority of its standard kit is on safety and functionality. Innovative technology and gimmicks are not its game, but at the same time the i20 offers

everything one may expect from a car in this segment.

With regard to safety ABS (anti-lock brakes), six airbags and "active front head restraints" (which prevent whiplash injuries when hit from behind) all come in standard. An electronic stability control ("ESP") does not come in standard as of yet but this might change next year. Also very safe: the built-in radio/CD player (with iPod connection) has steering wheel mounted controls.



## Priority on economising

That's all with regard to design and functionality. Hyundai knows like no other how to manufacture cars with an excellent price/performance ratio, which is exactly what the i20 is all about. In view of its size, kit and level of finishing the i20 does come at a nice price.



However, running costs do not cease upon purchase of a car. That's why Hyundai has put a lot of effort into the reliability of the car.

In doing so Hyundai promises that all its engines are very economical whilst maintaining excellent performance levels. A 1.4 litre petrol engine was driven for this test as it is expected to become the most popular model.

The i20 1.4 has no problem keeping up with the other traffic and has just about enough oomph to take over or join in swiftly from time to time. In mountainous areas the 1.4 climbs well, provided gears are changed in time. It then shows that the 1.4 engine is less powerful at low revs in comparison to similar engines of other manufacturers.



Despite the fact that the engine needs to be kept well on a certain rpm level the i20 is remarkable quiet: even more so than most of its rivals.

The reality is that the "i20 1.4 16v" uses approximately 5.7 litre of petrol per 60 miles on non-urban roads. In town the onboard computer reported a consumption of 7.3 litre per 60 miles. In both cases the i20 is slightly more economical than its main rivals, who are also slightly less powerful.

## Priority on driving characteristics

When it comes to road handling the priority is on soundness and common sense. The road-holding of the i20 can be summarised as "decent". As indicated previously, the i20 has been designed for the European market and therefore the car does not steer particularly light nor too heavy but just about right. The chassis is solid which gives it a safe and firm feel. In town the i20 offers the necessary comfort on bad road-surface whereas it is stable and placid on the motorway.

The i20 is not a particularly challenging car, but this latest Hyundai is definitely not afraid of a corner. The i20 thrives in particular on bendy roads through mountainous area. Whilst the car industry is low spirited the i20 lifts spirits!



## Conclusion

In times when most car manufacturers struggle Hyundai plays safe with a car that has neither innovative gimmicks nor a remarkable design. This may sound illogic, but this is exactly what the market has been waiting for. In troubled times people long for security and the i20 fits that bill perfectly.

Its kit is complete but not nothing exuberant. The emphasis is on a keen purchase price. From a technical point of view the i20 is sound, but instead of emphasising its driving enjoyment, reliability and a low consumption have been opted for.

The i20 may not be an exciting car, but it is a very sensible car. These days it is all about setting the right priorities which Hyundai has perfectly managed to do so. ■



# Specifications

## Hyundai i20 (2008 - 2014) 1.4 Style

### Size and weight



Length x width x height	394 x 171 x 149 cm
Wheelbase	253 cm
Kerb weight	1.010 kg
Trailer	450 kg
Trailer - braked	1.000 kg
Fuel capacity	45 l
Luggage space	370/1060 l
Tyre size	185/60R15

### Engine and performance



Capacity	1396 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	100 PS @ 5500 rpm
Max torque	137 Nm @ 4200 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	11.6 secs
Top speed	180 km/h
Average mileage	5.6 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	7.2 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.7 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	133 gr / km

### Price

Price	Â£ 10,845
Price base model	Â£ 8,645