

# Daewoo Nexia

Featuring 1.5GLi



**D**AEWOO – “THE BIGGEST COMPANY you’ve never heard of” – is a new kid on the block as far as the UK is concerned. Nevertheless, the ambitious South Korean Daewoo Group ranks as the world’s 33rd biggest company (Coca-Cola rates 100th), and, with the declared intention of becoming the most customer-focused brand in the market, it has set about introducing a brand-new way of car retailing.

With a no-dealership, direct-sales approach, it launched a nine-car range of Nexia and Espero models in April 1995, with fixed, all-inclusive prices, including a three-year/60,000-mile warranty, three years’ free servicing and a 30-day peace-of-mind exchange or refund period. You even get a free mobile phone.

If the six-model Nexia looks more than a touch familiar, it’s not surprising – it is, in fact, a reincarnated, restyled Mk 2 Vauxhall Astra. Available as a three- or five-door hatchback or a four-door saloon, the Nexia offers two engines, both 1.5-litres and based on GM’s familiar overhead cam unit. These produce 75bhp in the cheaper, single overhead cam GLi version we tested, and 90bhp in the sportier 16-valve GLXi versions.

Don’t be put off by the GLi’s modest power output,

however, it’s a real sweetie – smooth and subdued on a motorway (despite sporty, close-ratio gearing) and, unlike Vauxhall’s earlier versions, the engine delivers quite respectable urge without the driver needing to rev it sky high.

The GLi’s front seats lack both lumbar support and a height adjuster. These omissions apart, the driver’s lot is a reasonably happy one, with clear (if rather sparse) instrumentation, light and easy power steering and generally easy-going minor controls. We found the accelerator jerky, though, especially in slow-moving traffic.

The Nexia rides quite well on smooth roads, although progress becomes harsher and more agitated over bumpier surfaces. Roadholding is surefooted and vice-free, if short on excitement for the keener driver. Apart from side-impact beams, anti-submarining seats and a driver’s airbag, standard safety features on all models also include very satisfactory anti-lock brakes.

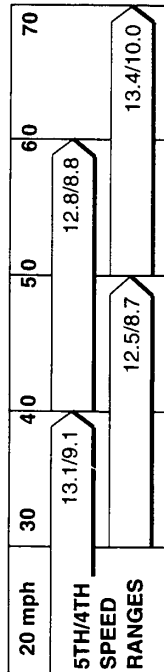
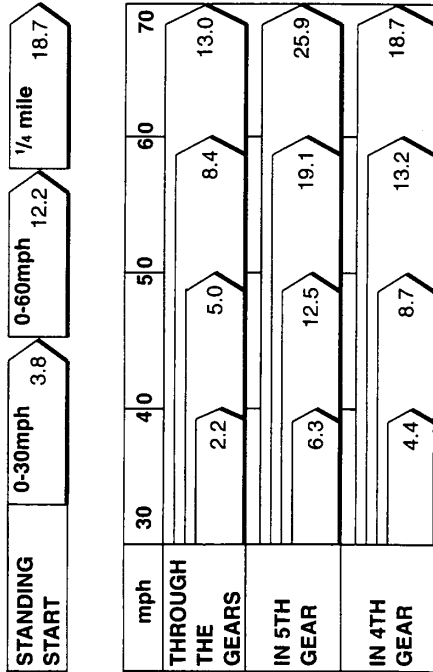
As the Nexia is heavily based on yesterday’s Astra, it’s not surprising that its accommodation exhibits much the same strengths... and weaknesses. Passenger space is reasonable up front, and even though the fixed-height driver’s seat is set fairly high, the GLi (which lacks a sunroof) provides generous headroom.

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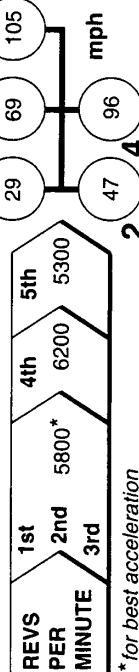
# Daewoo Nexia 1.5GLi (5-door)

## PERFORMANCE

### Acceleration time in seconds



### Maximum speeds



## FUEL CONSUMPTION

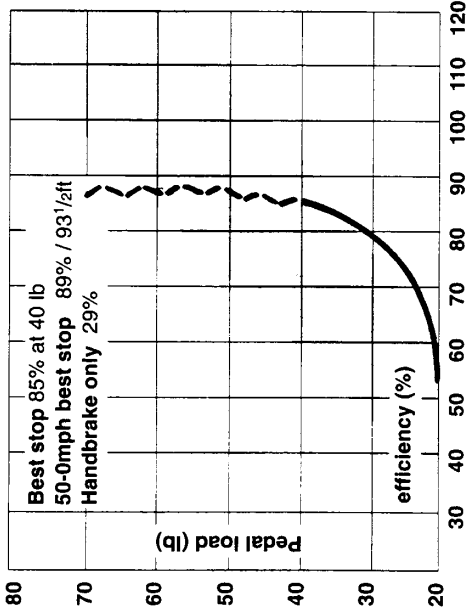
Fuel grade for tests: unleaded Premium, 95 octane

Normal range	mpg
Worst/best	32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> /44
Typical mpg overall	38
Realistic tank range*	44 litres/370 miles

\*based on fuel gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience

## SAFETY

### Brakes (with ABS) How pedal loads affect braking



Braking efficiency shown as a percentage of gravity (ie 100% = 1.0g). Ideally the braking curve should be a gentle sweep and lie within the shaded zone of this graph. If it's above, the brakes are too heavy; if it's below, they are too light - although this is more acceptable on cars with ABS. When the curve becomes broken, the ABS is operating.

### Fade test How hard use affects braking (ideal brakes show no change)

Pedal load needed for 75% stop (lb)	At start of test	After constant use	After severe use
	28	28	34

### Safety features

Assessed on their effectiveness and convenience (the more black blobs the better)

Seatbelts	front ●●●●○	rear ●●●●○
Head restraints	front ●●●●○	rear ●●●●○
Interior	safety padding ●●●●○	driver's airbag? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	other airbags? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	side impact protection ●●●●○
Fuel	anti-spillage measures ●●●●○	

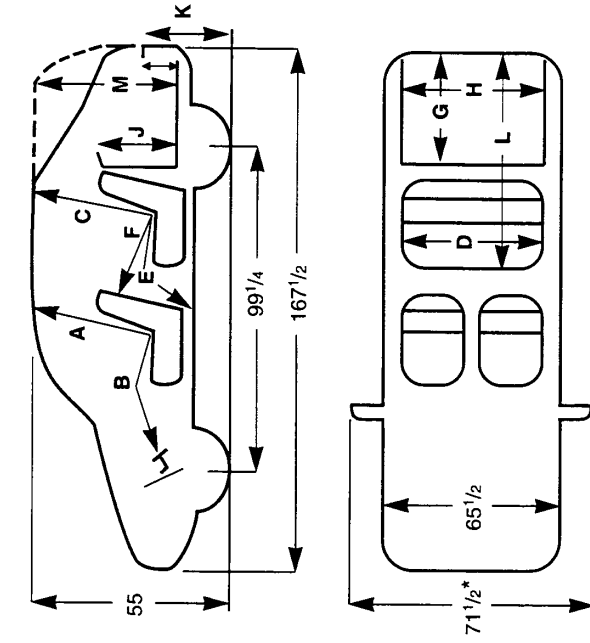
### Anti-theft features

Doors	locking ●●●●○
	central locking? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	remote control? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	auto window closure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	deadlocks? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Luggage	secure from interior/hidden from view ●●●●○
Alarm	engine immobilised? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

standard on test car  factory fitted option  not available

## MEASUREMENTS

### Dimensions for 5-door GLi (inches)



\* mirrors don't fold

### Inside (inches)

A Front headroom (no sunroof)	38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	G Load length	32
B Front legroom (min - max)	34-41 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	H Load floor width (min - max)	39-51 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
C Rear headroom	36 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	J Load height	19 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
D Back seat width (between armrests)	49 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	K Sill height (inner/outer)	8/24
E Typical rear legroom	37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	L Load length	56
F Typical rear kneeroom	28 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	M Load height (to tailgate hinge)	32

\* "Typical" represents the mean measurement behind the driver's seat set at 39in legroom and the passenger's seat set at 41in

Back seat occupants fare less well in both comfort and space, and although there's a roomy, well-shaped boot at the back, the thin, flimsy mat covering the spare wheel smacks of aggressive penny-pinching. Only the dearer GLXi hatchbacks have a split-folding back seat.

Even the entry-level GLi versions are quite well equipped. Power steering, a driver's airbag and anti-lock brakes aren't to be sniffed at this price, but there's no central locking or a rev counter on the cheaper version, and the windows and mirrors are manually operated. Automatic transmission is available, but only on the more powerful GLXi versions.

All models come with a transponder-key engine immobiliser (don't lose your key!), together with security etched glass and registration with a national vehicle security database. There's no deadlocking, though, anti-theft alarms are confined to the options list, and the luggage area isn't secure from a thief who has broken into the passenger compartment.

Daewoo's initiative to provide hassle-free, fixed-cost motoring for three years should appeal to private buyers, especially as the advertised on-the-road price is exactly what it says: delivery, number plates, road tax and a full tank of fuel are all included – but don't expect to be able to haggle over the price. Once the car has been bought, you should have only fuel, tyres, insurance and the second and third years' road tax to find.

Servicing – which is needed every 10,000 miles – is operated in conjunction with the Halfords service network, with all routine replacements free for three years. Daewoo's customer service commitment also offers free collection and delivery from your home or office, when servicing is due. The company also promises to provide a courtesy car, and to phone later to check that all's well.

It should prove relatively inexpensive to insure a Nexia, as the GLi model attracts a moderate Group 4 rating. Even the GLXi is still an attractive proposition at just one group higher.

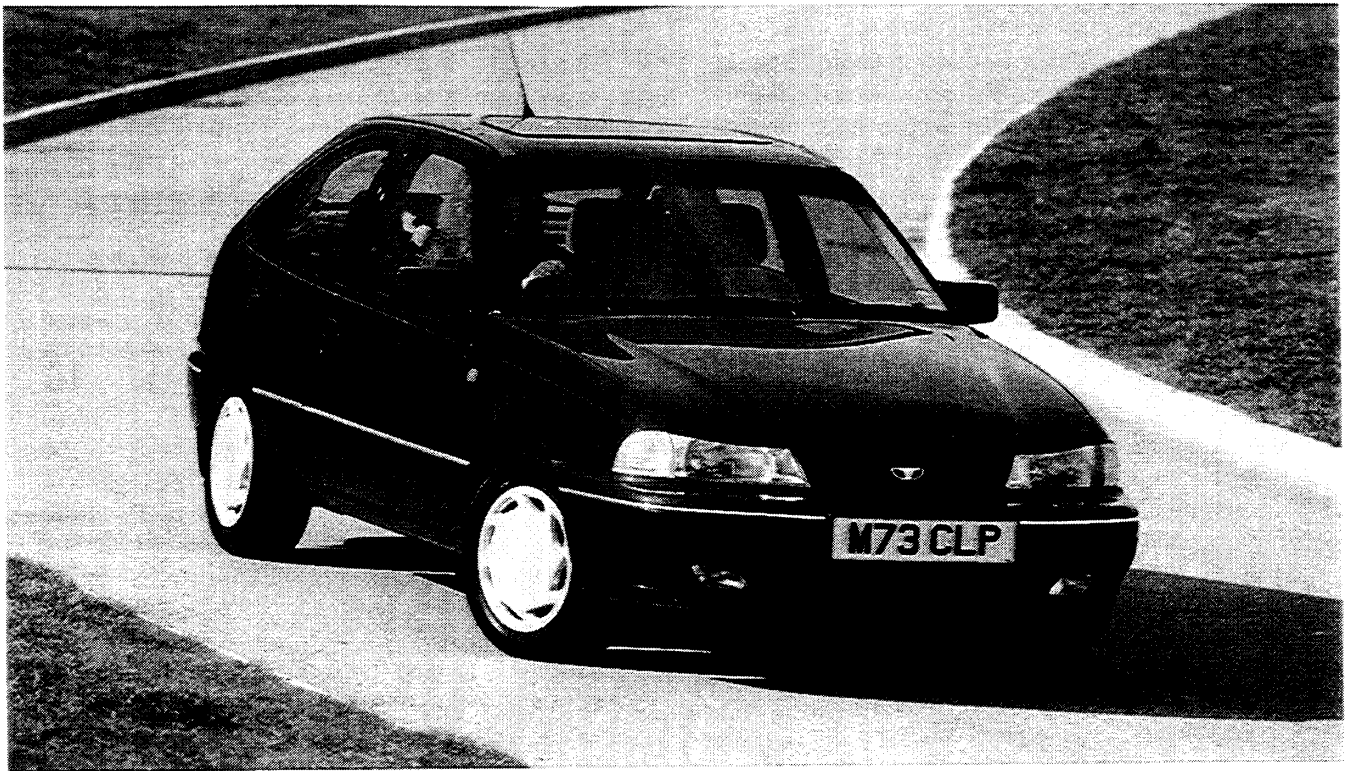
Overall, the Nexia appears reasonably well put together, although we did hear the odd creak and rattle, and noticed scrappy assembly here and there. Also, we weren't impressed by the need to unbolt a rear lamp assembly to change a blown bulb.

#### VERDICT

**The Nexia is an easy-going, if somewhat innocuous, family car at an unquestionably value-for-money price. What's more, Daewoo's impressive after-sales commitment should protect the owner's cheque book from nasty surprises.**

**Mediocre back seat comfort, an agitated ride and half-hearted security measures are its biggest weaknesses. Essentially, though, it's a well-equipped lower-medium family car for the price of a supermini.**





## HOW THE NEXIA COMPARES

	Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Max speed (mph)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes best stop (%g/lb)	Maximum legroom – front (in)	Typical leg/kneeroom – rear (in)	Steering turns/circle (ft)	Overall length (in)
Daewoo Nexia 1.5GLi (5-door)	1498/75	105	13.0	25.9/18.7	38	85/40*	41½	37½/28¼	3.5/33¼ (p)	167½
Citroën ZX 1.4i Reflex (5-door)	1360/75	102	13.4	32.2/21.3	38½	88/45	41¾	37½/26	4.2/34	161
Fiat Tipo 1.4S (5-door)	1372/71	99	15.3	30.6/22.5	36½	96/35	41¾	39½/29¼	3.1/35½ (p)	155¾
Nissan Sunny 1.4L (5-door)	1392/87	108	12.0	31.7/21.9	40	81/40	43	36¾/26½	3.3/31¾ (p)	163¼
Seat Cordoba 1.6CLX (4-door)	1598/75	102	13.3	27.5/20.4	35½	102/70	40	37¼/28½	3.1/33 (p)	161¾
Vauxhall Astra 1.4i Merit (5-door)	1389/59	98	15.8	35.4/24.0	42	102/35	42	40/27	4.1/32½	159½

\* with ABS

(p) = power assisted

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

### ENGINE

**Type and size** front-mounted, transverse four in line; water-cooled. 76.5mm bore x 81.5mm stroke = 1498cc. Iron block and alloy head; 5 main bearings

**Compression ratio** 8.6:1

**Valve gear** single belt-driven overhead camshaft actuating two valves per cylinder via hydraulic tappets

**Fuel system** Daewoo electronic multi-point fuel injection, three-way catalyser and lambda sensor. 50-litre (11.0-gallon) tank, with low-fuel warning lamp. Fuel required: unleaded only, 95 octane minimum

**Ignition system** fully programmed electronic, integral with fuel injection, via coil/distributor

**Maximum power** 75bhp at 5400rpm

**Maximum torque** 91 lb ft at 3200-3400rpm

### TRANSMISSION

**Clutch** 7.9in diaphragm-spring, dry plate; cable-operated. Pedal load/travel 20 lb/4½in

**Gearbox** 5-speed manual (all synchromesh) and reverse

(automatic option on 90bhp GLXi only). Ratios: first 3.55, second 2.16, third 1.48, fourth 1.13, top 0.89 and reverse 3.33:1

**Final drive** 3.72:1, to front wheels

**Mph per 1000rpm** 20.0 in top, 15.7 in 4th

**Rpm at 70mph** 3500 in top gear

### CHASSIS

**Suspension** front: independent by MacPherson damper/struts, coil springs, lower wishbones and an anti-roll bar. Rear: torsion beam axle, coil springs and an anti-roll bar. Dampers: telescopic all round

**Steering** power-assisted rack and pinion with 3.5 turns between full locks. Turning circles average 33¼ft between kerbs, with 56½ft circle for one turn of the wheel

**Wheels** 5½J steel with 175/70R13 82T tyres (Continental CT22 on test car)

**Brakes** 9.3in ventilated discs front, 8.5in drums rear, with vacuum servo. Daewoo electronic ABS standard