

Vauxhall Corsa Reinventing a success story



If you're a dyed-in-the-wool Corsa buyer, the latest model will be a rude awakening. The reason why is that Vauxhall were one of the very first manufacturers to really buy into spreading so-called 'utility' models right across their range.

The latest Corsa is offered in two different body styles. The five-door version features a more conservative profile with a flatter, longer roof section while the real scene stealer is the three-door version. The front end features a deep Vauxhall V-grille with aggressive air intakes under the bumper and a pair of headlamps that smear back along the wings

Climb inside and, if you're used to the Astra, you'll feel immediately at home here. The quality of materials used is leagues ahead of the old Corsa and like the Astra there's the bulletproof feeling of build quality that's as good as anything in the sector. Just about the only criticism of the Astra's interior was that, although well built, it didn't offer a whole lot of slick design to catch the eye. The Corsa changes that particular script with translucent ambient lighting on the centre console switchgear, one of those 'surprise

and delight' features that adds the all-important showroom wow-factor.

Like its progenitor, the Corsa is built in the same Zaragoza factory in Spain but breaks from tradition in offering a resolutely high tech approach. Halogen Adaptive Forward Lighting (AFL) alters the beam of the headlamp according to speed and steering input, allowing the Corsa to see further round dark corners. There's also an innovative Enhanced Understeer Control (EUC) function and convenience features such as MP3 compatibility and Bluetooth phone connectivity. Variable progressive sports power steering aims to offer finger light steering at parking speeds with a properly meaty feel when you're really in the groove.

Despite its strong sales figures, Vauxhall needed to give the Corsa a good whack up the backside and the latest model shows the benefits of this corporal approach. Smarter, prettier and a whole lot more sophisticated, the Corsa could well dominate sales charts for quite some time. ■

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