

## Toyota Auris Moves up a Gear

The emphasis with the new Toyota Auris is on improved styling, premium interiors, new engines, better economy and lower emissions.

The new car slots into the second biggest market in Europe and it goes head to head with the likes of the Golf and the Focus.



Built in the UK, right away I detected that the Toyota designers and engineers have produced a car that is ideally suited to our roads and driving conditions.

My first opportunity behind the wheel came in Belgium, day one and heavy rain felt just like home, while day two produced a mix of weather, conditions more akin to what we are used to.

Customer choice, two body styles, Hatchback or the stylish Touring Sportswagon and of course Hybrids will continue to prove popular.

Further choice is provided with five trim levels, Active, Icon, Business Edition, Design

and the range topping Excel. Worth noting that just like the recently announced new Avensis, the new Auris has a model in the line up with is set to target the business user.

Styling is in line with recent editions to the Toyota family, clean lines with a more refined look and wide use of LED technology.

I found the interiors pleasing, a vast improvement on the outgoing model with a generous seven inch screen which greets you as you take command.

Careful use of materials and an all new dashboard certainly add to the appeal of this latest car to wear the Auris badge.

A Toyota spokesperson informed me that the Hatchback is likely to account for 75 percent of sales and fifty five percent of customers are likely to opt for the Hybrid versions which have brought new customers to the brand and this will continue to be the case with the newcomer.

A wide range of engines further adds to the appeal and like big brother Avensis. BMW diesel engines are a feature.

New to the range is a 1.2 litre turbocharged petrol engine and while it would be completely wrong to conjure up a notion that this is yet another pocket rocket. Nothing could be further from the truth; it majors on refinement and economy.



This engine would be my choice and looking at performance, rest to 62mph in 10.1 seconds and on to a top speed of 124mph. Economy on the combined cycle it can be as high as 61.4mpg quoting an official Toyota figure.

No surprise to learn that Hybrid versions top the 80mpg barrier and another feature of the new Auris is tax pleasing emission figures with the lowest at 79g/km.

Safety is high on the priority list and like new Avensis the new Auris features Toyota a Safety Sense, a raft of features to keep driver and passengers safe.

I had the opportunity to try the system on a proving track and it did perform, bringing me to a stop in safety, good to see that a car in this class can offer such, once a feature reserved for much more expensive models.

The system offers active safety technologies designed to help prevent or mitigate collisions across a wide range of driving conditions. The package is available for all versions with the exception of the Active.

Not only does Toyota Safety Sense bring safer motoring but lower insurance premiums, which will be welcomed by all.

On the road, noise levels are lower than the previous model, improved steering feel and the suspension delivers a firm but comfy ride.

Prices for the new Toyota start at £15,245 and worth checking out a number of launch offers, also in line with the rest of the range, a five year/100,000 mile warranty.



Ian Lynas