

WHATCAR?

CAR
OF THE
YEAR
2020

Safety Award

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Research



Tesla Model 3



BMW 3 Series



Skoda Scala



Mercedes-Benz CLA



VW T-Cross



Seat Tarraco



VW Golf 8



Mazda 3



Mazda CX-30



Mercedes-Benz B Class

The 10 safest cars of 2019

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Do you drive one of the safest cars of 2019?

- Thatcham Research reveals the 10 safest new drives of 2019
- “Carmakers have really raised their game this year; drivers have never been safer behind the wheel,” says Thatcham Research
- 10 safest list features cars with record breaking protection for occupants in the event of a crash and innovative crash avoidance technology
- The 10 cars form shortlist for coveted What Car? Safety Award 2020

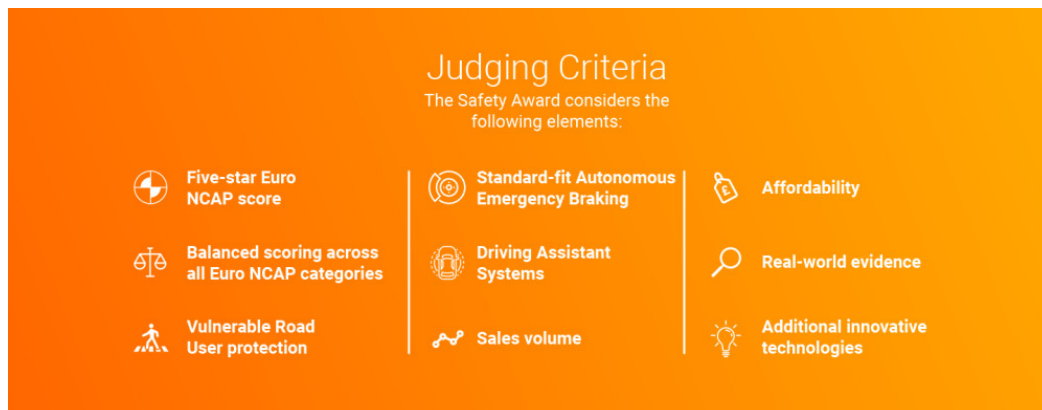
The 10 safest cars of 2019 have been revealed today by automotive research centre Thatcham Research. The list features some of the safest cars ever made, including the record-breaking Mazda CX-30 – the first car to achieve 99% in Euro NCAP’s Adult Occupant Protection tests – the

benchmark-setting Tesla Model 3 which is packed with market-leading crash avoidance technology and the Mercedes-Benz CLA which could be the brand's second Safety Award winner in consecutive years.

The 10 nominees have been selected by an expert panel made up of Thatcham Research's Matthew Avery, Euro NCAP's secretary general Michiel van Ratingen and Claire Evans, consumer editor for What Car? Magazine.

The judging criteria takes a variety of factors into account, including:

- five-star Euro NCAP rating and high overall Euro NCAP testing scores across all categories;
- potential sales and affordability – to promote cars bringing safety to the masses and making a big overall impact on road safety;
- standard-fit crash avoidance technology – from Autonomous Emergency Braking systems that can not only detect other vehicles but also pedestrians and cyclists, to intuitive Electronic Lane Keeping systems to prevent drivers from colliding with oncoming vehicles;
- and Driving Assistant Systems such as Adaptive Cruise Control and Lane Support Systems that combine to reduce fatigue for motorway drivers



Matthew Avery, director of research, Thatcham Research said, "Carmakers have really raised their game this year; drivers have never been safer behind the wheel. Should the worst happen, motorists are incredibly well protected. But crucially, these cars have an abundance of standard-fit safety systems designed to prevent crashes. These innovative technologies are watching the road when you aren't and the continued progression in their performance is genuinely exciting for road safety."

"Congratulations to the brands behind these cars, for delivering mainstream safety and giving such high priority to the well-being of their drivers."

The ten safest drives of 2019

In alphabetical order, these are the 10 safest cars of 2019 according to the expert panel, with insights from Avery:

- BMW 3 Series: “It’s overall 97% rating in the Adult Occupant Protection category is one of the highest of the year. Scored 100% in the pole crash which is the most invasive test we have. Strong sales, especially as a fashionable fleet choice, mean this car with its suite of standard-fit crash avoidance technologies, will be a common sight on UK roads. Popular with reviewers, the BMW 3 Series shows that safe cars can be fun to drive too.”
- Mazda 3: “A really good performer in so many areas. Class-leading safety protection in impacts and some great active safety features, including innovative Driver Monitoring technology which isn’t included in the current Euro NCAP rating, but will be in the future.”
- Mazda CX-30: “It’s 99% rating in the Adult Occupant Protection category – maxing out in the Full Frontal, Side impact, Pole crash and AEB City tests – was the highest ever seen in Euro NCAP testing. Class leading active and passive safety, offered in a fashionable crossover package.”
- Mercedes-Benz B-Class: “The first of two Mercedes-Benz cars to feature in the top 10. Typical of the brand’s attention to safety detail, reinforcing its reputation of offering safety as standard across its model range. A great choice for small families.”
- Mercedes-Benz CLA: “Its 90% average score across all Euro NCAP categories is the best of 2019. A close relative to last year’s What Car? Safety Award winner the Mercedes-Benz A-Class, the CLA continues the family tradition of class-leading safety. From a pop-up bonnet to protect pedestrians and cyclists in the event of a collision, to one of the best intelligent Speed Assistance Systems tested, this car is a very safe bet.”
- Seat Tarraco: “Another Volkswagen group SUV, this time in the large segment. Offers safety at a reasonable price point. Good performance for its driver assistance technologies, with strong AEB and Lane Support System scores. If you’re in the market for a big SUV, this car is one of the safest you can buy.”
- Škoda Scala: “Maximum safety, on a minimal budget. The Škoda Scala shows strong performance across the board – rating highly on passive and active safety protection. One of the safest small cars available in 2019.”
- Tesla Model 3: “Achieved the highest overall score in Euro NCAP’s Safety Assist category – and by some distance. It scored maximum points in our Lane Support System tests too, showing that a well-designed system can protect motorists without hindering the driving experience.”
- Volkswagen Golf 8: “The top selling Volkswagen Golf 8 comes with an admirable number of standard-fit safety technologies, including AEB and a Lane Support System and also some great driving assistant systems including Electronic Lane Keeping.”
- Volkswagen T-Cross: “The small crossover segment is one of the most popular and is growing fast. The usual high-performance

expected of new Volkswagen cars in impact testing, but also great active safety technology fitted as standard, including a Lane Support System which not only helps to prevent drivers from inadvertently drifting out of lane, but will also intervene in more critical situations.”

Judges' comments

“All the cars in this year's shortlist gain four or five stars in What Car?'s road tests and it's great to see that they're also the top performers in terms of safety. The majority of this year's contenders are also affordable to buy, and that means whichever you choose you can be reassured you're getting one of the safest new cars without breaking the bank,” said Claire Evans, consumer editor What Car? Magazine.

The eventual winner and two runners up will be selected from the top 10 list by the judges and revealed at the What Car? Car of the Year Awards 2020 on January 14.

<https://www.thatcham.org/what-we-do/what-car-awards-2020>

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Thatcham Research is the independent voice of automotive safety, security & repair, advising motorists, insurers and vehicle manufacturers to help reduce accident frequency, severity and costs and to realise the vision of 'Safer cars, fewer crashes', while driving standards in vehicle security.

As well as its world leading crash and track research, Thatcham Research develops repair methods amongst a number of other products and services within the collision repair industry for insurers, motor manufacturers, equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

In addition, Thatcham Research has administered the Association of British Insurer's (ABI) Group Rating system for the past 50 years. Group Rating is an advisory system intended to provide insurers with the relative risk of private cars and light commercial vehicles.

A founder member of the international Research Council for Automobile Repairs (RCAR), Thatcham Research has also been a member of the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP) since 2004.

Contacts



James Smith

Press Contact

Head Of Communications

james.smith@thatcham.org

01635 293101

07990 706146



Tom Flisher

Press Contact

PR Manager

tom.flisher@thatcham.org

01635868855

07876 755615