

RIDING THE WINTER OUT

Winter is approaching and we decide to bring some of our old maintenance and tips articles out of the closet--along with blankets and jackets--and dust them off. Enjoy.

A/C maintenance for cars

Brace yourself, winter is coming. And many car folk have found out to their dismay that a car AC that was working fine till November refuses to blow cool air when summer is back. Instead, it starts blowing warm air into your face reminiscent of a sweaty man standing too close to you at Ekushey Boi Mela.

Here's a surprise fact: Car air conditioners often break down over the winter due to lack of use. Sounds counterintuitive but it's not. When put into use, the AC circulates refrigerant and oil through the system which in turn keeps rubber seals and hoses soft and flat. Without circulating, rubber seals break down and leaks could form. Prevention is quite simple. Run your AC winter. Heck, it the cold considering



our cars have disconnected heater hoses. The AC should keep the interior less cold than outside. The AC also dehumidifies and prevents the windows fogging up when there's more than one person in the car.

Surviving fog on two wheels

Fog in Bangladesh is a sudden, freaky occurrence. It gets terrifying just outside the cities because everybody else uses the road like a game. And there are goats wandering the streets as if they are in a mid-life crisis.

The most important tips of riding in fog or any low visibility conditions: see and be seen. How?

Make yourself visible: Wear jackets with reflective strips on them. A lot of hardware stores and motorcycle accessory stores sell high visibility jackets. It's well worth the several hundred taka.

Low beams if you have it: Most modern bikes have high and low beams. Keep them low so that you see the road more clearly. High beams reflect off the moisture droplet in the air increasing the glare and making everything more difficult to spot. Avoid HID kits for winter or rain because the extra brightness causes excessive glare when reflecting off droplets. They make everything go blindingly white. Alm the lights low towards the ground.

The best lights? Yellow fog lights/bulbs. It's the color that is least stressful on the eyes and lights up everything evenly without unnecessary glare.

Remember: Fog lights aligned too high are a nuisance at best and quite dangerous at worst for other road users. Be responsible.

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Glow up season: 2022 Honda Civic review

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PHOTOS: AHBAAR MILKY



The new Honda Civic for 2022 is out, welcoming the 11th generation on their lineup which could almost be taken for an Accord; from a certain distance and after squinting hard enough. The new Civic debuts new body styling, interior design and features both in terms of driver aid and infotainment. This week, we got our hands on one and we finally got to drive the car. Keep reading to find out what more the new Honda Civic has to offer.

The new bits

The new 11th gen Civic comes completely refreshed, with a new plaid design and interior bits and pieces where the Civic comes in four different packages sporting two different engine options; a 2L which comes in the base model and a 1.5L turbocharged made available for the higher trim levels.

Our test mule was an EX package with the 1.5L version which is, ironically the only version available (including the EX touring package, of course) in Bangladesh as the base model comes with a 2L, which also has less power compared to the turbo and due to our taxation system, which is solely based on engine capacity, the base model will end up costing more than the top of the line Civic available.

A couple of other things to note is that the sedan version of the Civic does not offer a manual gearbox, it comes standard with a CVT; although if a manual transmission is absolutely necessary, there's the SI version available.

Exterior; a new generation

The exterior of the 11th gen Civic receives a dramatic design change which in retrospect, eliminates drama that was present in the last, introducing us to a new simpler, mature design language with easy to read straight body lines which end on the LED headlights with running DRLs, where the LEDs are a standard option through the whole lineup, even when it comes to the taillights.

Interior and infotainment

Jump inside the Civic and you will find everything well laid out in the right positions and since the car is targeted towards heavy commuters in general, Honda did not overcomplicate the knobs and buttons which the driver or the passengers will interact with.

Expect satisfactory materials used throughout the interior but since it's a Civic and not an Accord; do not expect Honda giving out genuine leather on the seats and wooden trim pieces. The seats in the Civic are roomy and although they are made of fabric, they come heated; and are manually operated, which is a bit of a bummer, but they still get the job well done.

As far as the climate control goes, it's controlled with a bunch of knobs where the air comes through a honeycomb mesh sandwiched between the infotainment system screen and the AC controls, which gets cold enough to tackle Dhaka weathers.

What sets apart the Civic from the bigger Accord is the obvious cost-cutting done from Honda. For example, the Piano black Trim pieces on the front

doors of our test car had a light bar going in the middle of the piece but the rear doors do not have it, but that is just me being nitpicky. The back seats though are amazing for a commuter. They are comfortable and have enough legroom where you can stretch your legs and your knees will not touch the front seat. There's also an armrest with cup holders in the middle which also adds up as an extra seat when folded up.

Another feature which the new Civic has and I would like to see implemented



end; the bass could be just a bit more satisfying but in the end, the mids make a satisfactory cut.

Driving the Civic

When you push the start button and finally start to drive the car, a noticeable feature is how visible everything is on the road and how open the ambience feels, mostly due to the sunroof, which allows a lot of light to enter inside the car which is always appreciated. Driving the actual car, the suspension in the Civic is brilliantly set where it takes small bumps at ease. The steering feels athletic where there is actual feedback when taking corners. The throttle response is great where the 1.5L turbo does not feel laggy and for a commuter, the 180hp and 240 Nm torque is plenty to feather with.

What intrigued Abhaar Milky (in his own words) the most was how hard the CVT, when in sport mode, actually tried and successfully pretended to simulate 'gear shifts' akin to a DCT, albeit a sluggish one at that. Flick the drive mode selector downwards once and the digital cluster greets you with a dash of red, unlocking the joys of rowing through five simulated gears through the flappy paddles, which are ergonomically positioned just where your index fingers would grip the wheel when the hands are at 9 and 3. The paddles are tactile enough, having the same resistance and feel as the R1 and L1 buttons of a PlayStation controller, or a keyboard.

Expect horrible economy on sport mode, obviously, as the CVT forces the engine to work overtime with instant throttle response if you're lead-footed. On the contrary, Normal and Economy modes do a solid job of keeping the drive experience seamless for hypermiling.

Verdict

The new Civic is a great 'people's car' and



in other cars as well as the feature to fold the seats directly from the boot of the car, which is a foolproof feature and contributes to extra convenience.

The infotainment system, on the other hand, has quite a lot to offer while maintaining simplicity; yet another effort from Honda not to overcomplicate what the user will interact with. It comes 7" standard but it can be upgraded to a 9" which usually comes in the LX package as standard. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto also come standard which is always good to see. The sound is delivered through pairs of Bose speakers for the first time in a Civic, where the mids are well pronounced which makes the sound clear but it lacks a bit around the low

it's the smallest details that make it just a bit more desirable all around. Driving the car does not feel like a chore and honestly, the whole package just makes sense. Although the E-Parking brake is the only thing that people could find annoying as it's small and the existence can easily slip off the dome (it happened twice with us).

Coupled with the fantastic dampening on bumpy Dhaka roads, and the no-nonsense yet bang up to date interior, the new civic is already leagues ahead of the previous generation in our book. We just wish the wireless Apple CarPlay would work without any glitches on our test vehicle. There's a wireless charging pad though which worked with no hiccups.