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# **ANNOUNCING THE CAR BOOK BEST BETS FOR 2017**

# 37<sup>th</sup> Edition: Jack Gillis and The Center for Auto Safety Reveal Best and Worst Among 2017 Vehicles

Washington, DC – Jack Gillis's *THE CAR BOOK 2017*, published in cooperation with the Center for Auto Safety, the nation's leading automotive safety advocacy organization, identifies this year's automotive Best Bets. For 37 years, Gillis, a noted consumer advocate and auto safety expert, and the Center for Auto Safety have compiled the information consumers need to purchase a safe and reliable vehicle. This 37<sup>th</sup> edition of America's foremost car buying guide contains this year's "Car Book Best Bets" for 2017—totally unbiased and advertising free.

#### JACK GILLIS'S CAR BOOK BEST BETS FOR 2017

#### FROM THE CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

#### **SUBCOMPACT**

Chevrolet Sonic (9) Kia Soul (8)

#### COMPACT

Buick Verano (10) Audi A3 (7) BMW 3 Series (7) Toyota Prius (7) Volkswagen Jetta (7)

#### INTERMEDIATE

Hyundai Sonata (10) Acura TLX (9) Honda Accord (9) Chrysler 200 (9) Mazda Mazda6 (8) Toyota Camry (8) Toyota Avalon (7)

#### LARGE

Tesla Model S (10) Cadillac XTS (9) MINIVAN

Honda Odyssey (8)

#### SMALL SUV

Acura RDX (9) Buick Encore (10) Chevrolet Trax (8) Kia Sportage (8) Ford Escape (7)

#### **MID-SIZE SUV**

Acura MDX (8) Ford Edge (8) Honda Pilot (8) Subaru Outback (7) Hyundai Santa Fe Sport (7)

LARGE SUV

Toyota Highlander (7)

**STANDARD PICKUP** Ford F-150 (8)

Note on *Car Book* Ratings: The number beside the vehicle reflects the overall *Car Book* 1-10 comparative ratings (10 being the best). The overall rating includes: crash safety, fuel economy, repair and maintenance costs, warranties, insurance costs, rollover, safety features and complaint history. Because safety is a key element in the Gillis ratings, vehicles that do not have government crash test ratings are not given an overall rating.



**ROLLOVER** 

# **Combining Front and Side Crash Test Results for an Overall Rating**

37 years ago *THE CAR BOOK* was the first publication to provide consumers with access to crash test ratings. *THE CAR BOOK's* Crash Test Ratings are based on the government's crash test results and compared on a <u>relative</u> basis. This enables consumers to separate the top performers from those at the bottom. The front crash 1-10 rating is relative to all other 2017 vehicles with evaluated results. The side crash 1-10 rating relatively compares cars and SUVs separately. The top 10% receive a 10 and the bottom 10% receive a 1. Because not all 2017 vehicles have undergone the test, *THE CAR BOOK*, (and the government) present the previous year's test results when the vehicle hasn't changed. The ratings are based on 2017 crash test results published as of December 2016. In addition, *Car Book* author Jack Gillis has <u>combined</u> the results of the government's front and side tests into an Overall Crash Test Rating that enables consumers to easily compare a vehicle's total crash test performance. The Overall Crash Test Rating weighs the front test by 60% and the side test by 40% which approximates typical accident types.

Here are the best and the worst 2017 cars and trucks by size class.<sup>1</sup> See *THE CAR BOOK* for the entire list.

#### Car Book Overall 2017 Crash Test Ratings - Best and Worst

#### THE BEST CARS THE BEST TRUCKS **SUBCOMPACT** INTERMEDIATE MINIVAN LARGE SUV Chevrolet Sonic - 9 Chrysler Pacifica - 8 Acura TLX – 10 Ford Expedition – 10 Honda Fit – 9 Honda Odyssey - 8 Lincoln Navigator – 10 Subaru Legacy - 10 Kia Soul – 9 Hyundai Sonata - 9 Buick Enclave – 9 Honda Accord – 9 SMALL SUV Chevrolet Tahoe - 9 Acura RDX – 10 COMPACT Chevrolet Traverse - 9 LARGE GMC Yukon – 9 Buick Encore - 9 Buick Verano – 10 Cadillac XTS – 10 Chevrolet Trax - 9 Toyota Highlander – 9 Dodge Fart - 9 Tesla Model S - 10 Ford Focus – 9 Dodge Challenger - 8 MID-SIZE SUV Cadillac ATS – 8 **STANDARD TRUCK** Ford Edge -10 Ford F-150 - 10 Subaru Outback - 10 Chevrolet Silverado - 8 Acura MDX – 9 GMC Sierra - 8 Honda Pilot - 9 THE WORST CARS THE WORST TRUCKS **SUBCOMPACT INTERMEDIATE** SMALL SUV **MID-SIZE SUV** Nissan Versa – 1 Ford Fusion – 3 Jeep Compass – 1 Mazda CX-9 – 1 Fiat 500 – 1 Lincoln MKZ - 3 Jeep Patriot – 1 Nissan Rogue - 1 Chevrolet Spark – 2 Nissan Juke – 1 Chevrolet Equinox - 2 Kia Rio – 2 LARGE Volkswagen Tiguan – 1 Dodge Journey - 2 Chrysler 300 - 2 GMC Terrain – 2 Mitsubishi Mirage – 2 LARGE SUV COMPACT LARGE TRUCK Nissan Leaf – 1 Toyota 4Runner – 1 Toyota Tacoma – 1 Mitsubishi Lancer - 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It's best to compare cars within the same size classes. A subcompact rated "Best" may not be as safe as a large car with the same rating. Because we separated the side tests results its best not to directly compare the overall crash rating for cars with SUVs.



*THE CAR BOOK'S* Rollover Rating, like the Crash Test rating allows for a relative comparison of government data. For those cars which were not rated by the government, an independent calculation based on the government's formula was done. Electronic stability control has dramatically reduced the incidences of rollover by preventing a vehicle from getting into a position where it could rollover. Once a vehicle is in a rollover position the vehicles center of gravity plays an important factor in rollover properties.

#### Least Likely to Roll Over

Tesla Model S Chevrolet Corvette Mazda MX-5 Nissan 370Z Toyota 86 Chevrolet Camaro Ford Mustang Tesla Model X Audi A5 BMW 4 Series Audi A6

#### Most Likely to Roll Over

Toyota 4Runner Cadillac Escalade/ Chevrolet Tahoe/GMC Yukon Ram 1500 Jeep Patriot Jeep Wrangler Nissan Armada Chevrolet Colorado/GMC Canyon Cadillac Escalade ESV/ Chevrolet Suburban/GMC Yukon XL Jeep Grand Cherokee

## **WARRANTIES**

*THE CAR BOOK* lists the Manufacturers with the best and worst warranties. This rating is calculated using the durations of basic, powertrain, and corrosion warranties and roadside assistance programs, as well as in various exceptions and additions for warranty plans.

#### <u>Best</u>

- Hyundai: Basic 60/60; Powertrain 120/100; Corrosion 84/Unlimited; Roadside 60/Unlimited; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0
- Genesis: Basic 60/60; Powertrain 120/100; Corrosion 84/Unlimited; Roadside 60/Unlimited; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0
- Mitsubishi: Basic 60/60; Powertrain 120/100; Corrosion 84/100; Roadside 60/Unlimited; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0

#### <u>Worst</u>

- Nissan: Basic 36/36; Powertrain 60/60; Corrosion 60/75; Roadside 0/0; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0
- Mazda: Basic 36/36; Powertrain 60/60; Corrosion 60/75; Roadside 36/36; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0
- Honda: Basic 36/36; Powertrain 60/60; Corrosion 60/Unlimited; Roadside 36/ 36; Scheduled Maintenance (Free) 0/0



## AUTO COMPLAINTS

*THE CAR BOOK* continues to provide the car buyer's *easiest* access to hundreds of thousands of auto complaints compiled since 1976 by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Information on auto complaints was withheld from the public until the Center for Auto Safety filed a Freedom of Information Act request. *THE CAR BOOK* presents this complaint information in an easy-to-use index which factors the number of complaints received against sales. Here are the year's most and least complained about automobiles:

#### Most Complained About\*

Hyundai Tucson – >20,000 Tesla Model S ->20,000 Volvo XC90 – 18,510 Chrysler 200 – 17,737 Infiniti QX50 – 15,125 Jeep Cherokee – 15,035 Dodge Journey – 11,302 Smart ForTwo – 10,945 Jeep Grand Cherokee – 10,774 Ford Focus – 10,063 Ford Fiesta – 9,959 Jeep Wrangler – 9,449 Acura TLX – 9,345 Volvo V60 – 9,053 Dodge Dart – 8,913 Jeep Renegade – 8,574 Fiat 500 – 8,501

## Least Complained About\*

Audi Q7 – 636 Mercedes-Benz GL-Class - 675 Toyota Prius C – 719 Infiniti Q50 – 801 Chevrolet Malibu – 804 Lexus GS – 819 Toyota Yaris – 892 Mini Countryman – 977 Subaru Crosstrek – 1005 BMW X5 - 1016 Toyota Corolla – 1026 Lexus NX – 1029 Audi Q3 – 1112 Toyota Highlander – 1122 Mercedes-Benz GLE-Class - 1190 Lexus IS - 1210 Mazda Mazda3 - 1231

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** The numbers represent relative index scores, <u>not</u> the number of complaints received. The complaint index score considers sales volume and years on the road. Lower index numbers are better. We capped the complaint index at 20,000 for excessively high complaint indices.



## **MAINTENANCE**

*THE CAR BOOK* lists vehicles with the best and worst preventative maintenance costs and repair costs. For example, the Jeep Cherokee ranked as the least expensive in preventive maintenance for the first 60,000 miles, and the Nissan Titan ranked among the most. *THE CAR BOOK* tells you that replacing a fuel injector will cost about \$230 on the Chevrolet Cruze, but will cost around \$640 on the Lexus IS—about three times as much! Gillis provides these types of comparisons for nearly all of the 2017 models

## **PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE**

Least Expensive Jeep Cherokee Jeep Wrangler Honda Civic Dodge Journey Jeep Compass Jeep Patriot Honda Fit Toyota Yaris

#### Most Expensive

Nissan Titan Range Rover Sport Lexus NX Mercedes-Benz C-Class Chevrolet Silverado Chevrolet Colorado Chevrolet Tahoe Chevrolet Suburban

## **REPAIR COSTS**

High Costs: Over \$6,750 for 9 Typical Repairs Audi Q7 Mercedes-Benz S-Class BMW 7 Series Porsche Macan Lexus RC Lexus RX Lexus IS BMW X5 Chevrolet Corvette Toyota Highlander BMW X6 Lexus GS

Mercedes-Benz E-Class

Infiniti QX60

Infiniti OX50

Lexus NX

#### <u>Low Costs</u>: Less than \$3,150 for 9 Typical Repairs

Mercedes-Benz B-Class Nissan Leaf BMW i3 Hvundai Azera Hyundai Accent **Jeep Patriot** Kia Optima Kia Forte Jeep Renegade Ford C-MAX Ford Fusion Energi Ram 1500 Hvundai Elantra Kia Rio Ford Fusion Kia Cadenza



## **FUEL Economy**

In spite of currently low gas prices, consumer surveys show that fuel efficiency is still a priority. One reason, is because most consumers believe the cost of gas will go up during the time they own their new car. Here's how the best and worst stack up for 2017. Note: we've removed exotic cars and large commercial vans in developing this list.

#### Least Efficient: Under 17 MPG

Lexus LX 570 Lexus GX 460 Dodge Challenger SRT8 **Chevrolet Camaro Dodge Charger SRT** Mustang GT350 Infiniti QX80 Toyota Tundra Toyota Sequoia Nissan Armada Toyota Land Cruiser Ram 1500 GMC Canyon Chevrolet Colorado Ford F150 Mercedes-Benz S 600 Lincoln Navigator L Ford Expedition EL Chevrolet Corvette

## Most Efficient: 40 MPG or More

BMW i3 Chevrolet Bolt Fiat 500e Nissan Leaf Kia Soul Electric Tesla Model S Tesla Model X Toyota Prius eco **Toyota** Prius Honda Accord Chevrolet Malibu **Chevrolet Volt** Ford Fusion Energi PHEV Kia Optima Hybrid Ford Fusion Hybrid Hyundai Sonata Hybrid Lexus CT Tovota Prius V **Toyota Camry** Lincoln MKZ Hybrid Lexus ES Toyota Avalon Hybrid Mitsubishi Mirage



## **SAFETY FEATURES**

Safety features have never been more important to consumers. As a result all of the car companies are promoting the safety of their cars – but which ones really have the most safety features? *THE CAR BOOK* assigns each car a safety index based on the number of safety and crash avoidance features that it offers. Each safety feature is weighted according to its potential safety benefit. For example collision avoidance braking gets more weight than day-time running lights, but both are included in the ratings.

#### Fewest Safety Features

Jeep Wrangler Nissan Leaf Kia Rio Mazda MX-5 Chevrolet Corvette Volkswagen Beetle Nissan 370Z Nissan Versa Fiat 500 Smart ForTwo Dodge Dart Mitsubishi Mirage Nissan Quest

#### Most Safety Features

Mercedes-Benz GLC-Class Mercedes-Benz S-Class Volvo XC90 Toyota Avalon Mercedes-Benz E-Class Genesis G80 Mercedes-Benz GLE-Class Mercedes-Benz CLA-Class BMW 7 Series Acura MDX Toyota Camry Lexus IS Lexus GS



# **ADVANCED SAFETY FEATURES**

*THE CAR BOOK* provides information on the newest safety features available, such as the crash avoidance systems Crash Imminent Braking (CIB) and Dynamic Brake Support (DBS). CIB uses radar or laser sensors to alert the driver and actively intervene to apply the brakes prior to a crash. DBS increases your braking force if the sensors determine that you are not applying enough force to stop in time. All vehicles with CIB and DBS have an underlying warning system, which warns drivers before activating the crash avoidance systems. The government has a little-known program to identify which of these warning systems (Forward Collision Warning, Lane Departure Warning, and backup cameras) voluntarily meet their standards and *The Car Book*, reveals which ones do. Following are the only CIB and DBS systems which have the Forward Collision Warning underlying the systems that meet the NHTSA criteria and come standard with the vehicle.

Blind Spot Detection uses radar or other technologies to detect objects in the driver's blind spots. When switching lanes a visible, audible, or vibrating alert warns if a vehicle has entered your blind spot.

#### **STANDARD CIB AND DBS**

Acura MDX Genesis G80 Mercedes-Benz B-Class Mercedes-Benz C-Class Mercedes-Benz CLA-Class Mercedes-Benz GLA-Class Mercedes-Benz GLC-Class Mercedes-Benz GLC-Class Mercedes-Benz S-Class Tesla Model S Tesla Model X

#### **STANDARD BLIND SPOT DETECTION**

Ford C-MAX Genesis G80 Hyundai Azera Kia Cadenza Lexus RC Lexus RX Tesla Model S Tesla Model X Volvo XC90

## **HISTORY OF THE CAR BOOK**

In both the 1980 government publication and the 1981 *Car Book* that was published in cooperation with the Center for Auto Safety, Jack Gillis was the first to compile complex safety and performance data on new model cars. *THE CAR BOOK* gave consumers access to information they were previously denied. *THE CAR BOOK* translated complicated data, such as crash test scores, into a simple index. Since Gillis began providing consumers with access to this information, the auto industry has been forced to respond: Cars have become safer, warranties have improved, the government has adopted a simpler system for its crash ratings, and dealer practices are (slowly) getting better.

## To arrange interviews or receive review copies, contact: Richard Eckman in Washington, DC at (202) 737-0766 or ricky@jagillis.com



*THE CAR BOOK* is available through the Center for Auto Safety at <u>www.autosafety.org</u> or by sending \$29.00 (includes postage and handling) to 1000 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 1010, Washington, DC 20005. Sales benefit the non-profit Center for Auto Safety, an independent consumer group founded in 1970 to improve vehicle/highway safety and quality. Book sellers contact Baker and Taylor.