

# SHIFT

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TEST DRIVE



## 2018 MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE CROSS

"This is not the Eclipse you're looking for" – Obi Wan Kenobi

The Eclipse Cross has nothing to do with the Eclipse sports coupe we've all come to know and love—despite floors falling off at nitrous boosted high speeds. At least, that is what the coupe is meme-famous for, courtesy of the first Fast and Furious movie.

**What is this wedge-y thing?**  
This crossover ticks all the right boxes for current design trends. It has more sharp slashes and creases than the knife collection of many student politics leaders. The wedge shaped profile slopes back at a deeply raked rear window. It kills some boot space but adds style points. All this is wrapped up with squinty, angry headlights and tail lights as per angry car consumer demands.

It has a bit of a long overhang up front and a short stubby rear but the design speaks of a solid, robust SUV image albeit scaled down. That upright split rear window helps add just a bit more boot space (448 litres with seats up) while adding to the rear visibility—a problem in most small crossovers with tiny rear windows. Think of the Toyota CH-R and the discontinued Nissan Juke. You can't see anything out the back of those.

**Can you fit inside?**  
The platform is taken from the Outlander, which translates to a very good amount of leg space in the front and rear. Considering how often you have to sit in traffic, it's nice to be able to stretch and feel your unused legs

again.

The multi-tiered dashboard has a decent mix of soft, hard and faux carbon fibre plastics that look good and functional, although not exactly a stand-out design like the exterior. The conservative approach means you will find your switchgear easily and intuitively, although the collision warning, traction and parking assist switches are down below by your right knee, far from your eyesight.

### Driving impressions

While 42 happens to be the answer to the Ultimate Question in Life according to The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, 1.5 seems to be the magic number for car manufacturers. The Eclipse Cross is powered by a turbo four cylinder, pumping out 150 HP and 184 lb-ft



going to the front wheels. This is mated to a CVT with 8 artificially selectable ratios via cool looking paddles behind the steering wheel. This fighter jet styling is further accentuated by a heads-up display unit that projects your velocity and number of battle kills in your line of sight. All that aggressive kit is rather let down by the droning CVT, something all CVTs do.

The engine never feels strained, although sudden stabbing of the accelerator leads to a slight delay before the car starts to accelerate. Torque is available on a wider range, letting you accelerate for overtaking manoeuvres without much drama. I love how the brakes are nicely modulated, allowing it to gently grab on light pressing and then more aggressively as you press further. Most new cars have

a brake feel that snatches with the lightest touch, making your passengers experience the lifestyle of a head-banging thrash metal enthusiast. The Eclipse Cross brakes smoothly and confidently. This is fuss-free driving.

The suspension has a few more tweaks than the Outlander, with the focus here on comfort rather than handling. The softer springs and damping provide you a more wallow-y, cushioned ride over rough stuff. It was surprisingly compliant despite running on large 18-inch wheels. Ridges and potholes met with muffled thumps hinting at good insulation. It is quiet on the inside, providing for a stress free driving. The soft setup leads to

body roll during sudden turns, however. The power steering is weighted dead centre, giving it a slightly reluctant resistance until you start twirling. Then it goes suddenly light.

### Verdict:

The styling flourishes, allow it to stand out of the crowd without being awkward. The design leans towards eye-candy instead of providing load carrying utility. It has a very comfortable ride and comes loaded with all the necessary kit. It comes with Front Collision Mitigation System, which primes and applies the brakes when it detects objects in front.

I find the interior very well built, which is something to point out considering fit and finish has not been Mitsubishi's strong point over the last decade. Too many Lancers and Pajeros with easily chipped, ill-fitting parts and inconsistent panel gaps have set a standard that needed upgrading. The Eclipse Cross seems to have addressed much of those issues.

It drives well, much better than I initially expected. Acceleration is brisk without snapping your neck. Noise insulation is on par, allowing you to waddle across the crowded city without feeling all stressed out. It managed to eclipse most of my misgivings, and proves to be a strong rebirth for Mitsubishi products post-Nissan ownership.

### SPECS

**Engine:** 1.5 litre MIVEC direct-injection turbo 4 cylinder (150 HP, 184 lb-ft)

**Transmission:** CVT, FWD.

**Safety:** ABS, EBD, Stability Control, Front Collision Mitigation System

**Features:** LED headlights with DRLs, Heads Up Display, 6.1-inch infotainment system, Rockford Fosgate 9-speaker sound system with sub-woofer and amplifier, CD/USB/AM/FM/iPod/Android/Bluetooth, heated seats

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### AUTO NEWS



## BHL LAUNCHES HONDA DIOMOTO-SCOOTER

Bangladesh Honda Limited (BHL), sole distributor and manufacturer of Honda motorcycles in Bangladesh, launched the new Diomoto-scooter at Jamuna Future Park on the 8th of December, 2018. Mr. Yuichiro Ishii, MD and CEO of BHL, introduced the new Dio at the launch event while Grameen Uniqlo put on a fashion show to drive home the Dio's youthful, unisex image.

The Dio was launched in 1988 for a newer generation of Japanese young-adults, and has since embodied the same principles of urban mobility over the course of its model history. The latest Dio fea-

tures Honda's proprietary Eco Technology in its 110 cc motor, which puts out 7.9 HP and 6.6 lb-ft of torque. The CVT gearbox promises ease of use and a bottom linked front and monoshock rear suspension tries to maximise comfort. There's LED lights and the under-seat storage has up to 18 litres of storage.

Honda is calling the Dio a "moto-scooter"—the styling of a high end motorbike with the urban mobility of a scooter. Watch out for a review, soon.

PHOTOS: SHAER REAZ

## Aston teases a classic EV

British heartthrob automotive manufacturer Aston Martin is the latest brand to jump on the retro-inspired-EV bandwagon with this, the Heritage EV Concept. The body is of the immensely desirable 1970 DB6 MKII Volante, while the running gear features plug-in EV know-how taken out of Aston's Rapide E programme. Aston Martin has been investing significantly into developing an EV

range, mainly focused through the Rapide E programme and its plans of a separate Lagonda line of products.

However, purists need not take up stakes—the DB6 is a reversible EV conversion, employing a "cassette" EV powertrain that slots in neatly between the original motor and gearbox mounting points. The cassette features its own self-contained cell



and has plug-in charging for EV driving, while charging information is displayed via a discreet screen installed in the otherwise un-modified interior. It's a part of Aston's plans of future-proofing these classic cars and keeping up their value in a world that seems to be shifting away from fossil fuels.

James Bond should be proud of his high-tech EV ride. 3

