

ALMOST NEW-BUT-USED CARS FOR UNDER TK 20 LAKH

For a lot of families—especially newer ones where the working members might be seeing their savings go into seven digits for the first time—buying a brand new car might seem impossible. At the other end of the scale, maintaining an older used car that falls easily within purchase budget might be a constant hassle to maintain and account for. If you compromise on the newness of the car and extend your budget a little bit though, you'll find the following options worth checking out for a first purchase.



2013 SUZUKI SWIFT

The Suzuki Swift is a great little car that combines good driving dynamics, brilliant packaging that somehow fits all your needs and fuel efficiency into a neat little package. It was one of the cheapest new cars on the market for a while, and companies snapped them up for fleet use, so there's quite a few of them on classifieds sites. Don't let the manual gearbox daunt you—you'll love the gear-change action. Expect to pay around 4-5 lakhs for an older 2005/6 model and around 8 lakhs for the newer ones.



2013 HONDA VEZEL

The Vezel turned things around for Honda's image in Bangladesh. It might be a bit cramped and the ride is a bit harsh, but you'll be hard pressed to find an alternative to the compact SUV in the local market. Watch out for gearbox issues, as some of these were likely not maintained right. Yours for approximately 19-20 lakhs for a hybrid (we say avoid) and around 18 lakhs for the regular.

2014 TOYOTA YARIS

Toyota's Yaris was brought in almost entirely by Navana through official channels, and it's a great little car that would have been more popular had our tax structure not killed its chances. Bare bones motoring, but the Yaris offers rock solid reliability and no-frills use, and corporates moved on from the Swift to this, so enough units floating around to risk it. It also means they've been maintained well, mostly. Mileage might be a bit high though. Yours for around 15 lakhs.



2009 NISSAN BLUEBIRD SYLPHY

The Bluebird is perhaps the last economy-class Nissan that's anything to talk about in a sea of drab offerings that are a stark contrast to the brilliant cars they were making in the 90s. They have a ton of space inside and a well-made and designed interior, although driving feel and reliability are nothing to write home about. If you can keep one going, it should serve you well though. Aim for a 2009-10 model, which will cost you around 11 lakhs.



2011 TOYOTA ALLION

It's good that the primary buyers of Allions and Premios in the country opt for an immediate upgrade to the newest model, much like they do with iPhones. That leaves the slightly older generations up for sale aplenty, some at fairly good prices. If you want space and the apparent prestige associated with Allion ownership, go for it. They require just basic maintenance from time to time and the legendary Toyota reliability takes care of the rest. Expect to pay around 15-18 lakhs for a 2010/11/12 one.



2011 TOYOTA NOAH

If you have a big family and need to move quite a number of people at the same time, a Noah is the perfect companion. They've gotten a bit expensive in recent years and have their share of mechanical quibbles from time to time (gearbox, engine on CNG, sometimes electronics) but if you can find a well-maintained one, not entirely a bad idea. Asking prices hover around the 18 lakh mark for a 2010/11 model, but haggle as much as you can.

2014 HYUNDAI TUCSON

Hyundais may have a good reputation now, but even a decade back they were slightly wonky, pretty weird cars from South Korea. If you want to find the turning points that led to Hyundai making some great cars at present, look no further than the 2012-15 Hyundai Tucson and the Sonata of the same period. A 2012 Tucson will set you back around 19 lakhs, but they will have fairly low mileage and few issues to complain about. Keep a runway of funds to fix it in the future and you're all set.



AUTO NEWS



Track-special Ferrari – 488 Challenge Evo

Following in the footsteps of the legendary 360 Challenge Stradale, the ballistic 430 Scuderia, the scalpel-like 458 Speciale and the bonkers 488 Pista, the 2017 488 Challenge Evo surprisingly evaded the hype surrounding track special Ferraris every time they are launched. To correct that unsightly error on the part of

supercar fans, Ferrari has launched this, the 488 Challenge Evo, to drive a jackhammer as revenge into the faces of people who ignored the base car.

The Challenge Evo gets an incredible 50% more downforce over the "regular" (hah!) Challenge, bigger brakes with a redesigned front

disc that reduces brake wear, fatter Pirelli tyres, a whole re-do of the interior that turns it into a proper race car cockpit and a whole lot more. Essentially the Challenge Evo is a homologation of the new 488 GT3 Evo, which will no doubt head over to an endurance racing series the first chance it gets.

COLLECTIBLES

Made in Bangladesh Mustang

Quite a big deal when we find out yet another popular diecast model made in Bangladesh. French company Solido—famous for budget models—has crafted this beautiful '67 GT500 on Bangladeshi soil, which then gets flown back to their land and comes back to Bangladesh after paying hefty taxes. That's how we end up having it in our hands.

Pros: Perfect shape, accurately scaled down mirrors and wipers that do not look blocky like they do on typical budget models. Perfect stance and wheels hide disc brakes up front and drums at the rear. Decals are spot on and a lovely thin mesh grill complete the look. Lights show enough depth and the interior

features good seats, roll cage and what appears to be seat belts. Doors are spring loaded, which is a great plus considering most budget models have ugly dog leg hinges.

Cons: No opening hood for engine detail. Dashboard gauges are printed onto the plastic and look a little too flat, although legible.

Price: About \$45 online. Should end up being around the TK 6000 mark if you ship it here using local carrier services.

Verdict: Worth having if engine option isn't a high priority.

WORDS & PHOTOS: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

