



# Honda Logo



**W**E APPROACHED THIS TRULY SMALL Honda (the first for some time, here in the UK) with eager anticipation. The Japanese make very reliable small cars, and most people will surely agree with us that at first sight Honda has designed a very pretty one. In fact, the Logo has been around for some time and there's another Fiesta-sized new Honda due in a couple of years or so.

When you start looking at the Logo more closely, its age begins to show. Not only in the detailing of the interior, but also in its road manners; it turns out to be a pleasant, innocuous performer, but one that seems to lack even a single new idea. Admirers of the staid but worthy original Nissan Micra can experience it all over again, a decade later, in the Logo.

The only problem (even for them) is that there's no five-door, and when you try to get into the back, it's awkward and cramped. This car is really only serious about seating two in comfort – although they do enjoy a generous degree of support from Civic-style seats. Twin adjusters for cushion height and tilt keep the fixed steering wheel in a sensible place for most drivers, and the pedals, (powered) steering and slightly whippy gearchange make

most newcomers feel at home within ten minutes.

The engine pulls gamely (if a shade raucously) and offers adequate refinement, even though its design is one of the simplest we've seen from Honda for some time – no multi-valve, VTEC technology under this bonnet. However, what there is looks easy to care for and sensible.

There's nothing remarkable about the Logo's ride or handling, either – it deals with cat's-eyes admirably, it's true, but there's some prominent road rumble and sharp reaction to potholes and ridges. It corners merely adequately, but the ABS brakes did feel good, in our road-based assessment at least.

In fact, this standard ABS is part of Honda's chosen marketing strategy for the Logo. They could have said, "Well, this isn't the bee's-knees when it comes to small-car packaging or dynamics, so let's sell it cheaper than most and rely on its reliability to win it friends". They haven't done this; instead, they've added features to a fundamentally retro design and are relying on these to justify its highish asking price.

So you get a three-door that lacks Yaris-style party-trick versatility, has no door sill protection or tachometer, but emerges ready for the UK showrooms

kitted out with electric mirrors and windows, plus standard air conditioning, even though the facia's fresh air vents lack volume controls. Look at our Likes and Gripes panel and you'll get the drift. However, the one important option is the CVT automatic gearbox, which we have yet to sample, but is likely to make the Logo a good city car, with a more relaxed main road cruising gait, as well.

## VERDICT

**Nothing much wrong here for people who want basic, reliable motoring – except the price. However, don't expect much dynamic excitement and don't expect your rear passengers to be very enthusiastic, either. The Logo fails to live up to its looks and it's difficult to see it other than as a stop-gap, to give Honda dealers something to offer that's cheaper than the Civic.**

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### BODY

<b>Style</b>	three-door hatchback
<b>Length x width</b>	379 x 165cm (between folded mirrors)
<b>Trim levels</b>	one only

### ENGINE

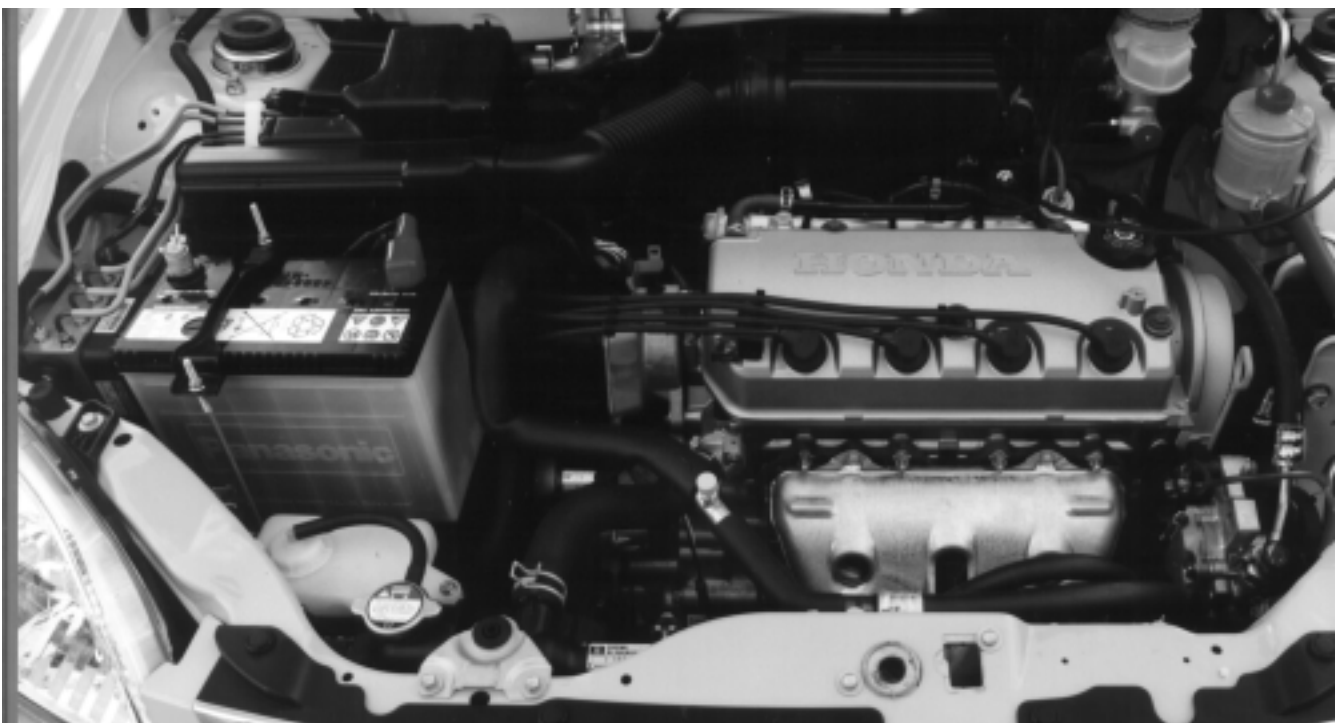
<b>Type and size</b>	transverse four in line / 1343cc
<b>Power (bhp/rpm)</b>	65 / 5000
<b>Torque (lb ft/rpm)</b>	80 / 2500
<b>Valves</b>	belt-driven single OHC operating two valves per cylinder
<b>Fuel/ignition</b>	electronic multi-point petrol-injection; integrated spark timing with coil, distributor and HT leads. 40-litre fuel tank

### TRANSMISSION

<b>Type</b>	five-speed manual standard, front-wheel drive. Continuously variable automatic optional extra
<b>Mph per 1000rpm (in top ratio)</b>	20.7 (manual), 22.6 (auto)

### CHASSIS

<b>Suspension - front</b>	damper/struts with integral coil springs
<b>- rear</b>	torsion beam (dead) axle with coil springs and a Panhard rod
<b>Steering</b>	rack and pinion with hydraulic power assistance
<b>Wheels</b>	5J steel with 175/70R13T tyres. Space-saver spare
<b>Brakes</b>	ventilated discs front, drums rear with electronic anti-skid control and brake force distribution (ABS + EBD)



## LIKES AND GRIPES

Twin airbags and seatbelt pretensioners up front	...	but belts' fixed shoulder mounts too low
Big, bold electric door mirrors	...	but no rear intermittent wipe
Reasonably roomy load deck	...	but rear cushions fixed (backrests flop forwards only)
Air con button to chill air	...	but no rear footwell outlets or simultaneous screen and face-level flow
Front seats comfortable	...	but lack "memory" when tilted forwards for rear occupants
Well positioned major controls	...	but displays' "orange on black" hard to decipher; no tachometer
Probably mechanically bulletproof	...	but unprotected paint and poor carpet at foot level

