



Suzuki Swift (2010 - 2017)

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Car review | This is the all-new Suzuki Swift. Yes, really. On first glance it may look exactly like the old one. On top of that, Suzuki hardly communicated about the coming of a new model. There were no concept cars at motor shows, no previews and no announcements. Instead it suddenly arrived and is at the local dealer as of now. So what does the new Suzuki Swift have to offer?

The previous generations of the Suzuki Swift owed their success to a combination of cheeky looks, sporty performance and yet a modest price tag.

Suzuki says it didn't manage to improve on the looks, so it merely refined the existing design. The new Swift has grown and is more muscular than its predecessor. Still, the difference is only clear when the new model is parked next to the old. Just to make sure: the car on the right in the picture is the new Swift.



Space

The length has increased by 9 cm; the wheelbase is 5 cm longer than before. That length doesn't benefit the room on the back seat. The space in the rear is always poor with cars this size, but the legroom in the back of the Swift is even worse than usual. Adults can hardly sit in the back of this new Suzuki.

On the other hand, room in the front is ample. Not only are the head and legroom excellent, there's also

lots of space to move around the front seats. Because the cabin is so roomy, both driver and passenger don't have the feeling of travelling in a compact car (the unfortunate passengers folded up on the rear seat will have quite a different opinion on this).



Also the layout of the dashboard gives the feeling of a large, serious car. The dash feels like cheap plastic, yet looks like a premium product. The spec level of the "SZ4" version driven here leaves little to be desired and adds to the big car feeling.

Keyless entry, an audio system with USB interface, Bluetooth, cruise control, climate control and a trip computer all come as standard on the test car. Suzuki didn't economise on safety either, even the base model is fitted with ESP (electronic stability control), ABS (anti-lock braking system) and EBD (electronic brake force distribution) and seven airbags.



Fuel economy

Only after searching thoroughly where a few things found to be missing. The Swift doesn't feature any fuel saving aids like a shift indicator or a start/stop mechanism (this is scheduled).

Yet, saving fuel is the central message of the new Swift. While the previous generations were all about having fun, the 2010 model focusses on low CO2 emissions. Thanks to smart materials, a lot of weight could be saved. It doesn't just make the car more economic, but also more dynamic. Although the Swift 2010 is larger, it is still 30 kg lighter than its predecessor with similar specifications (10 kg of weight globally equals 1 gram of CO2 emissions per kilometre). When compared to its main rivals, the Swift also weighs a bit less.



Engine

To reduce the price, Suzuki didn't choose new technology but instead refined existing parts. For now the Swift is only available with the 1.2 litre petrol engine from the Suzuki Splash.



For the Swift this has been fitted with "dual variable valve lifting" (both for the "inlet" and the "outlet" channel), making the power train more powerful and more frugal.

The engine develops 94 PS / 118 Nm which is average for a car like this. However, characteristics of the engine are unusual. Even at very low revs the engine is very torque strong, so one can drive 35 mph in fifth gear without any problem. Yet, performance at low engine speeds is minimal. To actually accelerate, the engine really has to be provoked. Therefore, the playful character of the previous Swift is definitely gone.



Instead the new Swift lends itself to a relaxed driving style. Not only the engine noise, but also the noise from the tyres and wind are minimal for a car like this. With a calm driving style the new Swift does 56 miles to the gallon (5 litres per 100 km).

Its sprinting power may be below average; braking power is downright impressive. The brakes seem to be aimed at a much more powerful engine. Regrettably, the braking pedal gives little feedback, while the stopping power is enormous. When fully hitting the brakes, everyone not wearing a seat belt will get very close to the windscreen within seconds!



Handling

As stated before, roadholding has been the strong

point of every Suzuki Swift since the introduction of the model in 1984 (back then it was known as the "SA310"). Further developing the suspension doesn't go at the expense of fuel economy or price. So this fifth generation of the Swift shows the biggest progress in handling ever!

This new, green Swift offers an excellent combination of comfort and sportiness. On bad surfaces the car never feels uncomfortable, while the suspension is so firm that the car is still fun to drive. While steering isn't exceptionally accurate, the Swift can corner at such high speeds that the guts of most drivers runs out before the grip of the tyres!



Conclusion

At first glance the "all-new Suzuki Swift" doesn't offer a lot of news. The car looks exactly like its predecessor and doesn't introduce any new technologies or clever innovations. The only engine on offer is smaller than before and isn't exciting to drive at all.

Instead the new Swift is more mature and adapted to a new era. In 2010 low CO2 emissions are key. Therefore, Suzuki emphasises on fuel economy and above average comfort over performance. Its exemplary handling is still there. The new Suzuki Swift is no longer a remarkable or innovative car, instead it follows the latest trend perfectly well. ■



Specifications

Suzuki Swift (2010 - 2017) 1.2 SZ4

Size and weight



Length x width x height	385 x 170 x 151 cm
Wheelbase	243 cm
Kerb weight	920 kg
Trailer	400 kg
Trailer - braked	1.000 kg
Fuel capacity	42 l
Luggage space	204/491 l
Tyre size	185/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	1242 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	94 PS @ 6000 rpm
Max torque	118 Nm @ 4800 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	12.3 secs
Top speed	165 km/h
Average mileage	5 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6.1 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.4 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	116 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 11,795
Price base model	Â£ 9,995