

Vauxhall Zafira

Featuring 1.6 16v



SCORECARD

Overtaking / pulling power

●●●○

Fuel economy

●●●○

Handling / steering

●●●○

Comfort / ease of control

●●●○

Interior space / practicality

●●●●

Accident / injury avoidance

●●●○

Costs in service

●●●○

Depreciation prospects

●●●○

It can't be desperation that has driven Vauxhall to introduce Zafira – the Astra Estate has been a perennial best seller for ages. No, it knows that today's motoring families want even more room and versatility, a good view out but something that's easy to park and is just as easy on the pocket.

The Zafira's ace card is that it's a true seven seater when required, but there's no heaving or shoving needed to convert the back end into a decent luggage area instead. So you can ring the changes in mid-journey, not before you leave home. The rear seats are surprisingly comfortable, too – once you've got there (a bit tricky) while the split-fold centre bench offers regal comfort, with sliding runners to apportion priorities between luggage and passengers. If you like, it will snuggle flat against the front seats and give you a protected, van-like cargo platform – with no load sill yet fully carpeted, of course!

This ingenious multi-purpose solution is enough in itself to nose Zafira ahead of its rivals; in fact, this Vauxhall's road manners turn out to be more than

respectable, as well. We opted for the cheapest 1.6 version which puts significant financial clear water between the Zafira and larger MPVs like the Galaxy. There's still a 10bhp advantage over the Scenic, with a slight edge in terms of overtaking ability, too. The Astra 1.6 Estate will out-perform both (it's 270kg lighter), so there's a downside to going down the MPV route.

Unlike most, however, the Zafira both rides and corners rather well, with pleasing road manners to match the driver's commanding position at the helm. It's & easy to get in and out of the supportive front seats and, apart from poorly placed centre vents that also turn warm too readily, the cabin feels congenial. Thick screen pillars and wipers that favour left-hand drive need watching, however. The engine has to work harder on the motorway, but it's always smooth and subdued, with commendable low-speed flexibility; the gears are a bit notchy, though.

Unless you intend to travel seven up habitually, it's not necessary to go for the 1.8-litre version (which is noisier) or the posher Comfort or Elegance trim levels. This

HOW THE ZAFIRA COMPARES	Engine cyl/cap/power (no/cc/bhp)	Revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes best stop (m/kg)	Maximum legroom - front (cm)	Typical leg/kneeroom - rear (cm)	Steering turns/ (p) circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 16v	4/1598/100	3630	13.1	27.0/18.8	35½	24½/18*	103	102/75	3.2/11.0	432
Mitsubishi Space Star 1.8GDI	4/1834/121	3150	10.6	27.1/20.4	38	27½/18*	109	103/75	3.1/10.0	403
Renault Megane Scenic 1.6	4/1598/90	3450	13.7	28.4/21.0	34	29/30*	105	102/76	3.5/10.5	414
Daihatsu Grand Move 1.6	4/1590/90	3370	10.8	28.1/20.0	35	28/16	103	109/75	3.7/9.5	410
Vauxhall Astra 1.6 Estate†	4/1598/100	3440	11.2	23.6/16.3	41½	26/21	108	95/70	3.1/10.4	429

† performance/economy figures for hatch

* with ABS

(p) all power assisted

& Includes information for disabled people and those with special needs

PERFORMANCE

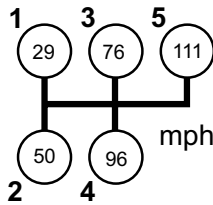
Acceleration time in seconds

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		2.2	4.8	8.8	13.1
IN 5TH GEAR		6.6	13.3	20.1	27.0
IN 4TH GEAR		4.7	9.2	13.7	18.8

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		13.8/9.8		13.5/9.0	
			13.3/9.2		13.7/9.6

Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
		6250*		6250*	5750



* for best acceleration

Gearing gives 19.3mph per 1000rpm in top = 3630rpm at 70mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION

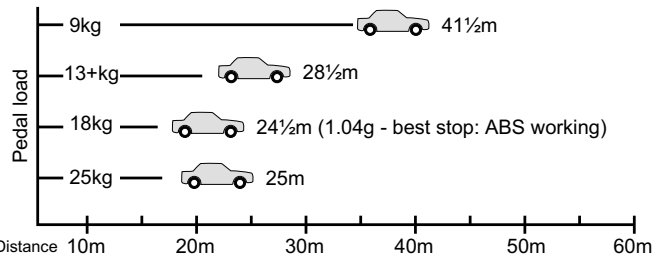
Type of use - with air conditioning off*	mpg
Urban (17mph average/heavy traffic)	24
Suburban (27mph average/6.4 miles from cold start)	29½
Motorway (70mph cruising)	33½
Cross-country (brisk driving/20 miles from cold start)	36½
Rural (gentle driving/20 miles from cold start)	42½
Typical mpg overall	35½

*with air conditioning switched on, consumption will increase by 2-4% in winter and 4-8% in summer

BRAKES

Pedal feel ●●●○○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●●○○ Handbrake ●●○○○

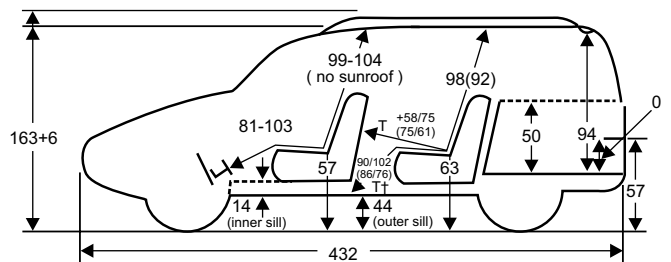
Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with optional ABS)
(A good-to-average best stop is about 26m at 15-20kg pedal load)



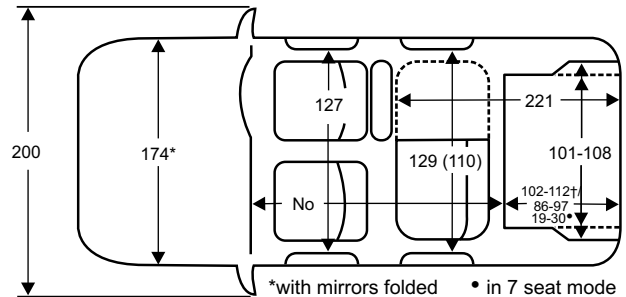
Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g stop):
10kg at start of test, 12kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres Multi-purpose 7 seater



T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants
†: with middle row seat forward/rearwards (third row in brackets)



*with mirrors folded • in 7 seat mode

LIKES AND GRIPES

- Convenient left footrest ... but accelerator dead movement provokes stalling
- ♿ Plenty of courtesy lamps ... but significant inner door sills
- ♿ Seats fold without belts impeding ... but adjuster levers are too short and stiff
- Good rear view when reversing ... but intermittent wiper's arc best for Europe
- Generous anti-rust warranty ... but the rest covered for only one year
- Heater works effective for those in two front rows of seats ... but big remote screen and side windows need air con demisting