

# Hyundai Accent

Featuring 1.3GSi 5-door



**T**HE ACCENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN “in-between” sort of car. In its six-year life, its UK price has been pitched midway between a Daewoo or Skoda on the one hand, and the mainstream European or Japanese smaller family cars on the other. But then, despite external dimensions more akin to those of an Escort than a Fiesta, it lacked the interior people-space of the former, even though its luggage area was generous.

Now, however, things have taken on a new complexion. The revised Accent retains most of the former model’s mechanical and running gear, but it’s longer and wider and is “a C-class sized car for a B-class price”, as the sales pitch goes. There’s no saloon version now, but you can have three or five doors.

What’s even more significant is that prices have become more competitive against the likes of Daewoo and Skoda – now there’s nothing in it.

We took our tape measure to the interior of both the new and old Accent, only to discover that, apart from a bit more rear kneeroom and hiproom, there’s nothing to choose between them. It’s basically the same story in the luggage area, although the Accent has always had little to

apologise for here.

Both driver legroom and the space behind remain too restricted to cope with lanky Europeans, but if you’re not too tall, seat support is very satisfactory. Indeed, our averaged-sized testers found the driving position good for long stints, even though there’s only wheel rake adjustment on the GSi. Actually, you get lumbar support and height adjustments for the driving seat (as well as a 60/40 split back seat) on the cheaper Si three-door, which seems incongruous.

The displays are clear and (in typical Hyundai fashion) well-nigh accurate; all the minor controls work precisely, including the new rotary ones for heating. There’s no sunroof or air-con on the GSi, but it’s easy in winter, at least, to get an excellent stratified airflow – warmth to all four footwells and much cooler air from facia and/or screen vents, at the same time.

The latest Accent is nicer to drive than the previous version, but the improvements are subtle, rather than glaringly obvious. The wheel is better to grasp and the power steering nicely weighted, but it can feel a bit vague from straight-ahead at dual-carriageway speed, especially if it’s windy.

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## PERFORMANCE

### Acceleration time in seconds

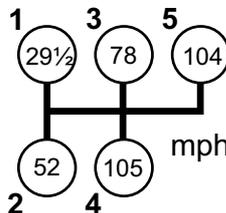
mph	30	40	50	60	70
<b>THROUGH THE GEARS</b>		2.2	4.7	8.4	12.8
<b>IN 5TH GEAR</b>		8.0	16.6	24.9	34.6
<b>IN 4TH GEAR</b>		6.2	12.3	18.5	26.2

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
<b>5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES</b>		17.0/12.6	16.6/12.3	16.9/12.3	18.0/13.9

### Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
	6000*	5725	4825		

\* for best acceleration



## FUEL CONSUMPTION

<b>Fuel grade:</b> unleaded Premium, 95 octane	
<b>Type of use</b> - air conditioning not fitted*	<b>mpg</b>
In the city - heavy traffic	27
In the country - quiet driving	47
<b>Typical mpg overall</b>	<b>38½</b>
Realistic tank range†	about 38 litres/320 miles

†based on fuel gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience - not nominal tank capacity

\*with air conditioning switched on, consumption will increase by 2–4% in winter and 4–8% in summer

## FOR THE TECHNICAL

### ENGINE

**Type** transverse four in line with iron block and alloy head; five main bearings

**Size** 71.5 x 83.5mm = 1341cc

**Power** 84bhp at 5500rpm

**Torque** 84 lb ft at 3000rpm

**Valves** belt-driven single overhead camshaft actuating three valves per cylinder via hydraulic tappets

**Fuel/ignition** electronic multi-point petrol injection with integrated spark timing. Three-way catalyser and 45-litre fuel tank, with low-level warning lamp

### TRANSMISSION

**Type** five-speed manual, front-wheel drive (epicyclic four-speed automatic optional)

**Mph per 1000rpm**

21.6 in 5th; 18.4 in 4th

### CHASSIS

**Suspension** front: independent damper/struts with integral coil springs. Rear: independent trailing arms, coil springs. Anti-roll bars and telescopic dampers all round

**Steering** rack and pinion with hydraulic power-assistance; 2.9 turns between full locks. Turning circles average 10.3m between kerbs, with 14.9m circle for one turn of the wheel

**Wheels** 5in steel with 175/70R13T tyres (Kumho Power Star on test car)

**Brakes** ventilated discs front, drums rear with vacuum servo and electronic anti-lock control (standard on GSi and CDX)

## SAFETY AND SECURITY FEATURES

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

### Seatbelts

front ●●●●○ rear ●●●●○

### Door locking

central locking? ●●○○○

remote control? ●●○○○

### Head restraints

front ●●●●○ rear

auto window closure? ●●○○○

deadlocks? ●●○○○

### Interior

safety padding ●●●●○

driver's airbag?

other airbags? (1)

side impact protection ●●●●○

### Luggage

secure from interior/hidden from view ●●○○○

### Alarm

engine immobilised?

### Fuel anti-spillage

●●●●○

standard on test car  factory fitted option  not available

**Euro NCAP crash test results** - Not available

## BRAKES

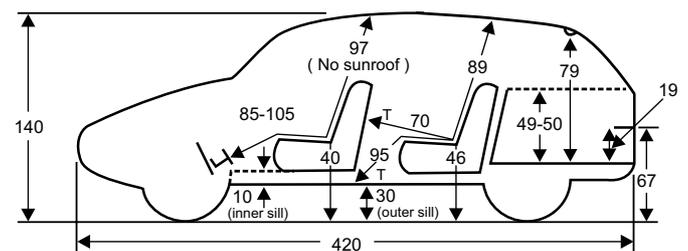
Pedal feel ●●●●○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●●●○ Handbrake ●●●●○

No track testing of the ABS-equipped brakes was possible, but a check-out on quiet rural roads (yet with a high-grip surface) proved highly satisfactory. Even the handbrake proved more powerful, yet required less effort, than most. Given that ABS is standard, our GSi's pedal effort of 13-14kg to give a full-blooded 1.0g (25½m) best stop is acceptable, if a bit too light under the foot of a burly male driver. Still, if you press twice as hard, the ABS looks after the situation. This system seems well sorted. Pedal load for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop is 9kg.

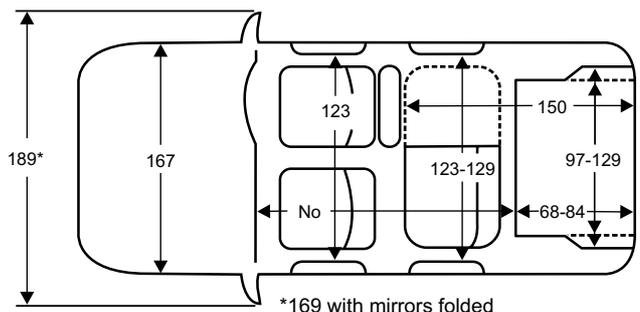
## MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres

Five-door hatchback



T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants



Again, the gearchange is less obstructive than before, but can still baulk, at rest, into first or reverse; also, the 3-to-2 downshift can't be rushed – unless you double-declutch. It's important, too, to ensure that the short-travel clutch is fully depressed, to prevent drag (which results in gearshifting problems, of course).

Crack these idiosyncracies and you've got a commendably enjoyable car to drive, with reasonably good acceleration, especially if you're willing to rev it harder. This engine does sound boisterous on wide accelerator openings, but it remains very smooth and uncomplaining if you slog along at low engine speeds, even though there's not much low-speed urge.

With just one or two occupants, we thought the ride and handling was very pleasing – the car soaks up the bumps in normal everyday use with commendable aplomb, yet responds well on twisty roads.

The Hyundai product has improved beyond all recognition since we first tested the rear-wheel drive Pony in 1982. We think it's the best of the Koreans for reliability, putting several Europeans in the shade, despite their higher prices. There's a refreshingly

informative section in the handbook devoted to front garden maintenance and parts prices aren't too hefty. The three-year warranty purports to tie the owner into dealer servicing, as a condition, however – which rather defeats the object of DIY.

#### VERDICT

**There's nothing lavish or swanky about this Accent, and despite the publicity claims to the contrary, it's lacking in space, if not comfort, for passengers.**

**We don't quite understand why this mainstream Gsi is deprived of useful features found in the cheaper Si – this undermines this Gsi's price competitiveness and practicality, as well. Nevertheless, it does boast good safety credentials – of both the primary and secondary kind – and the ownership experience looks reassuring in other ways, too.**

**This is a down-to-earth "meat and potatoes" sort of hatchback that deserves to sell to the shrewd, rather than the aspiring.**

#### LIKES AND GRIPES

Removable, clingy surfaces in oddments spaces	...	but reading the tyre pressure label in the glovebox calls for gymnastics!
Effective radio/cassette with removable front panel	...	but vulnerable rear aerial location
Effective rear wash/wipe functions	...	but control would be better on the stalk
Powerful headlamps	...	but rear foglamp can be left on too easily
Central locking by key	...	but only on driver's door



HOW THE ACCENT COMPARES	Engine cap/power (cyl/cc/bhp)	Revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes best stop (m/kg)	Maximum legroom - front (cm)	Typical leg/kneeroom - rear (cm)	Steering turns/ (p) circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
HYUNDAI ACCENT 1.3	4/1341/84	3240	12.8	34.6/26.2	38½	25½/14†	105	95/70	2.9/10.3	420
Daewoo Lanos 1.4	4/1349/75	3190	14.3	39.5/26.3	38½	27/16†	106	96/73	3.0/10.0	408
Skoda Felicia 1.6	4/1598/75	3150	12.4	25.2/17.1	39½	25/22†	106	99/74	3.1/10.8	388
Citroen Xsara 1.4*	4/1360/75	3400	14.0	31.9/22.1	38	25/23†	107	99/74	3.2/10.8	417
Suzuki Baleno 1.6	4/1590/98	3100	10.8	34.2/23.4	41	27/13	108	100/70	3.3/9.9	420
* Xsara estate car performance figures						† with ABS		(p) all power assisted		