

Daihatsu YRV

Featured model: 1.3 Premium 5 door



PEOPLE "IN THE KNOW" WILL BE aware of the close relationship between Daihatsu and bigger Toyota. It's not surprising, therefore, that this latest high-roof supermini fits neatly in size, price and concept midway between the Yaris and Verso. They also share major components like the engine and features inside, such as a sliding back seat that adapts readily to day-to-day changes in domestic priorities.

However, the YRV is a colourful character in its own right, with distinctive styling and a generous turn of speed – just like the 1.3 Yaris; the only rival that comes close in our acceleration times is the Suzuki Ignis.

Unfortunately, the manner in which this power unit delivers is less gratifying, with periods of raucous harshness in the mid-fifties and again, just on the legal limit until 80mph. We also found signs of poor engine installation on street corner pullaways and first thing, away from the garden gate.

We could have done with more lumbar support and we don't like height adjustment that alters only the cushion; otherwise, the driving position and the disposition of major controls work well. Minor switches are random, however – the rear wiper should be stalk-controlled, for example.

Daihatsu's solution to the problem of making room for passengers works admirably, with higher-set cushions that ease entry and ensure a good view and posture, even though the heater's favours don't extend to the rear floor.

However, the same cunning seems to have been lacking when the load area was designed. No boot lamp, a slippery plastic platform with wasted load height, plus unused recesses 'twixt this and the back seat, all look in need of a rethink. Seat-folding arrangements work well when it's two plus luggage, however. There's no painted metal on view inside, but you must have a penchant for dimpled plastic.

Ride and handling veers towards the latter in this "young recreational vehicle's" scale of priorities, but results didn't generate much enthusiasm, in our testers during enterprising cross-country driving, because the steering lacks precision and feedback. The set-up also results in an unsettled, intrusive bump reaction on all except smooth main roads.

The price of the Premium version is competitive when its standard kit is taken into account and we believe that the YRV will offer better-than-average reliability and safety in a crash.

VERDICT

The YRV's dimensions shape up sensibly to the needs of today's family motorists and congested roads. However, the reality doesn't quite measure up to the statistics – it needs more honing in areas of suspension, engine refinement and equipment detailing. Promising in concept, but more fine-tuning is required.

AT A GLANCE

considering size, price and rivals

Overtaking ability	★★★★★
Space/practicality	★★★★○
Controls/displays	★★★○○
Safety	★★★★○
Handling/steering	★★★★○
Comfort	★★★★○
Fuel economy	★★★★○

SPECIFICATION

engine 1298cc, 4-cylinder, petrol; 87bhp at 6000rpm, 88 lb ft at 3200rpm; belt-driven twin overhead camshafts, 16 valves

transmission 5-speed manual, front-wheel drive; 20.1 mph/1000rpm in 5th, 17.4 in 4th

suspension front: independent damper/struts with integral coil springs. Rear: torsion beam (dead) axle, coil springs

steering hydraulic power assistance; 3.6 turns lock-to-lock; 9.3m diameter turning circle between kerbs (16.4m for one turn of the wheel)

brakes solid discs front drums rear, with standard anti-skid and braking distribution controls (ABS and EBD) on Premium version tested

wheels/tyres 5½in alloy with 175/60R14 tyres (Bridgestone on test car); "space-saver" temporary spare

LIKES ...

clever rear cushion release latches
tailgate lock integrated with c/locking
sliding rear seat – good legroom
four electric windows

and GRIPES

oddments spaces slippery and slot-like
driver's cushion adjustment leaves gap
no boot lamp or load cover
room for full-size spare – not provided

THE YRV RANGE

type and size MPV-style (mid-priced)

5 door supermini

trim levels Standard, Premium

engines petrol: 4 cylinder/1.3 litre/87bhp only. diesel: none

drive front-wheel drive, 5-speed manual; 4-speed stepped automatic (with torque converter) optional

OVERTAKING ABILITY ★★★★★

Extremely rapid both in and through the gears with slick gearchange, too. Lacks mechanical refinement, however. Top speed in fourth

acceleration in seconds	through gears*	④ th gear	⑤ th gear		
20-40mph	3.3	9.9	12.6		
30-50mph	4.1	9.7	12.3		
40-60mph	5.3	10.1	12.8		
50-70mph	6.9	11.2	14.4		
30-70mph	11.0	20.9	26.7		
max speed in each gear (*using 6250rpm for best acceleration)					
gear	①*	②*	③*	④	⑤
speed (mph)	29½	51	75½	108	106

SPACE AND PRACTICALITY ★★★★★

Adaptable rear (split) seat slides fore and aft, to suit. High and slippery rear load platform squanders space/height; no sill, though. Tight turning circle but some rear vision problems

<i>in centimetres (5-door hatch)</i>		inside	(† without sunroof)
outside		front - legroom	83-105
length	377	- headroom	100-105†
width - inc mirrors	182	rear - typical leg/	93-103*
- mirrors folded	162	kneeroom	57-71*
height (no roof bars)	155	- headroom	92
load sill height	0/71	- hiproom	122-124
<i>(inside/outside)</i>		load space (all seats in use)	
steering		(litres/cu ft)	300/10.5 - 235/8.2*
turns lock-to-lock	3.6	load length	65-51*/116
turning circle (metres)	9.3	full length to fascia	217
easy to park/garage?		load width	119-132
	★★★★	load height (to glass/	37/
		to top of aperture)	76

* rear seat forwards - rearwards

CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS ★★★★★

Basically good driving position/major controls spoilt by detailing - rear wiper rocker, fiddly radio, no rear courtesy lights; driving seat wearing on long runs. Dimpled fascia creates terrible screen reflections in sunshine



HOW THE YRV COMPARES

	engine cyl/cap/power (no/cc/bhp)	revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	fuel economy (mpg)	brakes - best stop from 50mph (m/kg)	maximum legroom - front (cm)	typical leg/ kneeroom - rear (cm)	steering turns/ circle (m)	overall length (cm)
DAIHATSU YRV	4/1298/87	3480	11.0	26.7/20.9	43½	28½/27*	105	103/71	3.6/9.3	377
Vauxhall Agila 1.2	4/1199/75	3720	14.7	34.2/24.7	42	28/27	107	98/68	3.3/10.35	350
Suzuki Ignis 1.3	4/1328/82	3530	10.9	30.5/21.7	44	27½/12	105	100/66	3.2/10.35	361
Toyota Yaris 1.0	4/998/68	3850	14.8	32.5/23.3	47	26½/12	105	102/70	3.3/10.3	362
Toyota Yaris Verso	4/1299/85	3700	12.0	25.8/19.0	42	25½/15*	107	98/78	3.2/10.5	386
Audi A2 1.4 SE	4/1390/75	3250	12.3	27.7/18.6	43½	26/45*	111	102/72	2.9/10.5	383
Mazda Demio 1.3	4/1323/72	3450	14.4	32.1/24.0	39½	25/14	104	105/70	3.1/9.6	381

* with ABS

SAFETY ★★★★★

Lap-type fifth belt and obstructive head restraints. Best stop indifferent for ABS and even "brake-assist" permits highish pedal load. Neat locking arrangements but no rear load cover

braking	dry road stopping distance from 50 mph (with standard ABS)
pedal feel	★★★★
in emergency	★★★★
handbrake	★★★★
	pedal load distance
	10kg 31m
	27kg 28½m best stop
	+4kg ie 31kg 29m

EURO NCAP CRASH TEST RATINGS

YRV not yet tested

SECURITY FEATURES

central locking	✓	alarm	✗
remote control	✓	immobiliser	✓
auto window closure	✗	luggage security	★★★★
deadlocks	✗		★★★★
✓ standard	0 factory option	✗ not available	

HANDLING AND STEERING ★★★★★

Some steering free movement and skittish rough road response but otherwise reasonably agile - no real sporting appeal, however



COMFORT ★★★★★

Frisky, unsettled ride and disappointing periods of engine harshness; clutch judders first thing, too. Pleasant heater with "cooler" air conditioning button - but no rear footwell flow

FUEL ECONOMY ★★★★★

Another "economy-special" that, like the Audi A2, fails to live up to its claims - results are still satisfactory, however. No low fuel lamp plus pessimistic gauge, equals curtailed tank range

type of use (air conditioning off)	AA test (mpg)
urban (17mph average/heavy traffic)	31
suburban (27mph average/6.4 miles from cold start)	38
motorway (70mph cruising)	40
cross-country (brisk driving/20 miles from cold start)	45
rural (gentle driving/20 miles from cold start)	51½
typical mpg overall	43½
realistic tank capacity/range	30 litres/290 miles
official mpg (urban/extra urban/combined)	37.2/55.4/47.1
CO ₂ emissions 145 g/km	car tax band A