

Motoring

IT DOESN'T FLY!

By Tim Saunders, Motoring Correspondent

First impressions of the Skoda Scala are that it reminds me of the first generation Kia Rio, in production some 20 years ago. It's the dimensions of the vehicles and the overall look that are similar. The Scala's major selling point is the fact that its boot is larger than that found in a Golf. It is a hatchback, not an estate.

This model is fitted with a £410 electrically operated boot, which can be opened by lifting a switch on the inside of the driver's door but it cannot be closed from inside. It can only be closed by pushing the button on the underside of the boot lid. It's flash and something well suited to a chauffeur or business executive but a young family? As an addled dad, speed is of the essence. After all I have three demanding and impatient children – yes no doubt my fault, it's in the genes you know. But I do find many so called luxuries a bit of a pain.

You see it's quicker for me to open and close a boot myself without relying on a third party – it's a bit like running a business, if you don't do the job yourself it is not going to be done to your standard. I always find that it's necessary to double check whether the boot will shut - sometimes it won't if there is too much inside or the contents are too near the lip for its liking. Then of course there are the children to worry about. If a finger or hand was on the lip of the boot as the lid was coming down, it doesn't bear thinking about. What happens when it fails? How do you then get into it? A good thump of a traditional boot lid will usually always close it. In my opinion, manual is best. Keep it simple for the best results, just like with writing an article.



Tim Saunders is an advanced motorist and journalist. He has always been passionate about motoring and regularly reviews cars from the leading manufacturers. His first report on a BMW 520i was published in the Dorset Echo when he was 17 (just after passing his driving test) in 1995. He went on to become business and motoring editor at the Bournemouth Echo.



It is very helpful that the front passenger airbag can be switched off, so that one of our children can safely sit in the front. I find that in so many cars this airbag cannot be turned off.

When starting the car it takes time for the centre console to come to life, which is annoying. Driving an old car as I usually do I am accustomed to just getting in and turning the radio on. You can't do that in the Scala. You have to wait for the system to initialise and it requires you to tap the touchscreen before you can get the music on. It's a pain. When I inadvertently press the voice activation the car asks "What would you like to do?" The children love this. And as we are stuck in yet another long long traffic jam I say, to lots of laughter, "fly". This seems to confuse the poor system.

We rely heavily on the sat nav during a trip to north London to attend my wife's late uncle's funeral.

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FACTS AT A GLANCE

Skoda Scala SE L

Price: £21,205 inc VAT

CO2 g/km: 114g/km

Top speed: 117 mph

Power: 113 bhp

0-60mph: 10.9 secs

Economy: around 45 mpg

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