

# Toyota Carina E

Featuring 1.8GLi



**A**S WITH SOME HONDAS AND NISSANS, when you buy a Carina these days, you're buying a British-built car. Apart from some reported early teething troubles, a UK-assembled Toyota seems to maintain Toyota's enviable reputation for reliability. This Japanese company (which ranks among the world's top three for car output) has mastered the art of achieving quality through volume. A good thing too, because the underbonnet works of the Carina's special lean-burn versions are very complex.

The catalyser has been "a good thing" in reducing tailpipe pollution, but in fact the fuel thirst of nearly all the models rose to some extent when the cats were first introduced. But not this Carina's, because the cat works only part-time and lean-mixture running is used on the open road when hard acceleration and higher revs aren't required. This results in outstanding mpg figures, as our table in the next column shows.

These figures for the latest 1.8 are, in fact, better than for the previous 1.6/106bhp version; the smaller-capacity engine has now lost 12bhp, to meet the even stricter emission regulations that come into force next year. The new 1.8/103bhp version manages only to equal the old 1.6's overtaking ability when worked hard through the gears. In-gear acceleration is

measurably improved, however (despite a longer-legged top gear), thanks to better mid-range torque output and a sensible ratio gap widened between fifth and fourth.

Fuel consumption range	mpg
Hard driving, heavy traffic	33½
Short journeys in the suburbs (6 miles/cold start)	34
Motorway – 70mph cruising	44
Brisk driving, mixed roads (20 miles/cold start)	42
Gentle driving, rural roads (20 miles/cold start)	50

There's less gulping unevenness at half throttle on the latest version and although it reveals some throbbing coarseness around the legal limit, the power unit isn't objectionable. The gears are super-light, but the (hydraulic) clutch is still a shade heavier than some.

Although the Carina has a smooth ride, there's some tyre rumble at times. Its steering feels a bit slower and heavier into bends than we expect from a powered set-up, and the model generally lacks the gusto of a Mondeo if you drive enthusiastically. Instead, it concentrates on offering a lot of space and seat comfort; these are especially appreciated at the back.

The heater has rear outlets, and cold-air ventilation

*Continued on page 3*

PERFORMANCE		SAFETY AND SECURITY FEATURES																									
<p><b>Acceleration</b> time in seconds</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>mph</td> <td>30</td> <td>40</td> <td>50</td> <td>60</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>THROUGH THE GEARS</b></td> <td></td> <td>2.0</td> <td>4.2</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>10.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>IN 5TH GEAR</b></td> <td></td> <td>6.5</td> <td>13.1</td> <td>20.1</td> <td>27.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>IN 4TH GEAR</b></td> <td></td> <td>4.3</td> <td>8.4</td> <td>13.0</td> <td>17.9</td> </tr> </table>		mph	30	40	50	60	70	<b>THROUGH THE GEARS</b>		2.0	4.2	7.3	10.9	<b>IN 5TH GEAR</b>		6.5	13.1	20.1	27.5	<b>IN 4TH GEAR</b>		4.3	8.4	13.0	17.9	<p>Assessed on their effectiveness and convenience (the more black blobs the better)</p> <p><b>Seatbelts</b> front ●●●●○ rear ●●●●○</p> <p><b>Head restraints</b> front ●●●○○ rear ●●●○○</p> <p><b>Interior</b> safety padding ●●●○○ driver's airbag? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other airbags? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> side impact protection ●●●○○</p> <p><b>Fuel anti-spillage</b> ●●●○○</p> <p><b>Door locking</b> ●●●●○ central locking? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> remote control? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> auto window closure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deadlocks? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Luggage</b> secure from interior/hidden from view ●●●●●</p> <p><b>Alarm</b> ●●●○○ engine immobilised? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> standard on test car    <input type="checkbox"/> factory fitted option    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not available</p>	
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<p><b>Maximum speeds</b></p> <p>1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6200* 6200* 5050 33 84 117 54 108 * for best acceleration</p>		<p align="center"><b>FUEL CONSUMPTION</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Worst/best mpg</td> <td>34/50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Typical mpg overall</td> <td>42<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Realistic tank range*</td> <td>52 litres/485 miles</td> </tr> </table> <p>* based on fuel gauge, warning lamp and filling station experience</p>		Worst/best mpg	34/50	Typical mpg overall	42 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	Realistic tank range*	52 litres/485 miles																		
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<p align="center"><b>FOR THE TECHNICAL</b></p> <p><b>ENGINE</b> Type transverse four cylinder with iron block and alloy head; 5 main bearings Capacity 1762cc Maximum power 103bhp at 5600rpm Maximum torque 110 lb ft at 2800rpm Valves belt-driven twin overhead camshafts actuating four valves per cylinder, with special intake swirl control valves Fuel/ignition electronic multi-point injection with programmed, integrated ignition. Part-time exhaust catalyser with lean-burn mode. 60-litre fuel tank with low-level warning lamp</p> <p><b>TRANSMISSION</b> Type five-speed manual, front-wheel drive</p>		<p>Mph per 1000rpm 23.1 in 5th, 17.3 in 4th</p> <p><b>CHASSIS</b> Suspension front: independent by MacPherson struts and coil springs. Rear: independent by struts, coil springs, lower twin transverse and single longitudinal links. Front and rear anti-roll bars and gas-filled dampers</p> <p>Steering power-assisted rack and pinion with 3.2 turns between locks. Turning circles average 10.8m between kerbs, with 17.1m circle for one turn of the wheel</p> <p>Wheels 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>in steel with 175/70R14H Dunlop SP200 tyres</p> <p>Brakes ventilated discs front, drums rear with servo; ABS optional extra</p>																									
<p align="center"><b>DIMENSIONS</b></p> <p>Centimetres</p> <p>T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants</p> <p>* with mirrors folded</p>																											

is retained when it's on; the electric sunroof is noisy when fully open, but it has a shade and a tilt position. There's plenty of interior illumination at night and a panel light rheostat and a beam trimmer are provided. Over-the-shoulder vision is a problem, however.

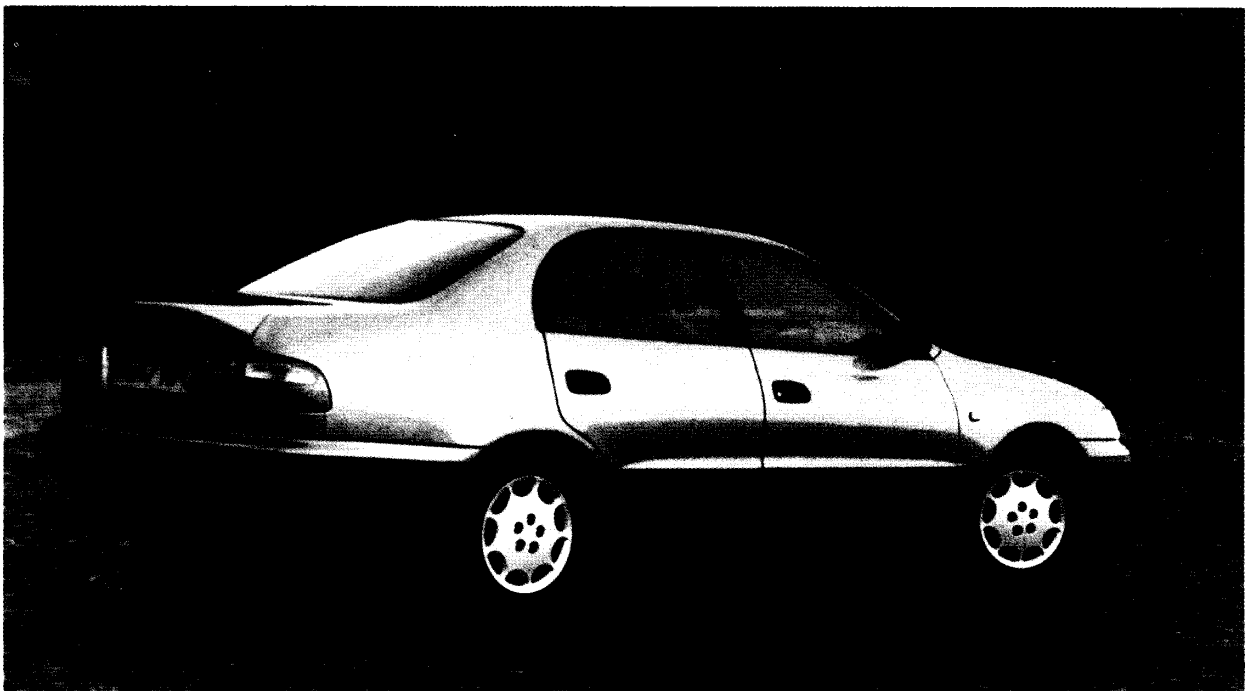
Locking and re-entry are aided by central locking on both front doors, as well as by the alarm's handset. Boot security and load space adaptability have been seriously thought out – even on the saloon version. By comparison, the alarm seems something of an after-thought and there are no deadlocks.

The brakes are too fiercely servoed for skid-free control in an emergency – the ABS option seems highly desirable. A driver's airbag is a standard safety

item, as are seatbelt pretensioners, but a passenger's airbag isn't available and there's no inertia switch to shut off the fuel in a crash.

#### VERDICT

**The Carina 1.8's engine is even more environmentally clean and frugal than the previous 1.6. When you add its totally uncompromised performance, there's nothing to touch it in the upper-medium class, unless you resort to a turbo-diesel. But perhaps the nicest aspect of Carina motoring is that it feels so civilised, so circumspect. The car goes about its allotted task with a level of understatement that amounts almost to anonymity.**



#### Likes . . . and gripes

Positioning and action of handbrake ● ● Poor ventilation when screen demister needed

Driver's left footrest ● ● Noisy heater fan

Right hand indicator stalk . . . but only when you're used to it

Driver's lumbar support adjusters . . . but only just sufficient when set firm

Steering column rake adjuster . . . but seat height adjuster unconvincing

Wonderful fuel tank range . . . but alarmist low-level lamp

<b>HOW THE CARINA E COMPARES</b>	Engine cap/power (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/ circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
Toyota Carina E 1.8GLi (4 door)	1762/103	3030	10.9	27.5/17.9	42½	28/12	109	108/76	3.2/10.8	453
Ford Mondeo 1.8GLX	1796/115	3240	10.7	26.3/17.2	36½	27/16*	109	101/71	3.0/10.4	448
Renault Laguna 2.0RXE	1998/115	3150	11.5	26.2/19.3	33	26/23*	111	94/72	3.1/11.0	451
Mazda 626 1.8i GLX (5 door)	1840/105	2850	10.8	31.7/21.4	35½	28/17*	106	98/69	3.1/11.0	469
Daewoo Espero 1.8CDi	1796/95	3070	11.1	28.7/20.1	34	25/20*	107	104/73	3.5/10.4	462

\* with ABS