

GEAR & GADGETS



YOUNG LOVE The affordability and throwback styling of the Honda Civic make it popular with Gen Z and Millennials.

DAN NEIL / RUMBLE SEAT



2022 Honda Civic Touring: Under 30 for the Under 30s

PEOPLE TRY to put Gen Z down, just because they get around. But since 2015, the generally awesome Honda Civic has been the bestselling light vehicle in the U.S. among “first-time buyers, Millennials, Gen Z and multicultural customers,” says the company. Seems to me the kids are alright.

Our guest, the 2022 Honda Civic 1.5T Touring—representing the new, 11th design generation of Civic compact (available in sedan and hatchback body styles)—will test something of an untried principle in the showroom, a post peak-car strategy. Call it *Civique Classique*. Here, the U.S.-market Civic is nearing its end-stage evolution, carrying into perpetuity this more formal-looking exterior and understated grille design, harking back to the '90s Accord. See it hark? Also note the lower hoodline and the hidden windshield wipers, which helped create the old Civic's expansive world view.

The cabin decor—smart and simple, cheap and cheerful—is likewise all new yet somehow archaic, like a “Friends” reunion episode. The signature bit inside is the panel of metal honeycomb trim bisecting the flat dash, a bit like old Porsches, that conceal the air vents. The climate controls are in a conventional three-dial presentation.

A large touchscreen resides on the dash, but nobody's playing *World of Warcraft* in here. “The new touchscreen,” said Honda, “features a physical volume knob, large, easy-to-recognize icons, and a simplified

2022 HONDA CIVIC TOURING SEDAN



Price, as tested \$29,515
Powertrain Turbocharged 1.5-liter inline four, with variable valve timing, and stop/start function; continuously variable transmission (CVT); front-wheel drive.
Power/torque 180 hp at 6,000 rpm/177 lb-ft at 1,700-4,500 rpm
Length/width/height/wheelbase 184.0/70.9/55.7/107.7 inches
Curb weight 3,077 pound
0-60 mph 8 seconds (est)
EPA fuel economy 31/38/34 mpg, city/highway/combined
Luggage space 14.4 cubic feet

navigation structure with fewer embedded menus. On the left are hard buttons for Home and Back functions.” It's like the Civic Big Type edition. Now Dad will stop yelling when he drives your car.

Under the hood is one of Honda's fine turbocharged engines of appropriate displacement (1.5 liters), power (180 hp) and consumption (34 mpg combined), buttoned to a continuously variable transmission and front-wheel drive.

And that's it. The 11th-generation Civic wants to jump off the merry-go-round of annualized updates and cosmetic changes. Honda likes this pony about where it is.

It's like they've been reading my mail. Readers are always asking me to recommend a car that is comfortable, safe, simple, efficient—and, if

possible, one that doesn't look like a runaway air conditioner (Toyota Corolla) or a bottle opener bent on mayhem (Nissan Sentra).

I admit, when I first read Honda's propaganda about “revisiting timeless design concepts of previous generation Civics,” I rolled my eyes. Oh yes, Civic is a latter-day Vitruvius. But I quickly sobered up. The itch the Civic scratches is a longing for automotive certainty, for styling and function that will be somehow more durable, less perishable in the years ahead. This retreat to maturity is brought to you by the wisdom of young people.

As for pride of ownership: The Civic's newfound formality is first a consequence of the base of the windshield pillars having been moved rearward 2 inches and

wheelbase extended 1.4 inches. These changes visually lengthen the hood profile and align the pillars with the front wheel center, giving Civic an axle-to-dash ratio more characteristic of a rear-drive car. These proportions are innately recognized in the West's auto-cultural lexicon as signifying prestige. At least it doesn't look like an Accord.

Much of the Civic's re-engineering is invisible to consumers, improvements to passenger safety and collision resilience. The unit-body's structural stiffness and side-impact protection have been reinforced, which pays dividends in handling as well as mitigating noise-vibration-harshness. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety named the Civic a top safety pick. The IIHS is one of the

more persnickety judges of these things. The Civic also gets Honda's latest front airbags designed to reduce traumatic brain injury. Can't wait to try 'em.

But most of the Civic's innovation is on the price side: Our Tour-

The itch the Civic scratches is a longing for automotive certainty, for styling and function that is less perishable.

ing edition sedan's out-the-door was \$29,515, including delivery and a tank of gas.

Now you are talking, Mr. Honda. Now you have my attention. Because—even if I typically prefer my cars a bit quicker (0-60 mph in roughly 8 seconds) and generally like transmissions that don't moan like a haunted house—for 30 grand, the Civic Touring is fabulous! For 30 thousand it's a silver spaceship, a superyacht, an Arabian stallion with diamond-studded horseshoes. For 30 grand, it's the Magna Carta and Honda is old King John.

If I seem enthusiastic about the price, it's only because I have recently done some shopping at the 30-thou threshold. Yikes. There are some pretty plucked chickens in this segment. The Civic's touch-and-feel—leather-trimmed seats, wheel and shifter—its instrumentation, its quotient of active-safety features, all recommend themselves highly for the price.

If these are the road manners and refinement that Civic takes into the foreseeable future, that's cool. The chassis changes were mostly refinement of the various elastomeric components, bushings and such, in the MacPherson strut front/multi-link rear. Overall the ride quality is liveable but it can still be a wee bit choppy at times. The e-assisted electric steering can snap the Civic's head around nicely. But if you open up the throttle while cornering the front tires grip fades away, progressively and benignly, but away. I think a set of summer tires would be transformational. Oh right, we're keeping it under 30 grand.

It's also fair to say the Civic looks ahead. The new design uses Honda's new, single-camera sensor for its advanced driver assist systems (ADAS), providing “a wider field of view than the previous radar-and-camera based system,” the company says. With new software and a more powerful processor, the system is “capable of more quickly and accurately identifying pedestrians, bicyclists and other vehicles, along with road lines and road signs.”

What a great little car for the money. The Civic's single experiential downside is its internal-combustion engine's backing track of fricative flatulence, snurrs and moos. The rest feels sort of immortal. I can't wait for an electric Civic. For \$30,000.

No Sticks, Stones or Broken Bones

At-home exercise injuries have skyrocketed during the pandemic. Here, exercise experts share their best tips on how to stay safe.

JOE JOHNSON knew better. A fitness instructor certified by the National Academy of Sports Medicine, he'd always safely bench-pressed with a spotter at the gym. But with the pandemic “that wasn't an option,” he said. When he hurt his shoulder during a particularly rigorous at-home solo session last September, he went to the hospital. “Turns out I'd torn my rotator cuff and couldn't train for six weeks,” he said.

At-home exercise injuries resulting in an emergency room visit increased by more than 48% from 2019 through the end of 2020, according to a survey from Medicare marketplace MedicareAdvantage.com using U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission data. Treadmills and stationary bikes accounted for a combined 37% of all injuries, but even push-ups and stretching made the list. Here, exercise experts weigh in on how to stay safe.



Don't Forget to Warm Up

“The body adapts to the postures and positions we put ourselves in,” explained Evan Matthews, Ph.D., an associate professor of exercise science and physical education at Montclair State University in Montclair, N.J. Sit for too long—as most of us are guilty of, especially during the pandemic—and your quadriceps tighten up, which inhibits your hips' and legs' ability to achieve full range of motion.

Warm up properly before a workout with five to 10 minutes of low-intensity cardio (think jogging or jumping rope), followed by dynamic exercises like lunges and squats that mimic the movements you'll be doing during training, said Dr. Matthews.

Vary Your Workouts

Even with a warmup, going overboard on the one piece of equipment you invested in during the pandemic can set you up for overuse injuries like cyclist's knee or shin splints. “These tend to happen when you over-stress the same muscle groups without giving your body a chance to recover fully,” said Dr. Matthews.

Instead of moving your body in the same plane of motion day after day—i.e., spinning your wheels on your Peloton—vary your workouts so you're moving in all three planes of motion (up and down, side to side, front and back) two or three times a week, said Naresh Rao, O.D., an osteopathic primary care physician and sports medicine specialist in New York City. A piece of equipment like the Zeno Workout Bench One (\$345, zenogym.com), with built-in resistance bands, allows for hundreds of workout moves that boost total-body strength and cardio health.

Learn Proper Technique

Understanding how to safely perform any exercise is crucial to staying in one piece. “It's like riding a bicycle: You have to learn to ride before you can do it alone,” said Dr. Rao. Without proper guidance, a small imbalance or form issue can be exacerbated over hundreds of repetitions and eventually lead to injury.

This is where the advent of virtual fitness can help: Apps like Future (\$150/month, future.co) allow you

to send workout videos to a remote trainer who can provide feedback on your form and technique via instant message. And mirrors like *Forme Studio* (\$2,495 plus \$30 a month; forme-life.com) have built-in two-way cameras for coaches to correct you in real time, thereby “catching issues early, so they don't progress into something more serious,” said Dr. Rao.

Set Up Your Space for Success

Think through the environment where you're breaking a sweat. When you're climbing off your treadmill, you don't want to trip into a laundry basket. Place free weights and resistance bands on wall-mounted storage like the *StoreWall Deluxe Home Fitness Kit* (\$500, storewall.com) so they aren't in your way as you jump back during burpees. Protect your joints from hardwood surfaces with a mat like one from *Yo Gorilla* (from \$160, gorillamats.com). The fewer obstacles, the less likely your chance of injury—and the more likely you are to max out your workout.

—Ashley Mateo