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King Kia

Why the all-new Kia Sportage is Australia's best new car **PAGE 3**





DRIVE CAR OF THE YEAR 2022

There's only one way to find Australia's best cars

Glenn Butler

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Our goal is simple: Help you buy smarter when you're shopping for a new car. Unlike other motoring awards, we don't just recognise one trend-setting car that, while it might give us a tantalising glimpse of future trends, isn't right for 99 per cent of Australians today.

Instead, we divide the 500-strong new car market into 20 distinct categories - prestige SUVs, small cars, dual-cabs sports coupes, and the like. Then we gather the best vehicles in each category for three weeks of intense real-world testing by Australia's most experienced judging panel. 2022 marks the 16th annual

Drive Car of the Year awards. making this one of Australia's longest-running consumer automotive awards. This year's program has evolved

to reflect changing buyer tastes and new market trends. In addition to 15 carryover categories like Best Small Car, Best Medium SUV and Best Large SUV, there are five new categories tailored to meet the expanding breadth of consumer expectations.

Best Large Off-Road SUV and Best Off-Road Dual-Cab Ute give attention to vehicles designed with greater off-road skills compared to other vehicles in their respective sales categories. The Nissan Navara Warrior and Ford Ranger

First Car, uses real-world evaluation and extensive data

Sports Coupe



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Kia Sportage takes out top prize

cargo bay.

mpress

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A Kia SUV has beaten an allelectric Hyundai and a hybrid Toyota family SUV to win Australia's most coveted new car accolade, the Drive Car of the Year Overall award. This is the second year in a row

that Kia has taken our top prize, and stands as testament to the incredible leaps in quality, design, driving engagement and value that Kla's new-generation vehicles are making

The Kia Sportage resets the benchmarks for safety, technology, refinement and affordability in Australia's biggestselling market segment: Medium SUVs

It not only beat the incumbent Best Medium SUV winner, the Toyota RAV4, to take this year's category prize but it beat the deeply impressive Porsche Taycan electric sports car and the reliable practical and affordable Toyota

The winners

Meet the

judges

UVs and Dual Cabs	
lest Light SUV	
lest Small SUV	Skoda Kamig
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Kluger seven-seat family SUV to claim our peak accolade: Drive Car of the Year Overall winner.

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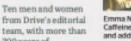
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The Kia Sportage also has a new centre front airbag which prevents front seat occupants' heads from clashing in a crash. This feature is already familiar to some luxury car

Passenger cars

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Electric Cars Best EV under \$100k Best EV over \$100K.



200 years of automotive industry experience between them, put every car under the microscop to find out which ones deserve recognition as the best in their class



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The cabin is a very classy affair, and technology integration and effectiveness is markedly better than previous years. The Sportage is best-in-class in terms of visual eness and case of use Sure, the \$55,000 GT-Line has the most equipment, but even the Sportage S is generously equipped. It boasts a touchscreen entertainment system, wireless smartphone connectivity, LED headlights and taillights, alloy wheels and a full-size spare. Judges tested all three of the Sportage range's mechanical

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On the road, the Sportage is a treat to drive. Variants with smaller wheel and tyre packages ride the most comfortable, but even the GT-Line diesel delivers a relatively cosseting ride while adding a touch of sportiness in the suspension tune.

The Sportage's steering is light and well-weighted to balance higher-speed feedback with lowspeed manoeuvring.

Much is made these days of hybrid powertrains and their fue efficiency. The Sportage does not offer a hybrid option yet, but it doesn't need to. Its petrol and diesel engines are surprisingly efficient

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THE FINALISTS



Toyota Kluger

What we like

- Refinement, comfort and space
- · Quality driving experience Strong equipment levels across the range

What we don't

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- Step up to Hybrid is expensive Doesn't match Kia's seven-year warranty

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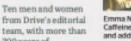
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the Best Small Luxury SUV class.

Isuzu's tough and reliable D-Max won the Best Dual Cab Ute award for

a second time, but this year it shares

the award with the Mazda BT-50. Both vehicles were co-developed by Isuzu and Mazda, but pricing

increases this year to the D-Max

the two.

made it impossible for judges to split

Other first-time winners include

the Hyundai i30 N DCT hot hatch,

which saw off a spirited challenge

from its smaller brother, the i20 N

and the property rapid and refined

Volkswagen Golf GTL

DRIVE CAR OF THE YEAR 2022

The shine

The Winners' Circle

Winning isn't easy but it is glorious, as our 20 victorious vehicles discovered, writes Glenn Butler.

From Ferraris to Fords, Havals to Hondas, Drive Car of the Year evaluates without fear or favour and with just one goal in mind: finding the best new cars to suit all Australian requirements and hudgets. Whether it's premium SUVs or

practical people movers, ecofriendly electric vehicles or scintillating sports cars, we put every car through the same exhaustive and exacting test regime designed to highlight all strengths and weaknesses.

The outcomes of Australia's toughest testing regime are dations you can trust and winners that should be proud to call themselves Drive's Cars of the Year. Winning one award is an amazing

ment. Winning four awards is incredible, as Ford did this Ford's Mustang V8 led the way,

snaring Best Sports Car, while the doughty and dependable Ford Everest won the Best Large Off-road SUV award in its inaugural year. The diminutive but still

impressive Ford Puma won Best Light SUV and at the other end of the

Ford's evergreen Everest was the

surprise over a week of testing that

encompassed plenty of highway running, back-road touring and off-

Off-road, the Everest proved

unflustered and capable no matter

the challenges thrown at it. While

others were arguably a smidgeon

more capable off the beaten track,

the Everest's blend of decent off-

road chops and excellent on-road

manners tipped it in the judges'

As one judge said: "It feels like it is

Ranger sibling, remaining

The Everest's gutsy 2.0-litre twin-

Rob Margeit

road crawling.

behind the wheel.

BEST LARGE OFF-ROAD SUV

Everest at the peak of

scale, the ruggedly rapid Ford Ranger Raptor won best Off-road Dual-Cab Ute. Kia won our most prestigious award, the Drive Car of the Year Overall winner, for the second year in a row with the benchmark-setting

The Sportage is not only a massive

Head online for a full rundown on each category plus videos of the finalists being put through their paces. DRIVE.COM.AU

Kia Sportage SUV.

step forward on its predecessor, it leapfrogged its Medium SUV competition with class-leading safety and refinement, and a classy cabin that puts some luxury SUVs to

Kia's extremely practical Carnival won Best People Mover for the third ear running, a feat equalled by the BMW 3 Series in the Best Medium Luxury Sedan category. The Skoda Kamiq backed up its 2021 win in the Best Small SUV

category, as did the Volvo XC40 in

 Well-designed interior Hefty 3500kg towing capacity

 Not as accomplished on the road as it is off · Engine not as refined as some in the class

Off-road, the Isuzu MU-X is capable and willing to tackle rougher terrain with poise and purpose. Despite giving away power and torque to its rivals, the MU-X has enough hauling a caravan or trailer, its 3500kg towing capacity besting the field by 400kg. But when it came to all-round



BEST HOT HATCH Hyundai i30 N hits the right (exhaust) note

Joshua Dowling

drive.com.au

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1- Anna

While this may seem a surprising outcome given the arrival of the latest Volkswagen Golf GTI - a previous winner - and the highly regarded Hyundai i20 N, the updated Hyundai i30 N snuck up on us and its competitors.

The latest update brought new steering and suspension, more power, sticky Pirelli tyres and, crucially, a new fast-acting eightspeed twin-clutch auto that transforms the car's breadth of ability compared to earlier manual only versions.

Seven out of eight judges voted in favour of the Hyundai i30 N DCT. It delivers next-level performance on and off the track, and yet is liveable in the daily grind.

In many regards, the Hyundai i30 N sits neatly between stripped-out hardcore hot hatches and the ess and refinement of the VW



the right boxes for most judges. The Hyundai i30 N was also the fastest hot hatch in this contest, stopping the clocks in a 0 to 100km/h test on our VBox timing equipment in 5.5 seconds (versus 6.1 to 6.3 seconds for the Golf GTI, and 6.6 seconds for

the i20 N). The Hyundai i30 N has true racetrack capability when you need it, but is not a chore to live with dayto-day. The exhaust note, while no

through a freeway tunnel. While the original Hyundai i30 N was close to the mark for many, the updated version has gone to finishing chool, giving it a breadth of capability

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turbo diesel proved more than adequate in all situations, offering a relaxed, comfortable and quiet time ability as an all-round family hauler. Crucially, though, around town and highway dynamics are equally as important as off-road ability and every bit as adept as its dual-cab ute where other vehicles ask for compromise, the Everest provides a near-perfect blend of on- and offroad performance.

and fresh. And with arguably better

third-row comfort than its rivals, the

Everest scores points too for its

The Everest's decent off-road chops and excellent on-road manners tipped it in the judges' favour

all-terrain wagons



of the winner



Toyota Fortuner

Gutsy diesel powertrain

Spacious second and third rows

· On-road manners _ It feels like a ute

Inelegant third-row seating stowage solution

Out on the highway, the Fortuner works hard to disguise its

expected of vehicles in this class and evident in some of its

large SUV, and straddles the line between family hauler and

accomplished as it is off-road, it falls just a little short on the

ute origins, but it misses out on some of the refinement

rivals. The Fortuner remains a decent off-road-capable

off-road adventurer with some aplomb. But, as

· Good off-road ability

What we like

What we don't

Feeling its age





25 years of Drive

Since 1996 the Drive team have been covering every automotive milestone in the Australian market. Check out some of our favourites!

favour.

The Volkswagen Golf did, however, take home the gold medal as Best Small Car, beating the strong-selling Toyota Corolla and Hyu idai i30 hatchbacks with its high-tech interior and polished driving dynamics. The Skoda Octavia used its space, value and versatility to good advantage to earn the judges' favour in a hard-fought battle with the Toyota Camry Hybrid and classy Hyundai Sonata. Arguably the toughest win of Drive Car of the Year went to the

Land Rover Defender. This reimagined icon of the offroad scene beat the bookies' favourite Toyota LandCruiser 200 and incumbent Nissan Patrol not just with its onroad chops but its incredible offroad prowess, proving it is the master of two very different worlds.

THE FINALISTS

Isuzu MU-X

What we like

Decent off-road

What we don't

Jittery and fidgety ride on the blacktop

grunt to overcome most obstacles. It's the most capable at ability and refinement, the MU-X pulled up a fraction short

BEST VALUE CAR Kia Cerato S



When chasing value, comparing features and equipment is only the start. The biggest cost is the initial purchase, then depreciation. Other factors include fuel costs, insurance registration and routine maintenance We analysed Australia's most

affordable new cars and found that the Best Value Car is the Kia Cerato S. It ticks the basic equipment and safety features box, and is the most affordable to buy, insure, refuel and service. Kia's seven year warranty adds peace of mind, too.

BEST FIRST CAR Toyota Corolla SX



The Toyota Corolla SX is our pick for the Best First Car award. The combination of low running costs excellent resale value, and more accessible insurance premiums delivered the Toyota Corolla SX hatch the edge in this contest. The Toyota

Corolla SX is also stress-free to drive feels secure on the road, is comfortable in the daily grind, has good visibility all around, and has most mod-cons covered. It's big on safety, making it a safe bet in an overcrowded market.



tested - and delighted the senses whether on a racetrack or driving

that's as much at home commuting as it is cutting racetrack laps in the hands of weekend warriors. It is a worthy winner

THE FINALISTS

Hyundai i20 N

- What we love
- Fun and agile handling
- Epic brakes and tyres
- Personalised performance modes

What we don't

- Revs hang between gearchanges Tyre roar on Australian roads
- Muted exhaust needs to be more
- evocative

Hyundai i20 N is the closest to the original hot hatch formula: Pintsized, affordable, fast and fun to drive. It also brings a level of adjustment and personalisation to the city-sized hot hatch class, but is less suited to the day-to-day than the others here.

VW Golf GTI

What we love

- · Performance in a luxury package
- Stopping power and tyre grip
- · Upmarket Interior, roomy cabin

What we don't

- · Infotainment and AC controls via touch only
- Less suited to track days
- Muted exhaust

For many buyers, the Volkswagen Golf GTI is what a hot hatch should be: fast luxury. But others who prefer less pampering want more edginess. In the end, as much as the judges loved the VW Golf GTI, they could see it was outclassed by another all-rounder.

L-R: the winning Hyundai i30 N, Volkswagen Golf GTI, and Hyundai i20 N



BEST EV UNDER \$100,000

Hyundai Ioniq 5 deeply impressive

6

Hyundai boldly showed newfound confidence when it unveiled the Ioniq 5 - a medium SUV with styling that references the brand's formative years when Hyundai was better known as a budget brand

Be that as it may, the Ioniq 5 generated a heap of interest because of its distinctive design and its satisfying specifications. Not Hyundal's first EV by a long shot, but the first to make a real impact. It's fresh and 'clean' inside, yet it

pays attention to how you might use the car. The front seat relax mode is just the thing if you're fast charging but don't care to wander through a shopping centre, or just want to stretch out and take a break during a long road trip.

Interior packaging showcases the available space too. A flat floor and plenty of room between the two rows of seats mean that everyone gets room to move. Although not compact, the dimensions are used to tremendous effect inside

On the road, the Ioniq 5 is swift, particularly the more powerful dual-motor model. More

BEST LIGHT SUV

Every time we get behind the

good it is, but how much of a

wheel of the Ford Puma we come

away impressed not only at how

massive leap forward it is over its

predecessor, the Ford EcoSport.

of the more expensive line-ups in

the segment (the RRP ranges

equipped the Puma to a high

standard that sees it compete

mention the Ford Puma's

satellite navigation, wireless

phone charging, LED ambien

interior lighting, DAB+ digital

radio, rain-sensing wipers, and

The standard 1.0-litre

turbocharged three-cylinder

drivetrain punches above its

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Tom Fraser



The winner

What we like Huge Interior space, with user oriented inclusions Incredibly well equipped

· Flexibility to share charge with other devices

What we don't Steering could do with more substance at speed · Big interior a little too large for shorter drivers

Ford Puma a city-SUV class act

The winner

What we like

specification

What we don't

occupants

Drive.com.au

Engaging driving character

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Tight second row for taller

Must use 95-octane fuel as a

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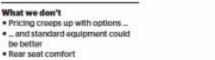
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The winner

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What we don't Firmer ride quality than most

 Stingy three-year warranty Limited storage

all cars on sale.

BEST MEDIUM LUXURY SUV Continual refinement pays off for Jaguar F-Pace

James Ward

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We tested the entry-level F-Pace S, with a 184kW/365Nm 2.0-litre turbocharged four-cylinder petrol engine (there are six and eightcylinder options up the range if you want even more leap from your cat), and found performance adequate for urban running and fun enough when exploring the Dynamic drive mode settings.

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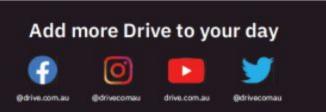
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What we don't Stop/Start system can be a little

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comfortable and luxurious feel. Inside, the Jaguar's cabin feels equally special, with a revised layout, high-quality switchgear and premium touchpoints. It's all very slick, but it's the new Pivi Pro



of storage options and a roomy 410-litre boot. On the road, the Puma has light

transmission behaves very well.

The interior is modern and

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In that same breath, the 3 Series' duality of character means it can operate as a quiet and comfortable daily driver with an ergonomic and well-appointed cabin. The iDrive infotainment system is still one of the greats of

BMW's Connected telematics system makes it simple to stay in tune with the car when you're away, while items such as keyless entry and push-button start make it easy to jump in and go. There's

THE FINALISTS

Volvo S60

What we like

- Modern, left-field interior layout Roomy cabin
- High quality materials used throughout

What we don't

- Gear selector is a pain
- Picks up little road imperfections Mild-hybrid integration not the

Where the BMW is a driver-focused offering in the segment, the Volvo S60 trades on its luxurious nature and feature-packed cabin. It's unashamedly different from the rest of the segment, blending an enjoyable and refined drive experience with a classy and contemporary cabin

decent room for second-row passengers and ergonomics are typically well sorted. There's even a good-size 480-litre boot with skichute access.

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- Striking cabin presentation
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South Korea's challenger truly deserves its place on the podium. It's refreshing to see a newcomer's take on what luxury should be, and it's obvious the amount of effort that Hyundai's luxury brand has put into engineering a genuine alternative both in the driving experience and interior presentation.

The BMW 3 Series is proof you don't have to spend over \$100,000 to get an engaging and luxurious sports sedan that will reward you every time you drive it.

11.4-inch infotainment system that makes the biggest difference. From the classy and intuitive interface design to the breadth of features, which includes mobileapp connectivity for vehicle monitoring, the system finally feels as polished as the rest of the car. Standard equipment levels are good, with driver assistance tech standard across the range. While our test car is a rather

conservative specification, you can go to town when creating your own, because the options are seemingly limitless.

In summary, the F-Pace has an answer for every question. It's stylish, practical, and delightful to drive. That it now delivers better value and a classleading infotainment system is simply icing on the cake

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- What we love Luxurious cabin with excellent fit and finish
- Practical space and family-friendly second row Style holding up well!

- What we don't Mild-hybrid helps with stop/start -
- but no real impact on efficiency Gets expensive when you tick
- boxes
- No Apple CarPlay

Last year's Best Medium Luxury SUV winner has been given a few tweaks and the range now offers a 48-volt mild-hybrid system in every model. Judges praised its fit and finish in a truly luxurious cabin, as well as an expansive array of technology.

Porsche Macan

What we love

- · Fun to drive with proper performance
- · Mild styling tweaks keep it looking good

· Blue seat belts!

What we don't

- · Entry price not indicative of realworld. Options are expensive
- Not as much room as others · infotainment a bit tricky to
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BEST EV UNDER \$100,000

Hyundai Ioniq 5 deeply impressive

6

Hyundai boldly showed newfound confidence when it unveiled the Ioniq 5 - a medium SUV with styling that references the brand's formative years when Hyundai was better known as a budget brand

Be that as it may, the Ioniq 5 generated a heap of interest because of its distinctive design and its satisfying specifications. Not Hyundal's first EV by a long shot, but the first to make a real impact. It's fresh and 'clean' inside, yet it

pays attention to how you might use the car. The front seat relax mode is just the thing if you're fast charging but don't care to wander through a shopping centre, or just want to stretch out and take a break during a long road trip.

Interior packaging showcases the available space too. A flat floor and plenty of room between the two rows of seats mean that everyone gets room to move. Although not compact, the dimensions are used to tremendous effect inside

On the road, the Ioniq 5 is swift, particularly the more powerful dual-motor model. More

BEST LIGHT SUV

Every time we get behind the

good it is, but how much of a

wheel of the Ford Puma we come

away impressed not only at how

massive leap forward it is over its

predecessor, the Ford EcoSport.

of the more expensive line-ups in

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equipped the Puma to a high

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satellite navigation, wireless

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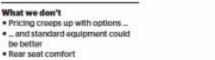
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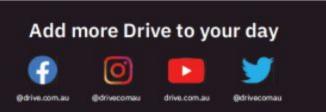
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