## ROAD REPORT

# The Most—and Least— **Reliable Cars You Can Buy**

Want to stay out of the repair shop? We got 1 million responses to our survey—and found out which brands you can rely on ... and which are time and budget drainers.

WHEN YOU BUY a new car, the last thing you want is an unscheduled trip back to the dealership to fix some problem the automaker or dealer should have caught before the car was sold. But every year, the Consumer Reports auto-reliability survey tells us that some owners will return over and over again.

Our annual survey collects responses on more than 1 million vehicles from Consumer Reports subscribers, generating enough exclusive data to let us predict which new cars, trucks, and SUVs are likely to be reliable and which are troublesome. It also can spot major problem trends among certain carmakers and component areas.

### Who's on Top, Who's Not:

- Most of the top 10 brands were Asian, with Lexus and Toyota leading the league by a comfortable margin. One of the reasons Toyota achieves this level of reliability, we believe, is because it introduces new technologies slowly and on proven platforms. By contrast, manufacturers such as Ford will sometimes launch a topto-bottom redesign with new technology in many areas of the car; it then takes years to work the bugs out.
- The top European brand was Audi, which continued its reliability renaissance after its third-from-bottom showing in our 2011 survey. Buick was the only domestic brand to break the top 10.
- Though some all-new cars beat the odds with high marks right out of the box, such as the BMW 4 series and Kia Cadenza, many do not. Perhaps the most important new vehicle with a lousy first year was the big-selling Chevrolet Silverado/ GMC Sierra 1500 series pickup truck lines. The problems were spread over several areas. Our standing advice: Wait a year or two after the introduction of a new

model before taking the plunge.

The fastest growing number of complaints by far involve infotainment systems: audio, navigation, and in-car communications. Results from previous surveys showed that problem areas most often included unresponsive touch screens or poorly functioning multifunction controllers, inability to sync smart phones with Blue-tooth or the docking port, and trouble in getting the voice-command system to recognize verbal commands.

The worst infotainment offender was the new Infiniti O50 sedan's InTouch system, with more than one in five owners reporting a problem. Updates and changes to Ford and Lincoln's notorious MyTouch systems have made them much less troublesome each year. Honda seems to have fixed a glitch with its HondaLink. And Chrysler has ironed out reliability wrinkles with updates to its easy-to-use Uconnect system. However, Cadillac's Cue system remains a problem.



## **Luxury Isn't What** It Used to Be. (It's Better)

The saying went that high-end luxury cars were reliably unreliable. If we look back at our surveys from a decade ago, the bottom of the pool was littered with European automakers: BMW, Jaguar, Lincoln, and Mercedes, while Audi, Cadillac, and Volvo were midpack or worse.

Conventional wisdom dictated that because high-end cars have more gadgets, they have more things that can go wrong. Though that maxim was mostly true, the concept was contradicted by Lexus. which had ironclad reliability.

The picture today is quite different. More gadgets don't necessarily equate to more problems, at least when the car is new. Tesla launched its high-tech Model S with average reliability and has remained reliable. And European makers have made great strides to improve their reliability.

In fact, Audi has emerged as one of the top brands. Moreover, in addition to every Lexus and Acura, all Audis, Porsches, and Volvos are apt to have average or better reliability. BMW now has only one model that we predict will be subpar.

Not that every luxury brand has escalated: Infiniti fell sharply this year, for the same reason that plagued the European luxury brands-too many gadgets with faulty components.

Meanwhile, the car market itself has evolved, with luxury marques adding more small cars and invading the compact SUV market.

However, as luxury high-tech equipment-such as heated seats, rear-view cameras, and complex infotainment systems-has trickled down to mainstream brands, the overall reliability of those vehicles hasn't necessarily suffered. Reliable brands tend to stay that way, despite the addition of all of the toys.

One note: Avoiding gadgets doesn't avoid problems. Many "cheap and cheerful" budget cars performed poorly in the survey.

## ROAD REPORT

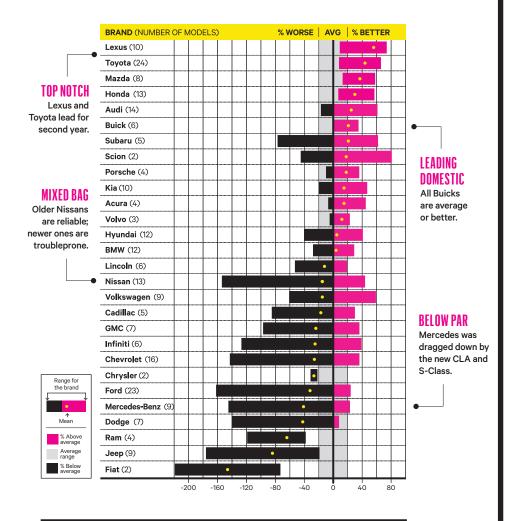


## **Reliability: How the Brands Stack Up**

This table shows how the brands rank based on the average of their models' predicted-reliability scores. A measure of the brand's consistency can be seen in the span of their scores, cross-referenced by how many different models they produce.

The bars illustrate a brand's consistency by showing the reliability range between its most and least reliable models. The numerals indicate the number of models included.

To score a brand, we need sufficient data on at least two models. That led us to exclude Jaguar, Land Rover, Mini, Mitsubishi and Tesla.



1,078,364

Number of vehicles in our survey

# Most Improved Cars ... and Biggest Losers

#### **BRANDS THAT GAINED THE MOST:**

- Lincoln
- Hyundai
- Kia

This year, Lincoln moved up 12 spots, finishing in 15th place, with four models scoring average and only two below average. Hyundai moved up eight places, finishing 13th. Kia moved up to 10th place, with all models having average or better scores.

#### **BRANDS THAT FELL THE MOST:**

- Infiniti
- Mercedes-Benz
- GMC

Infiniti dropped 14 steps this year to 20th, clobbered by poor showings for its QX60 SUV and Q50 sedan. Mercedes dropped 11 places, dragged down by a dreadful CLA debut. GMC dropped 10 places, finishing 19th, largely because of the Sierra 1500 pickup.

#### MODELS THAT GAINED THE MOST:

- Honda Accord Coupe (V6)
- Cadillac ATS (V6)
- Ford Taurus (V6)
- Ford Explorer (V6, EcoBoost)
- Honda Accord Coupe (4-cyl)
- Lincoln MKX

The Cadillac ATS V6 graduated from below average to above average, while the others all improved from much worse than average to average or better. A big reason was revisions to the infotainment systems.

#### MODELS THAT FELL THE MOST:

- Jeep Compass
- Ram 2500 and 3500 diesel
- Nissan Sentra
- Infiniti QX60
- Cadillac ATS (turbo)
- Mercedes-Benz GL-Class

All of these vehicles fell from average or better last year to much worse than average this year. The Compass rating went south for a number of little problems. The Cadillac ATS (turbo) did not share the success of its sibling.

## ROAD REPORT: RELIABILITY



### **Subcompact Cars**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Toyota Yaris*			
Kia Rio*			
Hyundai Accent			
Nissan Versa Sedan*			
Nissan Versa Note*			
Hyundai Veloster	_		
Chevrolet Sonic			
Fiat 500			
Ford Fiesta (-162%)	7		



### **Midsized Cars**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Volkswagen Passat (1.8T)*			
Mazda6*			
Toyota Camry (4-cyl.)			
Honda Accord Sedan (4-cyl.)			
Toyota Camry (V6)			
Ford Fusion (1.5L EcoBoost)*			
Honda Accord Sedan (V6)		-	
Kia Optima (4-cyl.)			
Chevrolet Malibu		•	
Kia Optima (turbo)		ŀ	
Ford Fusion (2.0L EcoBoost)		ŀ	
Ford Fusion (2.5L)		4	
Volkswagen Passat TDI			
Nissan Altima (4-cyl.)	•		
Nissan Altima (V6)*			



### **Coupes and Convertibles**

MAKE & MODEL	% <b>\</b>	VORSE	A	VG.	% BE1	TEF
Audi A5						
Honda Accord Coupe (V6)						
BMW 4 Series*						
Honda Accord Coupe (4-cyl.)						
Volkswagen Eos						
Mercedes-Benz E-Class Coupe and Convertible						
Infiniti Q60			•			
Audi S5*	1					



## **Hybrid/Electric Cars**

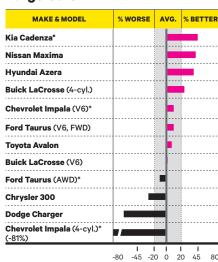
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	1	
7		



### **Luxury Compact Cars**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Lexus IS 350 Sedan*		-	
Acura ILX			
Buick Verano			
Infiniti Q40 (G sedan, RWD)			
Buick Regal			
Cadillac ATS (V6)*			
Volvo S60 (5- & 6-cyl.)			
Audi A4			
BMW 328d (diesel)*			
Lexus IS 250 Sedan*			
<b>BMW 320i,</b> 328i (AWD)			
BMW 335i			
<b>BMW 320i,</b> 328i (RWD)	ı		
Volkswagen CC			
Cadillac ATS (turbo)* (-85%)	7		
Infiniti Q50* (-127%)	/		
<b>Mercedes-Benz CLA</b> 250* (-145%)	7		
	-80 -45 -	20 0 2	20 45 80
	H	(ia Cade	nza

### **Large Cars**



### How to Use the Charts

The predicted-reliability scores on these pages are derived from the results of an annual Consumer Reports survey of our magazine and online subscribers, who tell us about problems they've experienced with their own cars in the previous 12 months.

This reliability survey is the largest of its kind, spanning nearly 1.1 million vehicles and identifying 17 trouble areas covering a car's components and systems. Respondents identify problems they consider serious, by reason of safety, failure, cost, or time out of service. Even a minor issue counts as serious if it means an unscheduled visit to the dealership.

The reliability Ratings of more than 200 new cars show whether a vehicle is expected to have a trouble rate better or worse than average. The predictions are based on the frequency of problems for the past three model years, provided the vehicle hasn't changed

significantly. Predictions based on a single year's data are marked with an asterisk (\*).

The charts' vertical line at zero represents the average for all cars. An "average" Rating goes to cars scoring within 20 percentage points of that line. A bar with a break indicates a score that fell outside the range of the chart.

One caveat: Our reliability Ratings and the road-test scores you see elsewhere in Consumer Reports are not related. Road-test Ratings come from cars we have purchased and tested. Reliability information comes solely from our subscribers. Those scores,

along with crash-test results, determine which cars we recommend.

So though the Mitsubishi Outlander Sport has excellent reliability, it wasn't recommended in our road tests. Conversely, the Chevrolet Silverado and Mercedes S-Class tested well but showed subpar reliability in our survey.

# ROAD REPORT: RELIABILITY



## **Sporty Cars**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Honda Civic Si		-	
Mazda MX-5 Miata			
Porsche Cayman*			
Audi S4*			
Porsche Boxster*			
Chevrolet Camaro		-	
Porsche 911*			
Dodge Challenger			
Chevrolet Corvette Stingray*			
Hyundai Genesis Coupe*			
Ford Focus ST*	•		
Scion FR-S*			
Subaru BRZ*			



### **Compact Cars**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Scion xB (81%)			
Honda Civic Coupe			
Honda Civic Sedan			
Mazda3 (2.0L)*			
Subaru Impreza			
<b>Hyundai Elantra</b> Sedan			
Kia Soul*			
Toyota Corolla*			
<b>Hyundai Elantra</b> GT*			
Mazda3 (2.5L)*		-	
Kia Forte*		•	
Dodge Dart (2.0L)*			
Volkswagen Jetta TDI			
Chevrolet Cruze (1.8L)	_		
Volkswagen Beetle TDI*			
Volkswagen Jetta (1.8T)*			
Nissan Sentra* (-87%)			
Ford Focus (-95%)			
Dodge Dart (1.4T)* (-140%)			
Chevrolet Cruze (1.4T) (-143%)	/		
Fiat 500L* (-219%)	7		



### **Luxury Midsized/Large Cars**

Lexus LS  Lexus ES (V6)  Audi A6 (4-cyl.)  Lexus GS  Hyundai Equus*  Cadillac CTS (V6)*  Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ  (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS  Mercedes-Benz S-Class*	TE	% BET	VG.	A	VORSE	% <b>\</b>	DEL	MAKE & MOD	
Audi A6 (4-cyl.)  Lexus GS  Hyundai Equus*  Cadillac CTS (V6)*  Infiniti O70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS								us LS	Lexus
Lexus GS  Hyundai Equus*  Cadillac CTS (V6)*  Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS								us ES (V6)	Lexus
Hyundai Equus*  Cadillac CTS (V6)*  Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS	•							i <b>A6</b> (4-cyl.)	Audi A
Cadillac CTS (V6)*  Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS								us GS	Lexus
Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS								ndai Equus*	Hyund
Infiniti Q70  Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS		•					*	illac CTS (V6)*	Cadilla
E-Class Sedan (V6)  BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS									
BMW 528i  Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS									
Lincoln MKZ (V6)*  Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl, EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ	5)		
Audi A6 (V6)  BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ			
BMW 535i  Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ	•		
Audi A6 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ			
Audi A7 (diesel)*  Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ			
Audi A7 (nondiesel)  Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ			
Lincoln MKZ (4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS						ļ			
(4-cyl., EcoBoost)*  Acura RLX*  BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS			ļ				el) 		
BMW 7 Series*  Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS							*		
Lincoln MKS*  Cadillac XTS			-	T				ra RLX*	Acura
Cadillac XTS								W 7 Series*	BMW :
					-			oln MKS*	Lincol
Mercedes-Renz S-Class*								illac XTS	Cadilla
(-127%)						-/-	-Class*		



## Luxury Compact SUVs

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
<b>Audi Q5</b> (V6)			
Audi Q5 (diesel)*			
Mercedes-Benz GLK (diesel)*			
Mercedes-Benz GLK (V6)			
Buick Encore			
Audi Q5 (4-cyl.)			
BMW X3 (28i)			
BMW X1		-	
Acura RDX		_	
BMW X3 (35i)		•	
Cadillac SRX		ı	
Volvo XC60 (6-cyl.)	1	•	



### **Small SUVs**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTE
Mitsubishi Outlander Sport	:		
Subaru Forester			
(nonturbo)*			
Subaru XV Crosstrek			
Mazda CX-5 (2.5L)*			
Toyota RAV4			
Mazda CX-5 (2.0L)			
Honda CR-V			
Subaru Forester (turbo)*			•
Kia Sportage			
Hyundai Tucson			
Nissan Rogue*		•	
Nissan Juke		-	
Volkswagen Tiguan			
Jeep Patriot			
Ford Escape (2.0L EcoBoost)			
Mini Countryman			
Ford Escape (4-cyl., nonturbo)			
Jeep Compass*			
Jeep Cherokee (V6)* (-96%)			
Ford Escape			
(1.6L EcoBoost) (-121%)  Jeep Cherokee (4-cyl.)*			
(-176%)	/		

# IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED ...

10%

Complaint rate for 2011 Ford Explorer infotainment system when new

28%

Peak complaint rate for 2011 Ford Explorer since vehicle launch

Complaint rate for 2014 Ford Explorer's revised system

# ROAD REPORT: RELIABILITY



### **Midsized SUVs**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Toyota Highlander (V6)*			
Toyota 4Runner			
Chevrolet Equinox (4-cyl.)			
GMC Terrain (4-cyl.)			
Chevrolet Equinox (V6)			
GMC Terrain (V6)			•
Mazda CX-9			
Nissan Xterra			
Honda Pilot		•	
Ford Explorer (V6, EcoBoost)*		-	
Kia Sorento (V6)*		•	
Kia Sorento (4-cyl.)*			
Hyundai Santa Fe (V6)			
Ford Edge (V6)			
Hyundai Santa Fe Sport (4-cyl.)			
Ford Explorer (V6)			
Hyundai Santa Fe Sport (turbo)			
Dodge Journey			
Ford Edge (4-cyl.)			
Jeep Wrangler (2-door)			
Jeep Grand Cherokee (V6)*			
Jeep Wrangler (4-door)			
Jeep Grand Cherokee (V8)*			
Jeep Grand Cherokee (diesel)* (-134%)			
Nissan Pathfinder (-154%)	7		

# TOP AND BOTTOM

248

Number of models in the Ratings

**Number of** best-scoring models

**Number of worst**scoring models



## Large SUVs

% <b>\</b>	VORSE	A\	/G.	% BE	TER
				_	
1					
		C			
-80	-45 -2	0 0	) 2	0 45	80
	-80	-80 -45 -2	-80 -45 -20 (	-80 -45 -20 O 2	-80 -45 -20 0 20 45



## **Luxury Midsized/Large SUVs**

MAKE & MODEL	% WORSE	AVG.	% BETTER
Lexus RX			
Lexus RX Hybrid			
Lexus GX			
Infiniti QX80*			
Porsche Cayenne			
Buick Enclave			
Audi Q7		-	
Acura MDX*		ļ	
Lincoln MKX			
BMW X5 (35i)*		C	
Volkswagen Touareg			
Mercedes-Benz M-Class (nondiesel)			
Mercedes-Benz M-Class (diesel)*	_		
Lincoln MKT EcoBoost*			
Mercedes-Benz GL-Class (-102%)			
Infiniti QX60 (-113%)	7		



### **Compact Pickups**

MAKE & MODEL	% <b>\</b>	wors	E	AVG.		% BET	TER
Toyota Tacoma (V6, 2WD)						_	
Toyota Tacoma (4-cyl.)							
Toyota Tacoma (V6, 4WD)					•		
Nissan Frontier					ı		
	-80	-45	<b>-</b> 20	0	<b>1</b> 20	45	80



### **Full-Sized Pickups**

MAKE & MODEL	MAKE & MODEL % WORSE			
Toyota Tundra				
(V8, 2WD) Toyota Tundra				
(V8, 4WD)				
Ford F-250 & F-350		4		
Ford F-250 & F-350 (diesel)				
Ram 1500 (V8, 4WD)	_			
Ram 1500 (V8, 2WD)				
Ram 1500 (V6)				
Chevrolet Silverado 1500 (V8, 2WD)*				
GMC Sierra 1500 (V8, 2WD)*				
Chevrolet Silverado 1500 (V6)*				
GMC Sierra 1500 (V6)*				
Chevrolet Silverado 1500 (V8, 4WD)* (-97%)				
GMC Sierra 1500 (V8, 4WD)* (-97%)	7			
Ram 2500 & 3500 (diesel) (-152%)				



## **Wagons**

MAKE & MODEL	% !	WORSE	AVG	%	BET	ΓER
Audi Allroad*			-			
Toyota Venza (V6)						
Toyota Venza (4-cyl.)						
Mazda5						
Volvo XC70						
Honda Crosstour*						
	-80	-45 ·	1 I 20 0	1 20	1 45	80



### **Minivans**

MIIIIAAII2						
MAKE & MODEL	% V	vors	E A	VG.	% ВЕТ	TER
Toyota Sienna (FWD)						
Toyota Sienna (AWD)						
Nissan Quest						
Honda Odyssey						
Chrysler Town & Country				1		
Dodge Grand Caravan						
·	-80	-45	-20	0 2	0 45	80