

**REVIEW**by *Tim Saunders*

# A car for all weathers

I DON'T usually pay much attention to the weather, but during my test drive of the Skoda Karoq, I cannot help but notice it.

I decide to take it on a trek to Hertfordshire and before long, spitting rain turns into a torrential and persistent downpour which sees many motorists stranded.

But not us, and I am grateful because the Karoq, being an SUV, stands taller than those smaller run-of-the-mill cars, like the usual Fiesta I drive.

I thank my lucky stars that I'm in the Karoq as I have to make my way through what seems to be a lake covering a country lane as we head towards Shaw's Corner, playwright George Bernard Shaw's retreat.

Although the water level is high, it doesn't pose a problem for the Skoda. Thank goodness. As this downpour continues for a good hour, my new friend has many similar challenges thrown at him.

My only criticism during this



**GOOD IMPRESSION: A competent family vehicle.**

time is that I could do with a faster speed for the windscreen wipers.

This is an excellent first impression which this competent vehicle keeps up for the duration of the test. It puts up with my three children and their heavy feet in the rear and there is a very positive contrast to the Hyundai i30 Fastback which I have just returned, in that I can fit my children's three car seats quickly and easily in the Skoda. The seatbelt points are placed in sensible positions unlike in the Hyundai.

## Facts at a glance

- **Model:** Skoda Karoq SE L 1.5 TSI 150PS
- **Price:** £26,145 (UK)
- **Top speed:** 126mph
- **0-60mph:** 8.4secs
- **Economy:** Over 50mpg
- **Power:** 150bhp

Watch the video at [www.testdrives.biz](http://www.testdrives.biz)

Model tested is UK-specification and equipment levels and prices may vary in other markets.

The seats are comfortable, there's a good amount of space and the boot is large enough to allow us to travel with our luggage as well as Henry's pushchair. Not many cars are so accommodating.

Another pleasant surprise is the full-size spare tyre, stored underneath the boot compartment.

This is a real luxury these days, as some manufacturers have done away entirely with providing a spare, opting instead for a little repair pack.

My steed is a fast and reliable vehicle and the cruise control on the left of the steering wheel, is easy to use. However, if you are too eager it can result in the indicator being operated instead.

The six-speed manual gearbox is decisive, and there's an electrically-operated handbrake, which always unsettles me, but it seems reliable and the car does not roll when stuck in a jam on a hill.

My heart is in my mouth at

one point though, because I have to negotiate a very tight entrance to a car park, so tight I have to retract the power folding wing mirrors but thankfully we make our way trouble-free, to our space.

Others have not been so fortunate, I see as I survey the parked cars with their various dents and scrapes.

The other great thing about the Karoq is its satellite navigation system, which is a joy to use.

There's no faffing about, the driver just needs to know the postcode and can enter it without even needing a space in between characters.

However, the female voice delivering the instructions unnervingly sounds like Theresa May and there is an irritating delay at the most nerve-wracking of moments for instance, while tackling a roundabout where I need to know which exit to take.

Overall though, it's a competent family vehicle.

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