

TEST DRIVE



Renault KWID Climber

WHAT IS IT?

The original heavily muscled Renault KWID concept was wild, like a Hot Wheels toy come to life. Reality suggested the car become more like a car, less like a toy. The production KWID features more muted styling. It combines small car dimensions (Bangladeshi readers think Toyota Starlet, but bigger) with the ride height of a small crossover SUV. The front bumper even sports a faux skid plate on the bottom edge, highlighted in gunmetal grey and orange. It's a budget segment car aimed at young people getting their first brand new ride.

DESIGN IN AND OUT

Sharp lines and bold, large lights give it an impression of being larger than it is. It has buff wheel arches covering very skinny tires. Much like a bodybuilder who has been avoiding leg days. 155/80 R13 seems unbelievably skinny, but you need them to help maintain a good fuel economy.

WHAT'S UNDER THE HOOD?

It has a 999cc engine squeezing out 67 HP and an evenly matched 67lb-ft torque. This is coupled to an automatic manual transmission (AMT) which is basically the five-speed manual transmission controlled by a computer, without the need of your left foot on a third pedal. This is different from our traditional automatic transmission in how it operates. First, there is no 'creep' forward as you let go

of the brake while stopped. The Kwid stays put while in drive. Secondly, the gearshifts are not as smooth as a traditional AT, with the first two upshifts often feeling sluggish, as the computer decides to hydraulically activate the clutch and engage the next gear. Beyond that, it picks up speed smoothly and downshifts are barely noticeable. It has a rotary dial for a drive selector—featuring reverse, neutral and drive. That represents the simplicity of the car which is further accentuated by the utility of having only the equipment you really need.

We took on the ramps in our office while loading up the car with the heaviest people we could find. Fully loaded, the car manages to smoothly take on our steep ramps with the AC on. But because of the tiny engine, you need to treat it like a manual (which it kind of is). To prevent stalling, the car goes into neutral and rolls back till you either press the accelerator or the brake.

HOW DOES IT RIDE?

It's spartan on the inside. There is a lot of black and grey hard plastic all around. There is plenty of orange stitching and door accents to liven up the drab interior, just by a few degrees. The feature list is rather quirky with the front windows being powered and the rear being manually cranked. This reflects the Indian market, where the car is often bought by young people who drive themselves.

SPECS

Engine: 1.0 litre 3-cylinder petrol (67 HP, 67 lb-ft)
Transmission: 5 speed AMT, FWD.
Safety: Driver's airbag.
Features: Front power windows, 13-inch alloy wheels, fabric seats, rear arm-rest, dual-tone interior and exterior, roof-rails, digital instrument cluster, touch-screen infotainment system, AM/FM/USB/Aux/Bluetooth.
Price: Starting from TK 14,50,000.
 For details, contact Karnaphuli Motors Ltd.



I especially like the front seats. They have rather pronounced bolster supports that hug your back and feel snugly comfortable. The suspension manages to soak up small bumps easily enough, without the car bouncing along. It settles quickly while taking on speed breakers. But road surface unevenness means I have to constantly adjust the steering to stay straight. The skinny small tires easily

VERDICT

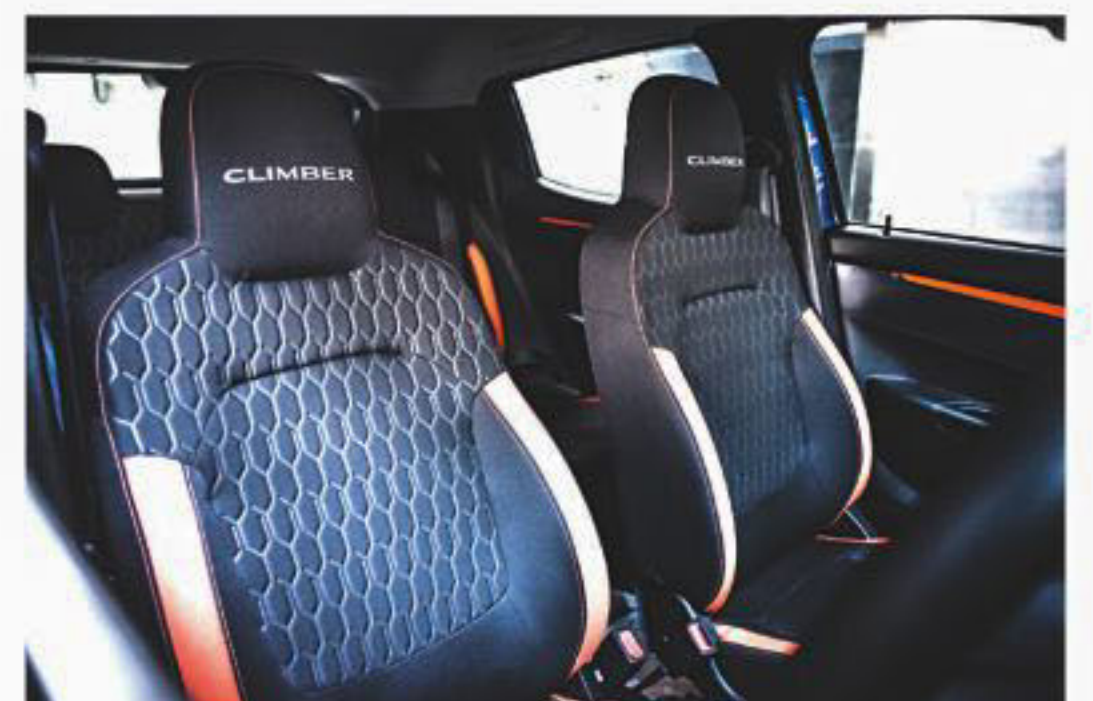
I like how it looks despite being a bit of a pretender. This is by no means an off roader, even though the styling apes that of the bigger Duster. The ride height is a boon in the city, allowing you to see over and ahead at road conditions further down. It makes for quite the ideal transportation when you want to manoeuvre between loose buses, stampeding motorcycles and headphone wearing jaywalkers.

Spoiled as we are by choice, it would have been preferable to have powered rear windows and mirror adjustment. The AC does a great job though, and the mileage is reported to be in the 12-15kmpl range according to most forum members who use the KWID. We'll do a longer test in the coming month. For now, the KWID offers a mix of utilitarian convenience with a mixed bag assortment of creature comforts to create an unusual yet interesting city car.

follow the chaotic grooves in what we like to call roads.

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AUTO NEWS

Porsche is now building a Coupe SUV-Cayenne Turbo Coupe

Porsche has bitten the SUV-Coupe trend and released this hellhound onto the world—the Cayenne Turbo Coupe. While BMW's X4 Coupe and Mercedes' GLC Coupe base models are fairly humdrum offerings in this weird consumer driven segment, the Cayenne Turbo Coupe tries to

spice up the Cayenne range by adding a bit of "Porsche-ness" to the mix.

The Cayenne Turbo Coupe is a high performance range-topper, going up against the X4 M Coupe and GLC63 Coupe with a twin turbo 4.0 V8 that pumps out 542 HP and 568 lb-ft torque. The basic Cayenne Coupe gets a 3.0 six-cylinder with 335 HP and 332 lb-ft torque. There's an automatic rear spoiler, PASM active suspension, and lightweight packages that aim to sharpen up response and driving feel.

It's certainly better looking than the cars that created the segment and are considered benchmarks, however. It almost looks normal next to the bloated, melt-y looks of the GLC Coupe or X4.



Tesla's smallish SUV - Model Y

Elon Musk's lettered kingdom of electric cars gets a new addition in the form of the Model Y, a crossover SUV that slots in below the Model X as a smaller, more affordable city cruiser. Think of what the Model 3 is to the Model S, only...higher. That's not a reference to Elon Musk's radio appearance habits, it actually holds true for the Model Y.

The Long Range model has a range of 300 miles, while the standard goes up to 230 miles on a single full charge. There's a 15 inch touch-screen and it supports superchargers. Here's the most important sta-

tistic that seemingly wins over petrolheads and turns them to a life of EV worship—it'll take 3.5 seconds to sprint to 60 MPH, and top speed is 150 MPH. Tesla's model line is now S, 3, X, Y. Make of that what you will.



COLLECTIBLES

Resination - GT Spirit Porsche RWB

Resin is the bane of most scale model collectors' existence. It's a lesson I learned the hard way. Within a day of owning my first resin model—the RWB Porsche, built by GT Spirit—I managed to snap off a mirror and a rear left canard. This came after a lot of ridicule from colleagues for handling the model while wearing latex gloves.

Why bother? Resin models are prohibitively expensive (this unit was TK 11,000), and considering the cons, doesn't really make sense. However, the realistic details and rarity of the model itself almost makes it



worth it. Autoart makes RWB Porsches with opening doors and tremendous interior details and they cost a bit more, but GT Spirit's paint and exterior details are all top notch. The candy red paint, the dish wheels, the Idlers tyre wall—there's no doubt GT Spirit went all out on it. This particular limited-edition model comes with a ducktail as opposed to the ridiculous wings that are a mainstay of RWB tuned Porsches, and are a testament to what's possible on resin models.