



Nissan Pixo

Young-adult

Review | You've just finished your education and you've started your very first job. So now it is time for your first car. But unfortunately you don't start with a top salary, so a luxurious limousine or a cool sports car is out of the question. You want a reliable car that isn't just cheap to buy, but is also economical to run. Perhaps the Nissan Pixo is a good choice?

It seems like all small cars are also cute cars. When shopping for a cheap car, one is confronted with tiny cars painted in candy colours with huge headlights making them look like cuddly toys. Now, the Nissan Pixo isn't exactly a monstrous machine, but compared to its competitors this compact car does look more mature.

Space

And the latter is typical for the Pixo: once behind the steering wheel this smallest Nissan doesn't feel like it is amongst the cheapest cars on the market. The room in the front is just fine and there's even some space between the driver and passenger, so that they don't sit on each other's lap. The seats are large, enforcing that mature feeling again.



Oddly enough the integrated headrests are too low, so they do not contribute to safety. The mirrors are not adjustable enough for tall drivers, to provide a clear picture of what's happening behind the car.

The Pixo has a real dashboard and the interior has been completely upholstered: this base model does not show any bare metal inside. The dashboard is unusually high, making the passengers feel like they are inside the vehicle rather than on top of it. These are all details that contribute to the feeling that the Pixo might be simple, but certainly not poor.



The space on the rear seats is average for a car like this: it's only when the front seats are adjusted, that there's enough legroom in the back. The size of the boot is fair (129 litres) but, due to a huge threshold and a tiny shelf, the opening to the luggage space is unpractically small.

Trim level

For this test the base model was chosen and that means the trim level is basic as well. The doors are unlocked with a key, the windows are lowered by a lever and the customer has to provide his/her own radio. This isn't meant as a criticism, because a £7,000 car simply cannot deliver the impossible.



Nissan didn't economise on safety: every Pixo is fitted with two airbags, ABS and EBD (electric brake-force distribution). More important is that roadholding is so good that accidents can be avoided easily. Even when speeding into a corner (for example to avoid another vehicle) the Pixo follows the road as if there was no problem whatsoever.



On top of that, the Pixo is remarkably comfortable. Due to its short wheelbase cars like this usually "bounce" on bad surfaces. The Pixo behaves much more quietly, again feeling like a mature car. The

power steering isn't too light or too heavy, but just right.

At this moment there are only two other small cars with such exemplary handling. The first is the Kia Picanto and the second is the Suzuki Alto. The fact that the Alto handles as well as the Pixo shouldn't come as a surprise: Nissan and Suzuki developed their compact cars together. Both are produced in the same factory in India. The only difference between both cars is the visual appearance, underneath they are identical.



Driving

The Nissan Pixo is powered by a one-litre engine with three cylinders. That's one cylinder less than most other cars. Because of the odd number the engine is less refined. On the other hand, three-cylinder engines are more frugal by nature. Also, the Pixo has been fitted with plenty of sound insulation, so the three-cylinder noise isn't disturbing in daily life with the car.

The engine develops 68 PS and that makes the Pixo surprisingly lively. This certainly isn't a fast car, but it is very eager. The gears have been spaced so that the car doesn't just easily come along with traffic, but can even overtake! On the highway the power is sufficient to cover long distances with ease.



The test route consisted of both city traffic and highways. The Pixo was driven rather quickly because of its spritely character. Since the test drive took place in exceptionally warm weather, the windows were opened during driving and that doesn't contribute to low fuel consumption. Despite all this, the car covered 63 miles per gallon. That is almost as economical as Nissan promises (64 mpg). That makes the Pixo not only cheap to buy, but also to run.

Conclusion

Is the Nissan Pixo the ideal car for a small budget? The Pixo is a fine car with just a few drawbacks. Whether that makes it the ideal car, is personal. Even in the smallest segment the number of cars on offer is huge, so there's a suitable vehicle for everyone.

The Pixo distinguishes itself from other compact cars by more mature looks and character. Performance is fine, despite fuel consumption being low. The suspension is excellent, which means the Pixo offers more safety and comfort than many other small cars. ■



Specifications

Nissan Pixo 1.0 Visia

Size and weight



Length x width x height	357 x 160 x 147 cm
Wheelbase	236 cm
Kerb weight	830 kg
Trailer	100 kg
Trailer - braked	200 kg
Fuel capacity	35 l
Luggage space	129/367 l
Tyre size	155/65R14

Engine and performance



Capacity	996 cc
Cylinders / valves	3/4
Max power	66 PS @ 6000 rpm
Max torque	90 Nm @ 3400 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	14 secs
Top speed	155 km/h
Average mileage	4.4 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	5.5 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	3.8 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	103 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 6,995
Price base model	Â£ 6,995