

SUZUKI SWIFT

1.0 Automatic

By Jim Mc Cauley



It looks as though the ingredients should be double checked with a small turbo petrol engine linked to an automatic transmission. But when it comes to small engines, Suzuki are the leaders and this range topping model is full of surprises. The company's latest model also has the personality ingredient of appealing good looks in a body that has been teased out to a more confident frame than its predecessor with greater visual presence.

The latest fourth generation model is all new and is lower and wider with a longer wheelbase contributing to both ride quality and interior space. It is built on Suzuki's latest platform already put to good use in both the Baleno and Ignis models and although 100kg lighter overall, offers improved safety protection.

Power choice is a two-way one between the company's 1.0 litre Boosterjet petrol engine and 1.2 litre Dualjet diesel with automatic and all-wheel drive variants available within the range. Test choice

was the 1.0 litre Boosterjet model driving through a 6-speed automatic gearbox. This 3-cylinder turbo engine produces 111bhp and returns a 0-62mph time of 10.0 seconds with a potential top speed of 118mph.

On road, and the car is very refined with the drive combination delivering smooth changes while maintaining enthusiastic progress. The 6-speed automatic is a delight to drive and offers the choice of manual override via the steering wheel mounted paddles. Steering is light but with excellent response and maintains an

appropriate feel for the size of the car, with the leather-trimmed steering wheel a standard fitment across the range.

Ride on this range topping automatic model is firm with initial body-roll on flat corners well controlled, contributing to the overall confident driving experience.



In SZ5 specification, the model benefits from 16-inch alloys, all-round disc brakes and a full package of electronic support systems including Suzuki's first application of an advanced forward detection system. This combines the input from the on-board camera, laser and radar systems to provide autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning, automatic headlight dipping and adaptive cruise control. On a 250 mile motorway drive during a week's driving of over 1,000 miles the adaptive cruise control confidently provided accurate speed management and distancing from the vehicle in front.



Other features include switchable start/stop and 'see-me-home' headlights for increased safety when approaching or leaving the vehicle at night.



For the driver, there is a full range of adjustments on both the seat and steering column, while the front seats now have extra padding at the top and on the edges to provide excellent support. With regards to instrumentation, the main analogue instruments are separated by a digital information screen while a central colour touch screen takes care of the infotainment controls including 3-D navigation maps, and connection to smartphone applications with MirrorLink, Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. Unlike some competitive models, the new Swift is a full 5-seater with improved cabin space and a 55 litre increase in boot space to 265 litres. While the previous Swift was available in both three and

five-door bodystyles, the new model is only offered in 5-door guise with the rear door handles now neatly disguised in the upper door to blend into the 'C' pillar.

While the official combined fuel economy of this range topping automatic model is given as 56.5mpg, the test vehicle returned 50.0mpg, an excellent 88% of the official figure. Interestingly, in fuel consumption comparisons, all Suzuki vehicles driven by me show closer adherence to official figures than those from any other manufacturer.

Topping the model range, this assertive automatic is listed at £15,849 with optional metallic paint adding £485. The car is in Group 27D for insurance purposes and like all Suzuki models, is covered by the company's comprehensive 3-year / 60,000 mile warranty.

(Driven August 2017)