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Property & Casualty Insurance
Filing Guidance Notice 2014-B

To: Insurers Submitting Private Passenger Motor Vehicle Insurance Rate/Rule Filings for Policies Effective on or after April 1, 2015

From: Matthew Mancini, Director State Rating Bureau

Date: December 19, 2014

Re: Required Filing Documents to Be Submitted with Private Passenger Motor Vehicle Rate/Rule Filings for Policies Effective on or after April 1, 2015

This filing guidance is being issued to update the assumptions and vehicles used to calculate the premium for the private passenger motor vehicle policy examples described in Filing Guidance 2010-C. All of the requirements of Filing Guidance 2010-C should be presumed to continue unless specifically modified by this guidance.

Vehicles Underlying the Sample Premiums

The premiums for the policy examples shall assume the following vehicles:

	Seven Core Policy Examples	Additional Seven Policy Examples
Single Vehicle Policy	2013 Toyota Camry LE <i>(replaces 2008 Honda Civic)</i>	2010 Hyundai Accent GLS <i>(replaces 2005 Nissan Altima)</i>
Two Vehicle Policy	2013 Toyota Camry LE 2010 Chevrolet Impala LT <i>(replaces 2005 Ford Taurus)</i>	2010 Hyundai Accent GLS 2013 Dodge Journey SXT AWD <i>(replaces 2008 Ford Explorer)</i>

Attached to this filing guidance are detailed descriptions of each of the above vehicles. Each of these descriptions includes specifications for a specific make/model of the vehicle that has been tested. These specifications should be used, as appropriate, to determine the policy example

premium. In instances where the vehicle cost new is required for premium determination, please assume this cost is equal to the base MSPR of the vehicle tested which is indicated with an asterisk in the attachment.

For the purposes of premium determination, the following additional assumptions about the vehicle apply:

Feature	2013 Camry	2010 Impala	2010 Accent	2013 Journey
Type of Title	Clear**	Clear**	Clear**	Clear**
Title State	MA	MA	MA	MA
Financing	Purchase	None - Owned	None - Owned	Purchase
Liens	Dealer Finance	None	None	Dealer Finance
Type of Purchase	2 nd Owner	1 st Owner	1 st Owner	2 st Owner
Date of Purchase	April 1, 2015	April 1, 2011	April 1, 2011	April 1, 2015
Expected Vehicle Lifetime	20 Years	20 Years	20 Years	20 Years

**Massachusetts law defines a clear title as a title issued to a vehicle with no previous salvage notations, sub-brands or legends. For additional information see [RMV - Title Types and Definitions](#).

Additional Assumptions for Determining Premiums

Prior Policy Information:

1. Prior bodily injury liability limits were the same as those shown in the policy profile.
2. Prior insurance policy was voluntarily issued by a competing standard auto insurer.
3. Prior insurance policy will expire without lapse on the effective date for which a replacement policy is being quoted.

Insured Operator Information:

1. No listed operator is excluded or deferred.
2. No operator regularly uses public transportation.
3. No operator has completed a defensive driving course.
4. No operator is active in the U.S. military.
5. No operator is eligible for accident forgiveness.
6. No operator is a member of an independent motor vehicle or road side assistance club.
7. No operator has signed a safe driving pledge document with the company.
8. No operator is eligible for the age 65 and over discount except for the operators described in policy example #2 in filing guidance 2010-C.

New Business Policy Characteristics

1. The policy was not submitted as part of an agency book transfer.
2. The policy was not quoted for individuals who were most recently insured under another policy issued by the quoting insurer.
3. The policyholder does not receive policy documents electronically.
4. The policyholder pays the premium in at least two installments.
5. The policyholder pays the premium by paper check or non-recurring credit card.

6. The policyholder does not purchase any qualifying companion policies in addition to those shown in the policy examples in filing guidance 2010-C.

Principal Named Insured Characteristics

1. The principal named insured is Driver 1 in each of the policy examples described in filing guidance 2010-C.
2. The principal named insured has been with their current employer for at least 2 years but no more than 6 years (assume no employer with respect to policy example #2).

Other Rating Characteristics

1. Annual mileage estimates of the vehicle are obtained from an independent third party, but the estimates are not obtained through telematic devices or cell phones.
2. No accident described in the policy examples in filing guidance 2010-C had a paid claim value in excess of \$2,000.
3. No accidents or traffic violations (whether chargeable or not) occurred in the three years prior to the driving record described by the policy examples in filing guidance 2010-C.

The Division will be updating its website to reflect premiums calculated under these assumptions on April 1, 2015. All insurers must email the updated premium comparisons in Excel format to MADOICATData@state.ma.us by March 15, 2015.

If you have any questions regarding this filing guidance, please contact Cara Blank at 617-521-7344.

2013 Toyota Camry

By [New Car Test Drive](#)

Updated: May 23, 2013



Review Pages

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2013 Toyota Camry

The Toyota Camry is America's best-selling midsize sedan. Toyota claims the Camry is the safest, quietest, most fuel-efficient car in its class, and we have no reason to doubt those claims.

Camry was completely redesigned for the 2012 model year and carries into the 2013 model largely unchanged, though the 2013 Camry does benefit from some additional equipment upgrades. Bluetooth wireless phone connectivity is standard across the 2013 Camry line. The Blind Spot Monitor adds a rear cross traffic alert function and is available on more models for 2013. 2013 Camry Hybrid models now sport the same soft-touch inner door panels as the non-hybrid Camry models. Leather-equipped 2013 Camrys feature accent stitching on the inner doors.

This seventh-generation Toyota Camry is an attractive car, with clean sides and nice edges. It's about the same size as the 2007-11 models. Benefitting from the latest impact energy management engineering, it's built on a rigid chassis using a lot of high-strength steel and ultra high-strength steel.

The interior is nice, the leather dashboard neat and stylish, the instrument panel pretty and functional. Storage spaces are well thought-out, and a 60/40 split rear seat is standard.

Five models of the 2013 Camry range from the stripped-down Camry L to the sport-tuned Camry SE to the environmentally friendly Camry Hybrid.

Camry offers a choice of four-cylinder, V6 or hybrid power. The standard 2.5-liter four-cylinder makes 178 horsepower. The 3.5-liter V6 produces 268 horsepower. Fuel economy is an EPA-estimated City/Highway 25/35 mpg with the four-cylinder, 21/30 mpg with the V6.

We were impressed with the smooth and responsive acceleration from the four-cylinder as well as the fuel economy. Toyota boasts a range of almost 600 miles.

The tuned suspension in the sporty Camry SE might be too firm for some; we didn't find the Camry SE uncomfortable, but we did find the softer Camry XLE more relaxing around town. We preferred the SE's tighter steering in all circumstances.

The Camry Hybrid uses a 2.5-liter Atkinson Cycle engine, with more horsepower and electric power than in previous generations. It feels like a totally different car than other models, as it slows everything down and makes the vehicle feel bigger. The Environmental Protection Agency rates the 2013 Camry Hybrid LE at 43/39 mpg City/Highway, Camry Hybrid XLE at 40/38 mpg.

Model Lineup

The 2013 Toyota Camry comes in five models. The base-model Camry L (\$22,235) comes standard with air conditioning with filter, fabric-trimmed front seats with seatback pockets, six-way adjustable driver's seat; four-way adjustable front-passenger seat, Bluetooth phone connectivity, 6.1-inch Display Audio screen, power windows and door locks, AM/FM/CD/MP3/WMA audio with USB port and iPod adapter, cruise control, 60/40 rear folding seats, overhead console, projector beam headlamps, manual front seat adjustment, 12-volt power outlet, 16-inch steel wheels with wheel covers. The 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine and 6-speed automatic transmission are standard.

Camry LE (\$22,680) upgrades with steering wheel audio and Bluetooth controls, remote keyless entry, an additional 12-volt power point, auto on/off headlights, and variable-intermittent wipers. Rocker panels get a chrome insert, and armrests are color-keyed, not black as on the Camry L. Camry Hybrid LE (\$26,140) is equipped similarly.

Camry XLE (\$24,855) upgrades further with dual-zone automatic climate control, leather-wrapped steering wheel and shifter, power front seats, wood-style interior trim, lighted vanity mirrors, rear reading lamps, rear air outlets, power moonroof, foglamps, heated outside mirrors, more chrome trim, 17-inch alloy wheels. Camry Hybrid XLE (\$27,670) is equipped similarly. A power sunroof (\$915) is available on the Camry Hybrid XLE.

Camry XLE V6 (\$30,465) comes with the 3.5-liter V6 engine, and adds leather seats with heated front seats, auto-dimming rearview mirror with compass and HomeLink, a rearview camera, and dual chrome exhaust tips, with touch-screen navigation; SiriusXM and HD radio; Toyota Entune, which encompasses a range of mobile applications and data services.

Camry SE (\$23,400) and SE V6 (\$27,260) start with standard LE features but feature a sport-tuned suspension, sport mesh body-colored front grille, halogen headlamps with black bezels, rocker panel extensions, rear and underbody spoilers, SofTex-trimmed sport seats, paddle shifters, leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, silver-grain interior trim; 18-inch alloy wheels on the V6, 17-inch on the I4. Camry SE V6 also comes with touch-screen navigation; SiriusXM and HD radio; and Toyota Entune.

Safety equipment standard on all models includes 10 airbags, electronic stability control with traction control, ABS with Brake Assist and Brake Force Distribution, and a tire pressure monitoring system. Rearview camera is optional; Blind Spot Monitor System with Rear Cross Traffic Alert is optional.

Walkaround and Interior

Walkaround

This latest-generation 2012-13 Camry looks significantly different from the previous-generation Camry (2007-11). The body was completely redesigned and the new one is slightly more aerodynamic with an impressive 0.27 Cd. The Camry look svelte, with no lumpy cladding and almost no chrome.

Though about the same size as the previous-generation version, the current model did lose weight in the re-design, 150 pounds (220 pounds for the Hybrid). It might all be under the skin, but no matter, it's all good. What Toyota calls aero-corner design enhances this image. Hips and shoulders tucked in.

Wheels help distinguish the trim levels. Camry LE uses wheelcovers over 16-inch steel wheels, Camry XLE uses 17-inch alloy wheels, Camry SE uses 17- or 18-inchers. All three styles successfully avoid cookie cutting, with the LE's 20-spoke titanium-tinted wheelcovers ironically being the most ambitious and eye-catching, if not the classiest.

The roofline angles the windshield steeply. There's a nice character line under the windows slanting slightly up to the rear deck, where there's a small spoiler lip on the SE. Windows are outlined in chrome, but no more, except for a thin strip at the rocker level on the LE and XLE. Body-colored door handles on all models.

The face of the Camry SE is tweaked, for the better, with body color over the black mesh grille, and more aggressive air intakes in the valance under the bumper. Headlamps are outlined in black, angled, narrow and sleek, with a neat little notch in the line at the bottom.

Interior Features

Interior dimensions for the seventh-generation (2012-13) Camry are within fractions of an inch of the sixth-generation (2007-11) models. There's a bit more backseat legroom, with 38.9 inches on a flat rear floor decent for a midsize car. Some interior parts have been thinned to create more eye, knee and elbow room: A-pillars, control panels on the doors, front seatbacks, center console.

Interior materials are different on different trim levels. Camry L, LE and XLE use a nice fabric, while the Camry SE uses a combination of fabric with SofTex synthetic leather trim. Real leather is available on Camry XLE, with leather-trimmed ultrasuede available on the SE and XLE Hybrid.

The fit of the front buckets is good on the Camry LE and XLE, with more bolstering on the SE. The Camry Hybrid has its own material, more like the SE. Trims are different too: LE is silver, XLE wood, SE silver grain, and Hybrid a metallic tech grain.

We found the driver's position comfortable, with thoughtful padding for the driver's right leg against the center console, and high armrests. Decent door pocket, great cubby forward in the center console, big glovebox with light.

Steering wheels differ on the different models, with LE a four-spoke urethane, XLE four-spoke leather, and SE four-spoke leather. They all work well enough, no inconveniences noted in driving all four models.

Camry LE feels quiet, solid and firm; but the XLE with optional leather and a grander display screen feels markedly uptown.

It's hard to make a dashboard not boring, because after all it is a board, but the Camry succeeds. The standard leather is overlapped in an arc with neat stitching, for a saddle-like effect; new passengers will compliment it and maybe run their hands over the seam. The little window for the clock up at the top looks like a hood scoop.

Instruments on most models are in 3D. The instruments themselves are the same, the only difference is in the rings around the gauges, chrome or satin.

The Hybrid's panel is the same only prettier. It has Optitron meters with white illumination, blue metallic printing, and white lighting pointer. Three gauges, with clear dials and numbers that glow up at you in crystal clear white. We like it. Cargo space in the Camry Hybrid is 13.1 cubic feet, a decent-size trunk.

Trunk space on all other Camry models is a roomy 15.4 cubic feet.

The manually operated climate control has big dials and easy buttons on the Camry LE. The automatic climate control on Camry XLE uses a 6.1-inch LCD touch-screen also used for radio tuning and navigation. The screen grows to 7 inches with upgrade systems.

In pursuit of fuel mileage, the Camry runs a numerically low torque converter ratio, to reduce the revs at freeway speeds and make the car quieter inside; at 70 mph you can't hear the motor. But you can hear the tire noise. Low-rolling-resistance tires are loud on the pavement.

There's the optional JBL Green Edge sound system, which uses up to 58 percent less power and is 27 percent lighter; and Entune, which does Bing searches and allegedly enables you to buy movie tickets while you're driving into the city on a crowded freeway in a hurry at night, and stuff like that. Safely and simply they say, and we say don't believe it. It can all be bundled with navigation and satellite radio and voice recognition, and controlled on the 7-inch touch screen. Have fun, good luck, and don't crash.

Driving Impressions

Ironically, after driving four models of the current Toyota Camry, we think the model we didn't drive might be the call. That would be a Camry SE with the I4 engine, rather than our V6. That's because the Camry SE is tighter than the Camry XLE or LE; and the 178-hp I4 is quick, silent and smooth, no matter that the 268-hp V6 is faster.

On the Camry XLE, using the lighter 6-speed for the I4, we noted good ratios, smooth upshifts and invisible kickdowns around town. With the I4, to get 30 mpg with that kind of performance is great. Toyota boasts a range of almost 600 miles, at 35 highway mpg.

Four-cylinder and V6 models use a 6-speed automatic that on the Camry SE comes with paddle shifters and normal and sport modes. No problems with the way the transmissions were programmed; both 5th and 6th gears in the V6 transmission are overdrives, with 6th being super overdrive at 0.608:1, for highway fuel mileage. There's a big leap between 1st and 2nd gears, but the 248 foot-pounds of torque in the V6 can make it.

The even-keel Camry SE suspension might be too firm for some; we didn't find it uncomfortable, but did find the softer Camry XLE more relaxing around town. We preferred the SE's tighter steering in all circumstances. Either way the brakes felt good too, sensitive with good feel.

The Hybrid uses a 2.5-liter Atkinson Cycle engine that was new for 2012, with more horsepower and electric power than before. It feels like a totally different car than the I4 or V6. It slows everything down and it feels bigger; even the seats feel wider. Don't expect much from acceleration, cornering, or quick response, though it's quicker than the previous-generation model.

Braking is regenerative and sensitive, sometimes diving the nose. It's quieter, when you're not straining at the throttle, but the tire noise on a rough freeway is still there.

Eco mode reduces the throttle opening, slowing the car way down, although Eco defaults to Power mode when you need more speed. EV mode with a good charge couldn't get us out of the parking lot. It wouldn't even run the air conditioner with the car at a standstill.

The Hybrid is more slippery in the wind, with underbody fairing panels lowering the Cd, but a small blue badge is the only visible difference.

The Camry XLE Hybrid is rated at 40 combined mpg, and even with 12.5:1 compression the Atkinson cycle allows the use of regular gasoline. We actually saw 45 mpg on our test run, probably because we were aghast at the idea of booting it.

Summary, Prices, Specs

Summary

The 2013 Toyota Camry is a superb midsize sedan, with the latest chassis engineering and sleek styling. Camry powertrains are so different you should consider your needs or drive them all before you choose. The four-cylinder engine is exceptional, with good smooth response and excellent fuel economy. The 6-speed automatic transmission is smooth. The suspension is comfortable and the interior clean and convenient. Upper level models with infotainment options move the Camry upscale. Camry SE has a firmer ride and sharper steering response. Camry Hybrid keeps emissions low but doesn't offer the responsiveness of the four-cylinder and V6 models.

Sam Moses filed this NewCarTestDrive.com report from the Columbia River Gorge.

Model Line Overview

Model lineup:	Toyota Camry L (\$22,235), LE (\$22,680), SE (\$23,400), SE V6 (\$27,260), XLE (\$24,855) XLE V6 (\$30,465), Hybrid LE (\$26,140), Hybrid XLE (\$27,670)
Engines:	178-hp 2.5-liter I4; 268-hp 3.5-liter V6; 2.5-liter Atkinson Cycle with electric motor assist (200 hp net system total)
Transmissions:	6-speed automatic
Safety equipment (standard):	10 airbags, ABS with brake assist and brake-force distribution, electronic stability and traction control, tire pressure monitor
Safety equipment (optional):	Blind Spot Monitor System with Rear Cross Traffic Alert; rearview camera
Basic warranty:	3 years/36,000 miles
Assembled in:	Georgetown, Kentucky; Evansville, Indiana

Specifications As Tested

* * Model tested (MSRP):	Toyota Camry LE (\$22,680)
Standard equipment:	cloth upholstery, manual air conditioning with air filter, power doors and windows, cruise control, 60/40 rear folding seats, overhead console, display with 6.1-inch screen, AM/FM/CD/MP3/USB with iPod, Bluetooth hands-free phone capability, projector beam headlamps, manual front seat adjustment, 16-inch steel wheels with wheelcovers
Options as tested (MSRP):	power driver's seat 8-way (\$440)
Destination charge:	\$860
Gas guzzler tax:	N/A
Price as tested (MSRP):	\$23980
Layout:	front-wheel drive
Engine:	2.5-liter 16-valve I4
Horsepower (lb.-ft @ rpm):	178 @ 6000
Torque (lb.-ft @ rpm):	170 @ 4100
Transmission:	6-speed automatic
EPA fuel economy, city/hwy:	25/35 mpg
Wheelbase:	109.3 in.
Length/width/height:	189.2/71.7/57.9 in.

Track, f/r: 62.4/62.0 in.
Turning circle: 36.7 ft.
Seating Capacity: 5
Head/hip/leg room, f: 38.8/54.5/41.6 in.
Head/hip/leg room, m: N/A
Head/hip/leg room, r: 38.1/54.5/38.9 in.
Cargo volume: 15.4 cu. ft.
Payload: N/A
Towing capacity: N/A
Suspension, f: independent, MacPherson strut with anti-roll bar
Suspension, r: independent, dual-link with anti-roll bar
Ground clearance: 6.1 in.
Curb weight: 3190 lbs.
Tires: 205/65R16
Brakes, f/r: vented disc/ solid disc with ABS, EBD, Brake Assist
Fuel capacity: 17.0 gal.

Unless otherwise indicated, specifications refer to test vehicle. All prices are manufacturer's suggested retail prices (MSRP) effective as of May 23, 2013. Prices do not include manufacturer's destination and delivery charges. N/A: Information not available or not applicable. Manufacturer Info Sources: 800-468-6968 - www.toyota.com

2010 Chevrolet Impala

By [New Car Test Drive](#)

Updated: June 2, 2010



Review Pages

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2010 Chevrolet Impala

The Chevrolet Impala is a big, roomy sedan. While classified as a mid-size sedan, it's large for that class. Close in size to the Toyota Avalon, it competes with mid-size and full-size cars. Among them: The Ford Taurus, Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger, Honda Accord, Toyota Camry, and Nissan Altima.

We find the Impala's neat, clean lines pleasing to the eye. Its styling looks contemporary, handsome, and clean. Inside, there's lots of room, in the front as well as the back seats, and getting in and out is easy. The Impala has a big trunk with a big lid that simplifies loading cargo, and it has a generous capacity. Optional flip-and-fold-forward rear seats are exclusive in its class, and provide not only holding wells for groceries but a flat cargo floor that expands the trunk for long items.

On the road, the Impala is very stable, a nice cruiser. There's lots of low-end torque from the larger of the two available V6 engines, a 3.9-liter V6 with advanced technologies. Step on the gas and it goes. Given its size, the Impala handles well, and surprisingly so.

There are three trim levels, ranging from a sensible, reliable, and fuel-efficient family sedan to a more luxurious version with commendable performance and a good complement of features, and the two available V6 engines are dependable, responsive and efficient, while delivering ample performance.

Chevrolet continues to improve and upgrade the Impala. Two important standard features are StabiliTrak, General Motors' electronic stability control system that includes the function of traction control, and the latest generation of OnStar, which will automatically communicate the nature and severity of a crash as well as its location to the call center.

Changes for 2010 are few. There are three new exterior colors, and LT models now have standard fog lamps and offer the optional availability of the Convenience Package, which includes a universal garage-door opener, inside auto-dimming mirror, Bluetooth and outside heated power-adjustable mirrors.

Overall, the Chevrolet Impala is a comfortable and convenient car, practical and enjoyable to drive, with decent performance and fuel economy and competitive pricing.

Model Lineup

The 2010 Chevrolet Impala spans a model range that includes the base LS, the mid-range LT and the comprehensively-equipped and more luxurious LTZ.

The Impala LS (\$23,890) comes with a 207-horsepower 3.5-liter V6, a four-speed automatic transmission, cloth upholstery, six-way power driver's seat, dual-zone air conditioning, power windows, programmable power locks, AM/FM/CD/MP3 audio with six speakers, XM Satellite Radio, OnStar, cruise control, 16-inch steel wheels, a tire-pressure monitor, four-wheel-disc brakes with anti-lock (ABS) and StabiliTrak, which includes the function of traction control. Options include an engine block heater (\$75), 40/20/40 front bench seat (\$195), and a flip-and-fold-forward rear seat (\$295).

The Impala LT (\$25,055) upgrades to 16-inch aluminum wheels, leather-wrapped steering wheel with audio and cruise controls and more interior conveniences. Options include leather upholstery (\$1,125), sunroof (\$900), universal garage door opener (\$100), and rear spoiler (\$275).

The Impala LT Luxury Edition package (\$2,270) includes leather trim, an upgraded OnStar with Directions and Connections and Turn-By-Turn Navigation, heated front seats, six-way power front passenger's seat, Bose premium eight-speaker audio system, flip-and-fold-forward rear seat, and a rear spoiler.

The Impala LTZ (\$29,630) comes standard with the equipment of the LT, plus the 238-horsepower 3.9-liter V6 engine and the FE3 performance suspension. Inside you'll find leather upholstery, heated seats with eight-way power on the driver's side and six-way power on the passenger's side, upgraded audio with eight speakers, and a leather-wrapped steering wheel with audio and cruise controls. Standard wheels are 18-inch machined alloys with P235/55R18 tires.

Safety features that come standard on all Impalas include dual front airbags, side-curtain roof-mounted airbags for front- and rear-seat passengers, thorax side-impact airbags, anti-lock brakes (ABS) with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), StabiliTrak with traction control and tire-pressure monitoring.

Walkaround and Interior

Walkaround

The Impala presents a clean, neat, pleasing design that's not so homogenized as to be boring. It's an attractive car.

The big headlamps have a premium, jeweled appearance with three independent lighting units and are smoothly integrated into the front end. The tail lights are nicely integrated as well. These details complement other quality attributes, such as tight gaps of 3.5mm or less between body panels and substantial grab-style door handles that won't pinch your fingers or snap away from your hand on a cold morning. Flat-blade windshield wipers provide consistent pressure on the glass, which helps eliminate streaking and wind noise.

Aside from minor badging, the only exterior differentiations among the trim levels are the wheels and the standard rear spoiler on the LTZ.

Interior Features

The Impala has a lot going for it inside as well. The standard seats have fairly firm cushions and decent lumbar support compared to previous models. A twin-brow instrument panel wraps around into the doors. We found the instrument panel pleasing to the eye, colorful, entertaining and easy to use, with a nice all-of-a-piece unity and style to it. Interior materials are a grade above average.

The dual-zone climate control system is a snap to use, with large, round control knobs and good markings. It can support up to a 12-degree temperature difference side-to-side. The optional remote engine start system comes with a 200-foot operating range and automatic climate pre-conditioning to warm or cool the interior. The driver information center offers more than 50 different alerts, depending on the vehicle's equipment. The glovebox is large enough to actually hold stuff.

The base audio system comes with six speakers, AM/FM/CD/MP3 capability, and XM Satellite Radio. It features speed-sensing volume control and a two-line, 32-character display and the capability to select freely between AM, FM and XM. We really liked this system because we could set up all of our favorite stations in one row, for example, allowing us to quickly switch between AM news, XM news, FM music stations, and CDs. Setting these presets is as easy as holding the button down. A big round knob in the center allows quick volume adjustments. Presets for the equalizer let you quickly switch settings from rock to country & western to talk radio. Too many radios nowadays are too complex or have tiny buttons difficult to operate underway. Not so with GM's radios. The Impala sound system is sophisticated yet easy to operate. The optional system adds an in-dash six-CD changer. The premium audio system is Bose. All radios include a standard auxiliary input jack for external devices such as an iPod or remote cassette player.

The OnStar offers Turn-by-Turn navigation with the Directions and Connections service. Turn-by-Turn navigation directs the driver through the route by using the digital readout lines in the radio head. Directions are downloaded by the OnStar advisor to the vehicle and can be played back or paused anywhere from start to destination. Besides being easy to use (all directions are downloaded to the car by an advisor) Turn-by-Turn is less expensive than a GPS navigation system.

The back seat is roomy and comfortable for two adults or three kids, but not three adults. The forward-flipping rear seat cushions reveal a storage tub underneath that can contain spills or transport a variety of items. The tub also serves as a covered storage area beneath the

seat with cushions down, and exposes convenient grocery bag hooks when the cushions are flipped forward. A generous pass-through from the trunk can be created by flipping the seat bottoms forward and the seat backs flat.

At 18.6 cubic feet the trunk is quite large and offers the additional convenience of a big opening.

Driving Impressions

We found the Impala's V6 engines to be smooth and quiet if not bristling with power. They feature variable valve timing, which changes the orientation of the camshaft, automatically adjusting the timing of the intake and exhaust valves for better performance, economy, and emissions.

The 3.5-liter E85-compatible V6 that's standard on the LS and LT has variable valve timing and generates 207 horsepower and 215 pound-feet of torque. It gets an EPA-rated 18/29 mpg City/Highway on gasoline and 14/22 City/Highway on E85 ethanol.

The 3.9-liter E85-compatible V6 has variable valve timing and produces 230 horsepower and 238 pound-feet of torque. The 3.9-liter V6 gets an EPA-rated 17/27 mpg City/Highway on gasoline and 13/20 mpg City/Highway on E85.

The four-speed automatic transmission is responsive and smooth, although some of the competition now offers more flexible five-speed automatics.

All Impalas come with a MacPherson-strut independent front suspension, with gas-charged struts and a stabilizer bar. The rear suspension uses a multi-link setup with gas-charged struts, coil springs, and a stabilizer bar. LS and LT models come with the softer FE1 suspension, while the LTZ has the performance-tuned FE3 setup and more responsive handling. The steering on all models is over-assisted, fairly numb and uncommunicative.

The Impala's four-wheel disc brake system (vented in front, solid in the rear) has been designed for quiet operation, long pad life, and resistance to brake pulsation. On the road we found the Impala's brakes very much to our liking: Powerful, direct, and linear, with a nice, progressive ratio of pedal travel to stopping progression.

Summary, Prices, Specs

Summary


The Chevrolet Impala is pleasing to drive, whether equipped with the 3.5-liter or 3.9-liter V6 engines. They are roomy, comfortable, promise good reliability and represent solid value for the money.

NewCarTestDrive.com correspondent Jim McCraw filed this report from Dearborn, Michigan.

Model Line Overview

Model lineup:	Chevrolet Impala LS (\$23,890); LT (\$25,055); LTZ (\$29,630)
Engines:	207-hp 3.5-liter ohv V6; 230-hp 3.9-liter ohv V6
Transmissions:	4-speed automatic
Safety equipment (standard):	frontal airbags, side-curtain airbags, thorax side-impact airbags, front-seat seat-belt pretensioners and force limiters, LATCH anchors for child seats in all rear seating positions, tire-pressure monitor, anti-lock brakes with EBD, StabiliTrak electronic stability control with the function of traction control.
Safety equipment (optional):	none
Basic warranty:	3 years/36,000 miles
Assembled in:	Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

Specifications As Tested

 Model tested (MSRP):	Chevrolet Impala LT (\$25,055)
Standard equipment:	dual-zone air conditioning, power steering, power disc brakes, power windows, power locks, six-way power driver's seat, cruise control, message center, trip computer, fog lamps, six-speaker AM/FM/CD/MP3 audio, XM Satellite Radio, OnStar, 16-inch aluminum wheels
Options as tested (MSRP):	rear spoiler (\$275)
Destination charge:	\$825
Gas guzzler tax:	N/A
Price as tested (MSRP):	\$26155
Layout:	front-wheel drive

Engine: 3.5-liter ohv V6 with variable valve timing
Horsepower (lb.-ft @ rpm): 207 @ 5800
Torque (lb.-ft @ rpm): 215 @ 4000
Transmission: 4-speed automatic
EPA fuel economy, city/hwy: 18/29 mpg
Wheelbase: 110.5 in.
Length/width/height: 200.4/72.9/58.7 in.
Track, f/r: 62.4/61.5 in.
Turning circle: 38.0 ft.
Seating Capacity: 5
Head/hip/leg room, f: 39.4/56.4/42.3 in.
Head/hip/leg room, m: N/A
Head/hip/leg room, r: 37.8/57.2/37.6 in.
Cargo volume: 18.6 cu. ft.
Payload: N/A
Towing capacity: 1000 Lbs.
Suspension, f: independent, MacPherson struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Suspension, r: independent, tri-link, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Ground clearance: 6.7 in.
Curb weight: 3555 lbs.
Tires: P225/60R16
Brakes, f/r: ventilated disc/disc with ABS, EBD
Fuel capacity: 17.5 gal.

Unless otherwise indicated, specifications refer to test vehicle. All prices are manufacturer's suggested retail prices (MSRP) effective as of June 2, 2010. Prices do not include manufacturer's destination and delivery charges. N/A: Information not available or not applicable. Manufacturer Info Sources: 800-462-8782 - www.chevrolet.com

2010 Hyundai Accent

By [New Car Test Drive](#)

Updated: May 25, 2010



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2010 Hyundai Accent

The Hyundai Accent is roomy, comfortable, well-appointed and practical. Beyond those qualities, it is also commendably fuel-efficient and offered at a very attractive price. For the buyer looking for a strong value for the money in an economical small car, it would be hard to beat the Accent.

Power for the Accent comes from a clean and sophisticated 1.6-liter double overhead-cam engine, featuring variable valve timing and delivering 110 horsepower and 106 pound-feet of torque; it is available with either a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic transmission. Perhaps more important, the Accent offers EPA-rated fuel economy numbers of 28 mpg City/34 mpg Highway with the manual transmission, and 27/36 mpg with the automatic.

At the same time, the Accent offers a generous list of safety features. Six airbags (front, seat-mounted side-impact, and side-curtain) are standard on all models; antilock brakes with electronic brake-force distribution are optional on the sedan and standard on the sporty SE coupe. The Accent is one of the least expensive cars on the market with these important safety features.

For 2010, Hyundai Accent offers some worthwhile changes and enhancements. All 2010 models have notably improved fuel economy. A new Blue edition, offering a lower price and even better fuel economy, is added to the line. Standard equipment now includes iPod/USB ports and blue backlit gauges; and steering-wheel audio controls, cruise control and sunroof on the SE trim level. There is also the availability of steering-wheel audio controls on the GLS and ABS on the GS.

We think people in the market for a small, practical, and thrifty car should consider the Hyundai Accent alongside the best from the Japanese name brands. A generous five-year/60,000-mile basic warranty with roadside assistance and a 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty make the Accent a particularly good deal for anyone who does not want to buy a used car and intends to keep the vehicle for an extended period of time.

Model Lineup

The 2010 Hyundai Accent is available in two body styles and four trim levels: A basic GS coupe, a nicer GLS four-door sedan, a sporty SE coupe, and the value-priced and more economical Blue coupe. A 110-horsepower 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine powers all models. A five-speed manual transmission is standard, a four-speed automatic transmission is optional.

The Accent GS coupe (\$11,995) comes with cloth upholstery, six-way adjustable driver's seat, fold-down driver's armrest, center console with two cupholders, a recline feature for its split-folding (60/40) rear seat, a tilting steering column, tachometer, digital clock, two 12-volt power outlets, cabin air filtration, two-speed plus variable-intermittent windshield wipers, rear-window defroster, power steering, and P175/70R14 tires on steel wheels. There's no radio, but the GS does come with four speakers, so installing an aftermarket unit is relatively easy. It is also available with an automatic transmission (\$12,995).

Air conditioning is available as an option (\$1,000). There is also a Premium Equipment Package (\$1,550) that includes a six-speaker, AM/FM/XM/CD/MP3 stereo with an auxiliary input jack, power windows, power mirrors, power door locks with remote keyless entry, anti-lock brakes (ABS), and dual illuminated visor vanity mirrors.

The Accent GLS sedan (\$13,645) comes with air conditioning and the six-speaker stereo, along with illuminated vanity mirrors and 185/65R14 tires on 14-inch steel wheels. It is also available with the automatic (\$14,645). The sedan's Premium Equipment Package (\$1,050) adds anti-lock brakes with electronic brake-force distribution, power windows with driver's auto-down, power mirrors, power door locks, remote keyless entry, tilt wheel, cruise control, steering-wheel audio controls and an alarm with panic alert.

The Accent SE coupe (\$16,195) comes with a sport-tuned suspension, ABS with EBD, rear spoiler and wiper/washer, P205/45VR16 tires on five-spoke aluminum wheels, a sunroof, fog lights, leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, metallic interior accents, power windows with express-down for the driver's-side window, seat-back pockets, and illuminated vanity mirrors. It is also available with the automatic transmission (\$16,995).

The value-priced Blue trim level is available only as a coupe (\$9,970); the automatic transmission is not available. Air conditioning is optional (\$1,000). The Blue coupe not only has a very low price, but also delivers the higher fuel economy numbers of 27 mpg/36 mpg City/Highway. The Blue edition has one of the highest MPG-per-dollar-of-price ratios in the industry, and it will be identified with unique Blue badging.

In addition, Hyundai offers numerous port or dealer-installed accessories, including a cargo mat (\$80), floor mats (\$95), iPod cable (\$35), mudguards (\$85), and several other features and accessories.

Safety features for all Accents include front seatbelt pre-tensioners along with six airbags: dual frontal, front-seat side-impact, and full-coverage side curtain. Head restraints are adjustable at all five seating positions, unusual for this price class.

Walkaround and Interior

Walkaround

Far from cheap or plain, the Hyundai Accent looks elegant and substantial. The look starts at the front with integrated bumpers and large aerodynamic headlight enclosures that wrap around the front fenders. The Accent has a high roofline defined on either side by rain channels, while the windshield blends into the front of the roof without any visible trim. A sharp character line originates just behind the front wheel opening and slashes boldly across the doors, fading again just short of the taillights.

The back of the sedan roof sweeps toward the trailing edge of the trunk lid, giving it almost a coupe-like appearance. Unlike many modern cars, the Accent has a generous greenhouse with big windows; blacked-out trim both defines and unifies the side-window opening. This, coupled with a long wheelbase and relatively short overhangs, makes the sedan appear a tad bigger than it actually is.

The Accent coupe has a look all its own, though it shares its front fenders and defining character line with the sedan. The differences begin with a more aggressive two-slot air opening that replaces the sedan's fine-lined horizontal grille, and ends with a rounded tail that takes the tentative reverse curve at the base of the sedan's roof, boldly widens it, and fuses it with the horizontally curving quarter panel. The two-door Accent is unashamedly a hatchback, and makes no pretense to a separate trunk lid.

Not surprisingly, then, the coupe is as tall and wide as the sedan, and shares the sedan's 98.4-inch wheelbase, but at 159.3 inches overall it dispenses with a significant 9.2 inches of the sedan's rear overhang. The result is a short profile that looks like it should cost more than it does.

On both the coupe and sedan, a roof-mounted micro-antenna is aerodynamic, flexible, and said to improve signal strength.

Interior Features

One of the things we like best about the Accent is its interior. It has big windows that provide a great view which, from the driver's seat, is a commanding perspective. Accent cabins feature a conservative two-tone color scheme reminiscent of larger cars, and are trimmed out quite nicely, helping avoid the feeling of an econobox.

The dashboard wraps around to the door panels, and the center stack is nicely integrated, with large, well-positioned climate control knobs. The big speedometer and tachometer are located in a nicely contoured instrument pod in front of the steering wheel. Smaller fuel and coolant temperature gauges are set inside, along with a small LCD readout for the odometer and trip meter as well as gear-selection indicator for automatics.

The seats are contoured and finished in a classy cloth material that feels high quality. The driver's seat is six-way adjustable on all models.

We noticed several nice touches that kept our test sedan from feeling like a cheap econobox. Among them: Dampened grab handles, a thick roof lining, center folding front and rear armrests, a tilt steering wheel, a micro roof-mounted antenna, driver and passenger side-illuminated vanity mirrors, cabin air filtration, remote trunk and fuel cap releases, and a windshield shade band. There are decent-size pockets with a cupholder in each door. In addition, there are other storage places and a big glovebox.

The rear seat splits 60/40 for additional storage capacity. For better rearward visibility, the three rear-seat headrests slide down into the seatback when not needed. A fold-out center armrest with two cupholders is provided for rear-seat passengers.

Rear-seat legroom and headroom is not too bad unless the car is full of six-footers. Getting into the back seats is made easier by locating the rear wheels farther back, so the wheelwell does not intrude into the sedan's door opening as much.

Compared to the sedan, the coupe surrenders less than a half-inch of hip room up front, and less than an inch in the rear; otherwise its passenger-comfort dimensions are identical to those of the sedan.

Trunk volume in the sedan is a very respectable 12.4 cubic feet. Despite its shorter length, the hatchback coupe expands this to 15.9 cubic feet with the rear seats in place. Folding the back seats flat in either car greatly increases the total cargo volume and makes room for long and bulky items.

Driving Impressions

Nobody buying a Hyundai Accent will expect sizzling performance, yet the 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine is surprisingly snappy, even with the automatic transmission. An Accent GLS automatic has no problem keeping up with traffic as long as you stomp on the gas pedal, and it's more than happy cruising at speed on the freeway. We have not had a chance to check out an Accent with a manual transmission but expect it to be more fun to drive.

Hyundai's 1.6-liter four-cylinder is a modern, sophisticated engine with dual overhead camshafts and continuously variable valve timing. This DOHC/CVVT combination helps give the engine a broad power band with high fuel efficiency and low emissions. The engine produces 110 horsepower at 6000 rpm and 106 pound-feet of torque at 4500 rpm.

The EPA's City/Highway fuel economy ratings are 28/34 mpg for the manual, and 27/36 mpg for the automatic or for the Blue model, which is available only with the manual. The automatic does slightly better than the manual on the highway because its overall top gear ratio is numerically lower. In exchange, the stick-shift Accent should deliver snappier throttle response from cruising speeds. The Blue edition achieves its fuel economy rating by virtue of different gear ratios than the other manual-transmission Accents.

The sedan's ride is on the soft side. The power assisted rack-and-pinion steering provides reasonable feedback and the handling proved to be acceptable on some winding mountain roads near San Diego. Overall, the driving characteristics and performance make this a commuter car rather than a long distance cruiser.

The SE coupe is more stiffly sprung than the GS coupe or GLS sedan, and its front anti-roll bar is beefed up to 24 mm, versus the 21mm bar on the GS and GLS. And the SE's tires have stiffer sidewalls and wider treads, which makes for a firmer ride but more responsive handling. The SE's suspension makes it more resistant to body roll so it leans less in corners than the other models.

Four-channel, four-sensor ABS with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD) is available on some models. ABS allows the driver to maintain steering control in an emergency braking situation by preventing wheel lockup. EBD improves stability in hard braking situations by balancing brake force front to rear.

Summary, Prices, Specs

Summary

The Hyundai Accent is a competent subcompact car that's big inside and sprightly underway. It includes an impressive array of standard safety features and is certainly worthy of being considered alongside more expensive models from other manufacturers. The hatchback coupe adds a strong dose of sporty styling, plus more cargo-hauling versatility, with no significant loss of passenger space. It's available at a very attractive price, has a terrific warranty, and delivers exceptional fuel economy.


NewCarTestDrive.com correspondent John Rettie filed this report from San Diego.

Model Line Overview

Model lineup:	Hyundai Accent GS coupe (\$11,995), automatic (\$12,995); GLS sedan (\$13,645), automatic (\$14,645); SE coupe (\$16,195), automatic (\$16,995); Blue edition (\$9,970)
Engines:	110-hp 1.6-liter DOHC 16-valve inline-4

Transmissions:	5-speed manual; 4-speed automatic
Safety equipment (standard):	frontal airbags, front seat side-impact airbags, full-coverage side-impact curtain airbags, front seatbelt pretensioners, tire-pressure monitor
Safety equipment (optional):	antilock brake system (ABS) with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD)
Basic warranty:	5 years/60,000 miles
Assembled in:	Ulsan, South Korea

Specifications As Tested

 Model tested (MSRP):	Hyundai Accent GLS automatic (\$14,645)
Standard equipment:	air conditioning, power steering, tilt steering column, tachometer, digital clock, AM/FM/CD/MP3/XM audio with auxiliary input jack, six-way adjustable driver's seat, fold-down driver's armrest, center console with two cupholders, split-folding (60/40) rear seat, two 12-volt power outlets, cabin air filtration, two-speed intermittent windshield wipers, rear-window defroster, illuminated vanity mirrors, 185/65R14 tires on 14-inch steel wheels
Options as tested (MSRP):	Premium Equipment Package (\$1,050) includes anti-lock brakes with electronic brake-force distribution, power windows with driver's auto-down, power mirrors, power door locks, remote keyless entry, tilt wheel, cruise control, steering-wheel audio controls and an alarm with panic alert.
Destination charge:	\$720
Gas guzzler tax:	N/A
Price as tested (MSRP):	\$16415
Layout:	front-wheel drive
Engine:	1.6-liter dohc 16v inline-4
Horsepower (lb.-ft @ rpm):	110 @ 6000
Torque (lb.-ft @ rpm):	106 @ 4500
Transmission:	4-speed automatic
EPA fuel economy, city/hwy:	27/36 mpg
Wheelbase:	98.4 in.
Length/width/height:	168.5/66.7/57.9 in.
Track, f/r:	57.9/57.5 in.
Turning circle:	33.1 ft.
Seating Capacity:	5
Head/hip/leg room, f:	39.6/50.6/42.8 in.
Head/hip/leg room, m:	N/A
Head/hip/leg room, r:	37.8/49.6/34.3 in.
Cargo volume:	12.4 cu. ft.
Payload:	N/A
Towing capacity:	N/A
Suspension, f:	independent, MacPherson struts, coil springs, gas-pressure shock absorbers, stabilizer bar
Suspension, r:	torsion beam, coil springs, gas-pressure shock absorbers
Ground clearance:	6.1 in.
Curb weight:	2403 lbs.
Tires:	P185/65R14
Brakes, f/r:	vented disc/drum with ABS and EBD
Fuel capacity:	11.9 gal.

Unless otherwise indicated, specifications refer to test vehicle. All prices are manufacturer's suggested retail prices (MSRP) effective as of May 25, 2010. Prices do not include manufacturer's destination and delivery charges. N/A: Information not available or not applicable. Manufacturer Info Sources: 800-826-2277 - www.hyundaiusa.com

2013 Dodge Journey

By [New Car Test Drive](#)

Updated: April 25, 2013



Review Pages

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2013 Dodge Journey

The Dodge Journey is a midsize sport-utility that offers the smoother ride and better fuel economy of a car with the cargo space and roominess of an SUV. It seats five or seven, depending on options. And with a significant price reduction, Chrysler claims the 2013 Dodge Journey to be the most affordable seven-seat crossover sold in the U.S.

Dodge Journey offers lots of choices: four or six cylinders, five or seven seats, basic trim or full-lux leather. And like most crossovers it offers front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive.

Journey is considered a crossover vehicle because it straddles the line between car and SUV. It uses a lightweight unit-body structure similar to that used by cars, instead of a body-on-frame truck chassis. Available all-wheel-drive traction adds confidence in bad weather.

Up-level models are powered by the same modern 3.6-liter V6 that's becoming ubiquitous in Chrysler Group vehicles. It has plenty of power but is ill-matched to the 6-speed automatic transmission, making it feel less powerful than it actually is. The V6 produces 283 horsepower at 6350 rpm, 260 pound-feet of torque at 4400 rpm.

The Journey's standard motivation is a 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine of 173 horsepower. We found the four-cylinder engine rough and noisy, with too little power for a vehicle of this size. The V6 is the one to get, in our view.

Inside is where the Journey shines. Its interior design and materials give it one of the nicest cockpits in the class. It comes standard with seating for five, with a two-passenger third row optional. Either way it has useful, though not class leading, cargo space. Filling the Journey with adults won't make all your passengers happy, but the rear seat should work well for children. Seats flip and fold to provide ample versatility for hauling people, cargo, or both. The Journey offers a fold-flat front passenger seat that will allow loading items up to nine feet long. It features some unique storage solutions owners will find useful. Among them: a bin under the front passenger seat, storage under the floor in the second row and behind the last row of seats, a dual glove box with Dodge's Chill Zone that cools soda cans, and all the usual cubbies up front, including a fairly deep center console. Entertainment options are plentiful, as the Journey has a CD player standard and offers a rear DVD entertainment system and a hard-drive radio.

2013 Journey R/T models come with new perforated leather seats, a dimpled leather heated steering wheel and dimpled shift knob, red accent stitching on the steering wheel and a new performance suspension for even more responsive handling.

New for all 2013 Journey models is the addition of a max air conditioning setting for the climate controls, and an instantaneous fuel consumption indicator in the color Electronic Vehicle Information Center screen.

With prices starting at \$18,995 the Journey offers affordable utility. We recommend the V6 engine, which provides that extra margin of power that many buyers will want, as well as much more refinement. Be careful when it comes to options, though, as it is easy to get the Journey over \$30,000, money that can buy larger and/or more premium SUVs.

Model Lineup

The 2013 Dodge Journey is offered in five trim levels: AVP (American Value Package), SE, SXT, Crew, and R/T. The AVP and SE are only available with front-wheel drive and the 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine with 4-speed automatic transmission. The 3.6-liter V6 and 6-speed automatic are standard on Crew and R/T. The mid-range SXT can be ordered with front-wheel drive and the four-cylinder or V6, or with the V6 and AWD.

All five models provide seating for five in their standard configuration, or for seven with the optional Flexible Seating Group (\$1,050) which adds not only a 50/50 folding and reclining third seat, but a 60/40 tilt-and-slide second seat, tri-zone automatic climate control, and a cargo compartment cover.

Journey AVP (\$18,995) comes with cloth upholstery; cruise control; dual-zone manual air conditioning with air filtering; tinted glass; Uconnect 4.3 with AM/FM/CD/MP3/WMA stereo with six speakers, 4.3-inch touchscreen, auxiliary input jack, and USB port; power windows; power heated exterior mirrors; power door locks; remote keyless entry; tilt/telescoping steering wheel with audio controls; driver's seat height adjustment; 60/40-split-folding second-row seat; headlights with time-delay off; a grille with bright accents; and P225/65R17 all-season touring tires on steel wheels.

Journey SE (\$20,995) adds LED taillamps and a longer list of available options.

Journey SXT (\$22,995) adds deep-tint sunscreen glass, SiriusXM satellite radio, floor mats, fog lamps, and 17-inch aluminum wheels. Mirrors are body color rather than black, and the front fascia is more elaborate. The front-drive SXT can be ordered with the V6 (\$1,600). Journey SXT AWD (\$26,395) comes standard with the V6, which also gets bright exhaust tips, black roof rails, a performance-tuned suspension and a slightly larger fuel tank.

Journey Crew (\$27,995) upgrades further with the V6 engine as standard; fully automatic halogen headlamps; dual-zone automatic climate control; Uconnect 8.4 with 8.4-in. touchscreen, AM/FM radio, SiriusXM radio, CD/DVD player, MP3/WMA/AAC, audio input jack, remote USB port and SD card slot; six-way power driver's seat with four-way lumbar support; fold-flat front passenger seat with in-seat storage; leather-wrapped steering wheel with audio controls; illuminated vanity mirrors; one-touch control for power windows; 115-volt power outlet; and new 225/55R19 all-season touring tires on 19-inch Satin Silver aluminum wheels. Door handles, exhaust tips, and roof rails are all chromed. Journey Crew AWD (\$29,795) includes all-wheel drive.

Journey R/T (\$28,995) and AWD (\$30,795) are the sporty models. They add firm-feel power steering; high-performance suspension; heated front seats; black leather upholstery with red stitching; dimple-leather wrap for the steering wheel with matching red stitching; Infiniti 368-watt premium sound; and 19-inch alloy wheels finished in Satin Carbon. Door handles revert to body color, matching the body color trim in the grille; and roof rails revert to optional status (\$125).

The Navigation and Sound Group (\$995) includes Garmin navigation with audible turn by turn directions, POI and Lane Guidance, Uconnect Voice Command, Bluetooth streaming audio, hands-free texting and preprogrammed response, SiriusXM Travel Link, HomeLink universal garage door opener, rear park assist, and rearview camera; Rear DVD entertainment (\$795) comes with a 9-inch screen, remote control, and two wireless headphones. Stand-alone options include the six premium Infinity speakers with subwoofer and 368-watt amplifier (\$395); an engine block heater (\$95), sunroof (\$895), heated front seats (\$295), integrated second-row child safety seats (\$225), and a Trailer Tow Group (\$145) with an engine oil cooler and a four-pin connector. Many more options are available, and the model you order and the combination of options you order can affect option prices.

Safety features on all Journey models include advanced multistage front airbags; torso-protecting, seat-mounted front side air bags; head-protecting curtain side airbags that cover all seating rows; driver's knee bag; front-seat active head restraints; a tire-pressure monitor; traction control; electronic stability control with rollover mitigation; ABS with Electronic Brake-force Distribution and Brake Assist; and Dodge's trailer sway control. Available all-wheel drive improves stability in slippery conditions.

Walkaround and Interior

Walkaround

On the outside, the Journey announces its presence with the familiar Dodge crosshair grille. The look might be described as bold. But the upright shape of the grille and its relation to the aluminum hood and windshield is very reminiscent of the current Dodge Grand Caravan, and no SUV ever earned sales by looking like a minivan.

That said, the Journey's front end is somewhat simpler than the Grand Caravan's, with more straight lines and straightforward shapes. Journey AVP and SE breathe through a full-width lower air intake, superficially resembling the Grand Caravan's but again more decisively shaped and divided into three segments. Upmarket SXT, Crew, and R/T Journeys sport a more aggressive front fascia with a single, centered lower opening arched at the top and defined by a faux skidplate below. Flanking it are round fog lights set into ersatz brake ducts.

Around the sides, the Journey features pronounced wheel arches and a creased character line that starts at the top of each headlight, angles upward, and wraps completely around the vehicle. The roofline flows nicely from the windshield, curving down slightly front to rear. The B- and C-pillars are blacked out to, as Dodge puts it, give the look of a car-like greenhouse and an SUV-like lower half.

At the back, the Journey's taillights wrap around the sides of the vehicle and continue into the tailgate, which opens upward. The taillights themselves are LEDs on all but the base model. The rear bumper has an integrated step pad that matches the height of the load floor. Models with the V6 engine can be distinguished by their dual chrome exhaust tips.

The Dodge Journey is bigger than it looks. In overall dimension, it is actually longer than such seven-passenger crossover competitors as the Toyota Highlander and Subaru Tribeca (although the Journey is just an inch longer than the 2013 Honda Pilot). The Journey's size translates to plenty of interior cargo room, but the design isn't as space efficient as some of its competitors.

Interior Features

The Dodge Journey features an inviting cabin, offering plenty of room for passengers and cargo, available seating for seven, and several smart and convenient storage solutions.

Rich, soft-touch surfaces form an attractive layout. The dash top, door panels, armrests and center console are all soft to the touch. Generous sound-deadening material makes the Journey quiet underway. The look, feel and calm places the Journey at or near the top of the class for interior quality.

The center stack features three low-set knobs surrounded by several buttons. The climate controls are arrayed around the center knob, and they're easy enough to use.

Infotainment choices (Chrysler calls them Multimedia Systems) begin on the base model with Uconnect 4.3, which has a 4.3-inch touchscreen, standard audio input jack and USB port; add SiriusXM satellite radio and this setup becomes Uconnect 4.3S. The next step up (Uconnect 8.4) comes with an 8.4-inch touchscreen and a 30-gigabyte hard drive that can hold up to 6700 song files. There is also a premium version of this unit (8.4N) that adds Bluetooth streaming audio, voice command, a Garmin navigation system with SiriusXM Travel Link, Lane Guidance and pre-programmed hands-free texting responses. We've had limited exposure to this system but it works fairly well. Given Garmin's reach, more people should be familiar with the navigation system, but we think it looks cartoonish. We also like the idea of hands-free texting.

The Journey offers plenty of entertainment features for all occupants. An AM/FM radio with in-dash CD player and six speakers is standard. An available rear DVD entertainment system has a nine-inch screen and wireless headphones. Dodge's Uconnect phone hands-free cell phone link and a premium Infinity sound system are also offered.

Cabin space in the Journey is good but not great. The driver's seat offers plenty of head and leg room for just about any occupant. The view is generally unobstructed front and rear. The Journey's unique storage and convenience features, however, are what really make it shine. All Journeys have a dual-level glove box with Dodge's Chill Zone up top. Chill Zone uses the air conditioning system to keep up to four soda cans cool.

The center console/armrest has a lid that slides forward three inches. It has enough storage space for up to 10 DVD cases. Two cupholders are located in front of the console, along with a tray for cell phones and the like. An additional, more discreet storage space is standard in R/T and Crew and optional on SE and SXT. The front passenger seat bottom flips up to reveal a storage bin that has about enough room for a good-sized purse. The seat back also folds flat, allowing items up to nine feet long to be loaded into the Journey. And to help drivers keep an eye on the kids, there is a popular minivan feature, a fisheye conversation mirror.

The second row is equally as ingenious. The three-passenger bench seat is 1.6 inches higher than the front seat to give passengers a better view of the road. It slides forward and back up to 4.7 inches in seven-passenger models, and can be ordered with integrated child booster seats for the outboard positions. The Journey also has two in-floor storage bins with removable liners. Each bin can hold up to six soda cans plus ice. The seat backs are split 60/40 and fold flat. When the optional Flexible Seating Group is ordered, the second-row seats fold in a scissors action, with the seat bottoms tilting up, the seatbacks tilting forward, and the seats sliding forward, to provide easy access to the third row. The rear doors also open 90 degrees, making entry and exit easy.

Base seating is for five, but the Flexible Seating Group expands seating capacity to seven. The third row is 0.6 inches higher than the second row, is split 50/50, and folds flat. Dodge says it offers enough head room for a 95th-percentile male. That's all well and good, but leg room is tight and the bottom cushion is low to the floor, so adults sit with their knees up. It will be possible to fit seven adults in the Journey, but the third-row passengers and second-row middle occupant will be none too happy about it. Younger children will have plenty of room, though.

Both the five- and seven-passenger Journeys have a shallow under-floor storage bin that extends from the rear of the vehicle forward to just behind the last row of seats. That means the five-passenger version has considerably more space under the floor than the seven-passenger version. The cover for this bin is reversible, too, with carpet on one side and plastic on the other. The plastic will allow for worry-free stowage of items such as muddy boots.

Cargo space expands to 67.6 cubic feet with all the seats down, which is average for the class but bested by the Toyota Highlander and even the smaller Honda CR-V. Loading cargo shouldn't be tough, as the liftover height is relatively low. It would be nice, however, if the tailgate had a separate opening glass. As an added bonus, a removable, rechargeable flashlight is included in the rear cargo area in higher line models.

Driving Impressions

The Dodge Journey is nondescript when it comes to road manners, even after chassis changes for the 2011 model year that included stiffer springs and shocks, lower rolling resistance tires with more grip, a retuned steering gear and linkage, and modified rear suspension geometry.

Ride quality is generally good, with little pounding over bumps. The head sway that is associated with a high seating position is also minimal. Even with the available 19-inch wheels, the Journey does a good job of ironing out most jolts. But there are plenty of midsize crossovers and SUVs with similar ride characteristics.

While the high seating position affords a good view of the road, it seems to hurt the feel behind the wheel. This is not an off-road oriented SUV, and as such it seems that Dodge could have made it sit a bit lower, which would have made it feel more carlike. The way it's engineered, however, means the Journey leans more in turns than other crossovers. The steering is light, but predictable, and the brakes are easy to modulate.

The engines are comparable to the handling: capable but not as good as the best in the class. The base four-cylinder, Chrysler's 173-hp 2.4-liter World Engine, is loud in the Journey and delivers too little power in this 3800-pound package. The four-cylinder will certainly get you and your kids around town, but passing will require some planning and it's not rated for towing. With a 0-60 mph time of somewhere between 11 and 12 seconds, a four-cylinder Journey is one of the slower vehicles in its class.

The 3.6-liter V6 produces 283 horsepower at 6350 rpm, 260 pound-feet of torque at 4400 rpm. The V6 is plenty modern, equipped with double overhead camshafts (that's four cams) and four valves per cylinder. However, it seems hampered by transmission and throttle tuning.

Power is decent from a start, but the transmission shifts up as quickly as it can, meaning power is no longer readily on tap. It requires a deep stab of the throttle to coax a downshift and you practically have to floor it to get a two-gear downshift needed for highway passing. The problem is exacerbated by numb throttle response. We also found that with front-wheel drive, those foot-to-the-floor blasts can cause some torque steer (felt as a slight tug on the steering wheel) that temporarily disrupts fine steering control.

On the positive side, the 3.6-liter engine should provide 0-60 mph runs in the high seven-second range. Towing capacity is 2500 pounds, but a Dodge Grand Caravan minivan with the same engine can tow 3600 pounds, nearly have again as much.

Fuel economy numbers are decent. With the four-cylinder engine, the Journey is EPA-rated at 19/26 mpg City/Highway. The V6 is rated at 17/25 mpg with front-wheel drive, and with AWD it's rated 16/24 mpg.

The all-wheel-drive system is mainly meant for slippery surfaces, not off-roading. It does not have low-range gearing. It sends the power to the front wheels in most conditions, but when more traction is needed, such as in wintry conditions, rain or on any slippery surface, it can send some of the power to the rear wheels. It can also aid handling, at least a bit. When traveling over 25 mph into a turn, the system sends power to the rear wheels to help the vehicle turn. It's not as sophisticated as systems from Acura and BMW that send the power to the outside rear wheel in turns, but it's a help.

Summary, Prices, Specs

Summary

The Dodge Journey has one of the nicest interiors in the class, as well as an intelligent design with family-friendly entertainment and versatility features. Its handling is controlled and reasonably carlike. The four-cylinder engine lacks refinement, but the V6 doesn't, though it could use better transmission programming. Still, for the young family on the go, the Journey offers a pleasant ride, plenty of room, and enough space and entertainment options to keep the kids comfortable and occupied.

Kirk Bell filed this NewCarTestDrive.com report after his test drive of the Dodge Journey in and around Las Vegas and Sonoma, California. Additional material by John F. Katz.

Model Line Overview

Model lineup:

	Dodge Journey AVP (\$18,995); Journey SE (\$20,995); Journey SXT (\$22,995); SXT AWD (\$26,395); Journey Crew (\$27,995); Crew AWD (\$29,795); Journey R/T (\$28,995); R/T AWD (\$30,795)
Engines:	173-hp 2.4-liter inline-4; 283-hp 3.6-liter V6
Transmissions:	4-speed automatic; 6-speed automatic with AutoStick
Safety equipment (standard):	dual-stage frontal airbags, front side-impact airbags, curtain airbags that cover all seating rows; driver's knee airbag; tire-pressure monitor; traction control; electronic stability control with rollover mitigation, ABS with Electronic Brake-force Distribution and brake assist; trailer sway control, front-seat active head restraints
Safety equipment (optional):	rear park assist; rearview camera; all-wheel drive
Basic warranty:	4 years/50,000 miles
Assembled in:	Toluca, Mexico

Specifications As Tested

* * Model tested (MSRP):	Dodge Journey SXT AWD (\$26,395)
Standard equipment:	cloth upholstery, cruise control, air conditioning with dual-zone manual climate control, Chill Zone beverage storage bin, AM/FM/CD/MP3 stereo with six speakers, SiriusXM satellite radio, 4.3 inch touchscreen, auxiliary input jack, USB port, power windows, power heated exterior mirrors, power door locks, remote keyless entry, tilt/telescoping steering wheel with audio controls, floor mats, driver's seat height adjustment, 60/40-split-folding second-row seat, automatic-off headlights, roof rails, P225/65R17 tires on aluminum wheels
Options as tested (MSRP):	Flexible Seating Group (\$1,050) with third-row 50/50 folding/reclining seat, second-row 60/40 Tilt 'n Slide rear seat, and three-zone automatic temperature control (including the rear), cargo cover; Popular Equipment Group (\$1,095) with upgraded cloth upholstery, 6-way power driver seat with lumbar adjustment, fold-flat passenger seat with under-cushion storage bin, leather-wrapped steering wheel, universal garage door opener, illuminated visor mirrors, remote engine starting, LED map lights, overhead console, alarm, daytime running lights; Trailer Tow Group (\$145) includes engine oil cooler, four-pin connector and wiring harness
Destination charge:	\$995
Gas guzzler tax:	N/A
Price as tested (MSRP):	\$29680
Layout:	all-wheel drive
Engine:	3.6-liter dohc 24-valve V6
Horsepower (lb.-ft @ rpm):	283 @ 6350
Torque (lb.-ft @ rpm):	260 @ 4400
Transmission:	6-speed automatic with AutoStick
EPA fuel economy, city/hwy:	16/24 mpg
Wheelbase:	113.8 in.
Length/width/height:	192.4/72.2/69.5 in.
Track, f/r:	61.8/62.3 in.
Turning circle:	38.5 ft.
Seating Capacity:	7
Head/hip/leg room, f:	40.8/53.8/40.8 in.
Head/hip/leg room, m:	39.9/54.4/36.1 in.
Head/hip/leg room, r:	37.7/40.0/23.4 in.
Cargo volume:	67.6 cu. ft.
Payload:	N/A
Towing capacity:	2500 Lbs.
Suspension, f:	independent, MacPherson strut, coil springs over shock absorbers, stabilizer bar
Suspension, r:	multi-link independent with coil springs, link-type stabilizer bar, shock absorbers
Ground clearance:	7.8 in.
Curb weight:	4238 lbs.
Tires:	P225/65R17

Brakes, f/r: vented disc/disc with ABS, EBD, Brake Assist
Fuel capacity: 21.1 gal.

Unless otherwise indicated, specifications refer to test vehicle. All prices are manufacturer's suggested retail prices (MSRP) effective as of April 25, 2013. Prices do not include manufacturer's destination and delivery charges. N/A: Information not available or not applicable. Manufacturer Info Sources: 800-423-6343 - www.dodge.com