

### HONDA CR-V SE SPORT



Sweet engine, excellent refinement and an airy, comfortable cabin aren't enough to give this sleek family estate off-road credibility. Nor is it off-road agile, in spite of its effective auto-engaging four-wheel-drive system. Mediocre ground clearance, a lack of axle articulation and a revvy engine that lacks low-down torque leaves it struggling in conditions that many of its rivals would take in their stride, though it's good enough for an occasional foray into a woodland car park for a spell of mountain biking. The Honda's more at home on the tarmac, where the engine delights with its smooth power delivery and the gearbox with its light and accurate shift. Good equipment, especially in the SE Sport, makes the CR-V look good value against the Freelander, but it doesn't excite.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

Price:	£17,995
Engine cc/bhp:	1998/148
Transmission:	5-speed manual, auto-engaging 4WD

#### RATINGS (0-10)

Comfort:	7
Refinement:	8
Off-road:	3
Value:	7
Style:	5
TOTAL:	30

**WE LIKED:**  
Great Honda engine  
**WE DISLIKED:**  
Minimal off-road ability

### SUBARU FORESTER X AWD



Lusty engine, taut handling, good four-wheel-drive system, spacious and well-equipped interior – pity about the styling. Subaru made its name with a stunning 4WD presence in the World Rally Championship, for some reason decided that enthusiasts must be boring old folk who like nothing more than a dull and conservative-looking estate. Hence the Forester, a dynamic, supple, nimble and exciting car to drive – especially in range-topping turbocharged form – looks no more enticing than an average road-going family car. Yet four-wheel drive is permanent, with a viscous coupling locking the centre diff if wheelspin threatens, with further control provided by a limited slip rear diff. The non-turbo versions even have low range gearing.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

Price:	£18,245
Engine cc/bhp:	1994/156
Transmission:	5-speed manual, permanent 4WD

#### RATINGS (0-10)

Comfort:	5
Refinement:	6
Off-road:	6
Value:	6
Style:	4
TOTAL:	27

**WE LIKED:**  
On and off-road ability balanced  
**WE DISLIKED:**  
For Eastern styling

### LAND ROVER FREELANDER TD4 ES AUTO 5-DR



The most desirable Freelander, with its cosy, leather-upholstered five-seater cabin and refined and economical turbodiesel engine, good enough to give the Cherokee a good run for its money. Though the rear of the estate is ungainly the Freelander exudes the right image of exciting off-road potential, and it lives up to the promise to a surprising degree thanks to good, even torque delivery and electronic traction controls including the clever Hill Descent Control. The automatic transmission is a bonus, the tiptronic working particularly well with the low-revving turbodiesel, while off road its torque-multiplication effect virtually eliminates stalling in difficult situations. The Freelander isn't cheap, but the cost is reflected in high-tech driving aids and good equipment.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

Price:	£23,490
Engine cc/bhp:	1991/110
Transmission:	5-speed automatic, auto-engaging 4WD

#### RATINGS (0-10)

Comfort:	7
Refinement:	7
Off-road:	5
Value:	7
Style:	9
TOTAL:	35

**WE LIKED:**  
Image, high-tech driving aids  
**WE DISLIKED:**  
Lack of low range