

# HONDA CIVIC 1.0

By Jim Mc Cauley



Honda's latest Civic might be all-new, but the company has retained the key features that have set the outgoing model apart from the competition. The new car is slightly larger with the dramatic styling of its predecessor refined to add an elegance to the previously aggressive shape. Large black mesh panels front and rear maintain the sporting inference while the lower rear spoiler is now slimmer. But despite concealing the rear door handles in the previous model, Honda has decided to reintroduce the traditional grips which are uncomfortably placed to break the flow of the waistline as it

sweeps upwards and outwards to accentuate the rear wheelarch. But in other respects, the origami bodywork leads the eye around the assertive creasing to appreciate the entirety of a pleasantly balanced form.

Although the car is now bigger, the engine capacities have shrunk with the test cars powered by Honda's new 3-cylinder 1.0 litre turbo engine. However, this 129PS unit with a maximum torque availability of 200Nm is more than capable, taking the car from rest to 62mph in 11.2 seconds with the potential to see 126mph top speed.

As well as driving through its standard manual gearbox, the 1.0 litre is also available with the company's tried and tested CVT automatic transmission. On road, and the engine is quite refined, the manual version delivering a surprisingly agile performance through its short-throw and conveniently located 6-speed gearbox. Although the test cars – manual and CVT – were both finished in top EX trim which adds adaptive dampers, the standard 'Comfort' setting meshes best with the car's performance and driver expectations. Quick steering response combined with the lower seating position and more driver-focused instrument





presentation add a sporting feel to the car which is much more justified in the larger engined 1.5 litre model.

Transferring to the CVT equipped car, this continuously variable transmission finds its optimum gear response quicker and with less fuss than in previous applications with the manual override retained which allows the driver to select one of six pre-set ratios on the steering wheel mounted paddles. Again the 1.0 litre engine impresses and in benchmark figures actually pares a fraction of a second off the 0-62mph time of the manual.

For the driver, there is the marginally lower seating position and a more traditional instrument layout, featuring a clear digital speed read-out bordered by the rev counter and supported by auxiliary gauges in two side pods.

The 7-inch infotainment touch-screen dominates the central stack but is placed below the air vents and would benefit from higher positioning. In the top specification levels including the EX, the infotainment package extends to 'Honda Connect' with Garmin navigation, DAB radio, Apple Carplay, Android Auto and App integration with internet browsing. This also serves as the screen for the rear parking camera.

However, one of the main selling points of the new Civic range is its comprehensive package of safety equipment which in the EX specification includes front and rear parking sensors, 'City-Brake Active System', Traction Control, Hill Start Assist and 'Honda Sensing' technology. This sophisticated package features Collision Mitigation Braking System with pedestrian detection, Forward Collision Warning, Lane Departure Warning, Traffic Sign Recognition and automatic headlight dipping.

Overall, the new Honda Civic maintains its characteristic image with performance from this smaller engined car well above expectations. This now larger and more refined model provides class leading safety systems as standard in EX trim and offers the best of both worlds with manual and automatic transmission choices.

The 1.0 litre manual version in EX trim is priced at £23,200 in a range that opens at £19,875 with personal contract purchase (PCP) payments as low as £199 per month. The CVT transmission adds £1,400 but also extends the official combined fuel consumption of the manual from 58.9mpg to 60.1mpg while CO2 emissions drop from 110 to 106gms/km.



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