

Honda Jazz e-Hybrid – Road Test

Published: September 25, 2023

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Online version: <https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/honda-jazz-e-hybrid-road-test/>



The latest Honda Jazz e-Hybrid Advance Sport test driven by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

A lot of airtime and column centimetres/inches have been taken up with the new Wales' default 20 mph urban limit, but I'll let you into a little secret, you can do 100 in a Honda Jazz Advance Sport, and it's perfectly legal.

The fact is I am not talking about the sporty Jazz's speed, rather its ability to return 102 mpg: yes over a ton. Even on a busy day you'll probably exceed 60 mpg as we did from this



incredible Tardis of the tarmac.

Put simply, it packs more than you can imagine into a body just over 4 metres (about 13 feet) long but it somehow manages to give the comfortable feel of a mid-sized SUV/hatchback and it covers distances with disdain of effort.



First introduced 41 years ago, the compact Jazz City model has gone through several body styles and really took off in the early years of this century when it became the secret crush for young enthusiasts in its home country of Japan. Helped by a willing performance tuning market there, the Jazz literally lived up to its name with some remarkable enhancements



and conversions, becoming music to the ears of enthusiasts.

But it was a different story this side of the English Channel and the sober-suited British buyers took to it with their pension books as it became an older person's pleasure.

Time moves on and the market is changing again, and so is Honda which actually introduced 3-Hybrid powertrains in the Jazz in 2020. Today's Jazz was carefully tweaked this spring and the Advance Sport introduced a sharper, dynamic edge to its performance.

The engine and handling refinements have given it more power plus better responses, and a package of equipment upgrades for safety and sophistication match it to the latest features found in mobile phones.

At a stroke, Honda has significantly widened the appeal of the Jazz to a motoring public which is seriously looking at value for money, economy and do not want or have the ability to use plug-in electric cars to get around.

The new Jazz Advance Sport comes with a new grille design and tailgate spoiler, black door mirror housings and exclusive larger alloy wheels and lower profile Yokohama tyres.

It tops the range comprising Elegance, Advance, and Advance Sport from £25,900, £27,010 and £28,145 respectively.

In addition there is the SUV styled Crosstar version that has a slightly lower trim than the Advance Sport and costs £28,010 but most of the other features from the Advance.

For the first time, Honda has added the option of a towbar capable of pulling a 500 kg (1,102 lb) trailer, sufficient for camping, trail bikes or a dinghy etc..

The well proven 1.5 litre four-cylinder petrol engine is backed up by two electric motors to assist with power delivery in the greenest manner and this really explains why you get over 100 mpg on some journeys. Most of the time its highly sophisticated software is keeping the



car going on electric power with minimum petrol assistance but coming in as required and at the other end of the torque table the electric motors boost acceleration when the petrol engine requires it, for instance when overtaking.



The power delivery is almost instant and always extremely smooth, with some rising noise as it all comes together and this is filtered back through the in-car speakers.

In the CVT transmission the pulling away is very linear and silent as it builds up after some initial jerkiness upon selection.



It's not a sporty model in the manner of some rivals but it has a respectable getaway and is relaxed at the motorway maximum which is some 30 mph below its engineered top speed.

The steering feedback is also very good, the turning circle tight and it did not suffer from any twitchiness or kickback. Meanwhile the brakes underfoot had good progression and power to slow it smoothly and quickly, and the parking brake securely held on a regular test slope.

Secondary switches, and there are a lot of them, grouped on the wheel-spokes, fascia and console, needed familiarisation but worked well to touch as did the nine-inch infotainment screen, but some may find that display a bit small when so much detail is contained.

The driver has a seven-inch instruments display which subtly changes with the selected modes and can be programmed to show different functions, and it was always quick to revise and very clear to read.

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Big wipers both ends, strong washers and bright long range intelligent headlights were excellent.

Heating and ventilation was straightforward, simple and had good output, direction and variation, and you have four powered windows. It also comes with heated front seats but not a powered driver's seat.

I liked the amount of oddments space but all the compartments were on the small side and the small boot with its low floor would be good for shopping bags but little else.

Capacity could be quickly increased with the flip down backrests offset to suit loading needs and I really liked the multi-folding Magic back seats to maximise space for bigger loads which could be gingerly wiggled through the fifth door.



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The passenger doors open wide but their apertures are not particularly big so you have to duck your head to get in, which is fine if you first sit on the seats and pivot.

Seating was very well upholstered, sensibly shaped and had good cushions and squabs to hold occupants, even if a tight squeeze for three in the rear.

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The Jazz driver has a wealth of features at their disposal to assist them including intelligent cruise control, proximity alerts, lane assist and departure warnings, with ten airbags in the cabin.

On the move the Jazz Advance Sport has a button which can alter the engine's performance and response and the 2023 revisions gave the car more power as well as made the suspension tauter on its low profile tyres. It handles far better than many compact people carriers and is actually delightful to drive to its limits, although these are modest.

Noise levels, self-induced in some situations, are present but not excessive and the background road rumbles are joined by a busier engine note under acceleration, but there is little wind noise generated thanks to the teardrop profile which eases air around the car.

VERDICT

The Jazz Advance Sport does ride and handle well but for many it really adds up to a lot of car in a small package with low running costs, however you measure it.

For: Excellent economy, very comfortable seats, easy to drive and park, clear visibility, agile, three driving modes.

Against: Very small boot with the rear seats in use, not a lot of shoulder room in the rear seats, noisy under acceleration and modest performance.



FAST FACTS

Model: Honda Jazz e-Hybrid Advance Sport 5-door hatchback

Price: £28,145



Mechanical: 120 bhp, 4 cyl 1.5 litre petrol e-Hybrid,
CVT front wheel drive,

Max Speed: 108 mph

0 - 62 mph: 9.6 secs

Combined MPG: 62 on test

Insurance Group: 22

CO2 emissions: 105 g/km

Tax costs: BiK rating 26%, VED £175FY, £170SR

Warranty: 3 years/90,000 miles

Size: L 4.09 m (13.42 ft), W 1.97 m (6.46 ft), H 1.53 m (5.02 ft)

Bootpace: 304 - 1,205 litres (10.74 to 42.55 cu.ft)



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Kerbweight: 1,244 kg (2,743 lb)