

# Toyota Yaris Verso



**I**F YOU FANCY (OR NEED) A SCENIC or Zafira, but the budget won't stretch to one, what are the alternatives? Well, you could head straight for your nearest Toyota dealer.

Toyota's already highly acclaimed Yaris hatchback has a few tricks up its sleeve when it comes to shoehorning quarts into pint pots. This versatile little supermini is a fine drive, too, eclipsed only by Ford's ageing Fiesta for at-the-wheel feel-good factor.

The Yaris Verso, however, takes the diminutive Yaris as its starting point, and with a tug here and a stretch there, turns it into a roomy and versatile high-roof, mini-MPV-style estate.

The result may not be the prettiest of the pettily proportioned people-carriers, but beyond its dumpy, "Postman Pat" looks lies a clever little conveyance, bursting with character, versatility and a deceptively greedy appetite for all manner of cargoes.

A touch longer, wider and obviously taller, than the Yaris hatchback, the Verso sports the 1.3-litre 85bhp version of the two VVT-i power units available in the hatch, driving the front wheels via a five-speed manual gearbox or four-speed automatic option.

Clever, but all very conventional stuff, so far. Beyond its short-but-tall route to space efficiency, however, the Verso's killer blow is being able to stow its back seats (Zafira-style) under the "floorboards" when maximum load space is called for. In this maxi-carrier, two-seat mode the

Verso can teach established Scenic-type (and even Galaxy-sized) MPVs a trick or two at swallowing loads. And even when the cargo is of the human variety, the Verso's tall build provides an airy, spacious cabin with ample headroom for taller occupants, even in the back.

Performance is quite adequate, although the Verso can feel a bit underpowered at times, while its nippy handling (despite plenty of body lean) and light, responsive steering make it a doddle to drive around town.

Even with the back seats in use, there's ample, low-silled load space to play with; the only downside being a side-opening rear door and a fussy, rather flimsy, dual-height load cover. All-round vision is excellent thanks to a big back window and squared-off tail, while the comfortable cabin height and chunky, full-length grab handles greatly ease entry and exit for elderly or infirm occupants.

## VERDICT

**The Verso is pint-sized and perky, with character, space and practicality written all over it. To us, though, its biggest drawback is its dumpy, odd-ball appearance. Overlook this, however, and the Tardis-like Toyota offers mid-sized MPV accommodation for the price of a normal (albeit more conformist), supermini. Few snags and plenty of plusses for this quirky little family "fun-about", then, but what will the neighbours say!**

## AT A GLANCE

*considering size, price and rivals*

<b>Overtaking ability</b>	☆☆☆☆○
<b>Space/practicality</b>	☆☆☆☆☆
<b>Controls/displays</b>	☆☆☆☆○
<b>Safety</b>	☆☆☆☆○
<b>Handling/steering</b>	☆☆☆☆○
<b>Comfort</b>	☆☆☆☆○
<b>Fuel economy</b>	☆☆☆☆○

## SPECIFICATION

**engine** 1299cc, 4-cylinder, petrol; 85bhp at 6000rpm, 91 lb ft at 4400rpm; chain-driven double overhead camshaft, 16 valves, VVT-i variable valve timing

**transmission** 5-speed manual, front-wheel drive; 18.9mph/1000rpm in 5th, 15.9 in 4th

**suspension** front: independent MacPherson damper/struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar. Rear: torsion beam axle with trailing arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar

**steering** hydraulic power assisted; 3.2 turns lock-to-lock; 10.5m diameter turning circle between kerbs (16.5m for one turn of the wheel)

**brakes** ventilated discs front, drums rear. ABS with EBD optional (in Premium pack)

**wheels/tyres** 5½in steel (dealer-fit alloy option) with 175/65R14 82T tyres (Bridgestone B391 on test car); space-saver spare

## LIKES ...

less agile like cab height/grab rails on-board seat stowage (but it's fiddly) three rooflamps - one a take-out torch neat info/radio displays; good sound

## ... and GRIPES

trip computer zeroes when ignition off oddball looks; some fittings a bit frail side-hinged tailgate; skinny spare wheel no rear heater ducts/rear wiper delay

## THE YARIS VERSO RANGE

**body** 5-door, mini-MPV-style estate


**trim levels** one only, with Premium, Classic and Protection packs, plus dealer-fit options

**engines** petrol: 4 cylinder/1.3 litre/85bhp diesel: none

**drive** front-wheel drive, 5-speed manual; (4-speed automatic option available)

OVERTAKING ABILITY <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>					
<i>Toyota is wise to offer only the punchier 1.3 engine in the Verso. Allied to modest gearing it proves an eager ally, but T-junction pull-outs in too high a gear are best avoided. Thrives on plenty of revs, but gearshift a trifle notchy</i>					
acceleration in seconds	through gears*	③ <sup>rd</sup> gear	④ <sup>th</sup> gear	⑤ <sup>th</sup> gear	
20-40mph	3.6	6.8	9.5	12.7	
30-50mph	4.2	6.5	9.1	11.9	
40-60mph	5.8	6.4	9.3	12.7	
50-70mph	7.8	7.7	9.9	13.9	
<b>30-70mph</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>25.8</b>	
max speed in each gear (*using 6400rpm for best acceleration)					
gear	①*	②*	③*	④	⑤
speed (mph)	30	55	80	102	104

SPACE AND PRACTICALITY <span style="float:right">★★★★★</span>		
<i>Crams the proverbial quart into a pint pot; back seats always available, too. Lots of neat ideas, handbag hidey-holes and easy access. Huge load space, but seat folding a bit fiddly and load deck not entirely flat</i>		
<i>in centimetres (5-door mini-MPV)</i>	<b>inside</b>	<i>(†without sunroof)</i>
<b>outside</b>	front	- legroom 85-107
length		- headroom 110 †
width - inc mirrors	rear	- typical leg/ 98
- mirrors folded		kneeroom 78
height (inc roof rails)		- headroom 106
load sill height		- hiproom 127
<i>(inside/outside)</i>	<b>load space</b> (all seats in use)	
<b>steering</b>	<i>(litres/cu ft)</i>	320/11.4 <sup>1</sup>
turns lock-to-lock	load length	62-140
turning circle (metres)	full length to fascia	222
easy to park/garage?	load width	96-129
<span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	load height (under shelf/ 54/	to top of aperture) 113
<sup>1</sup> with dual-height shelf in upper position		

CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	
<i>Digital display won't suit all, but works well apart from small rev counter. Easy mph/kph swap, twin trip meters plus a simple trip computer. Handy, easy controls, but front foglamp switch is hidden under handbrake</i>	
	

HOW THE YARIS VERSO 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 from 50mph (m/kg)	maximum legroom - front (cm)	typical leg/ kneeroom - rear (cm)	steering turns/ circle (m)	overall length (cm)
<b>TOYOTA YARIS VERSO 1.3 5DR</b>	4/1299/85	3700	12.0	25.8/19.0	42	25½/15†	107	98/78	3.2/10.5	386
Citroën Berlingo Multispace 1.8i 3dr	4/1761/90	3070	12.4	28.1/20.7	33	29/18	109	107/74	3.3/11.1	411
Daihatsu Grand Move 1.6 5dr	4/1590/90	3375	10.8	28.1/20.0	35	28/16	103	109/75	3.7/9.5	410
Fiat Multipla 1.6 5dr	4/1581/103	3800	12.7	29.2/20.6	29	27½/20†	106	114/83	2.8/11.1	399
Mercedes-Benz A140 5dr	4/1397/82	3025	13.3	36.4/23.3	37	25/25†	110	97/71	3.7/10.7	358
Toyota Yaris 1.0 5dr	4/998/68	3850	14.8	32.5/23.3	47	26½/12	105	102/70	3.3/10.1	362

† with ABS

SAFETY <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	
<i>Standard kit includes dual front airbags, front belt pretensioners and head restraints all round, but only a lap belt for centre rear seat. Outside temperature display handy in winter, ABS optional in premium pack</i>	
<b>braking</b>	<b>dry road stopping distance</b> <i>from 50mph (with optional ABS)</i>
pedal feel <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	pedal load
in emergency <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	10 kg 37m
handbrake <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	15 kg 25½ best stop
	+4kg ie 19 kg 27m

EURO NCAP CRASH TEST RATINGS
Yaris Verso not yet tested

SECURITY FEATURES	
central locking <span style="float:right">✓</span>	alarm <span style="float:right">0</span>
remote control <span style="float:right">✓</span>	immobiliser <span style="float:right">✓</span>
auto window closure <span style="float:right">✗</span>	luggage security <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>
deadlocks <span style="float:right">✓</span>	
✓ standard	0 factory option ✗ not available

HANDLING AND STEERING <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	
<i>Less "Noddy car"-like than it appears, yet there's plenty of body roll. Fluid, smooth steering, but almost too light and responds a touch slow. Compact size, good all-round vision and nifty lock ease life around town</i>	
	

COMFORT <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	
<i>High roof, comfortable seating and ample space pamper passengers. Noise levels well-tamed, too, but ride gets unruly on tetchy tarmac. Ideal cabin height and full-length hand rails prove a boon for the less agile</i>	

FUEL ECONOMY <span style="float:right">★★★★○</span>	
<i>Modest thirst aided by variable valve timing, but tall build, spirited pace and modest gearing peg economy back a touch. Trip computer standard, but is optimistic and irritatingly dumps all its data when engine turned off</i>	
<b>AA test results (mpg)</b>	<b>official figures (mpg)</b>
worst (hard/urban) 27	urban 35.3
best (gentle/rural) 51	extra urban 51.4
<b>overall mpg on test 42</b>	<b>combined 44.1</b>
realistic tank capacity 38 litres	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions 154g/km
typical range 350 miles	car tax band B