



News Release

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IIHS updates used vehicle list for teens, shows why small cars should be avoided

ARLINGTON, Va. — When it's time for a new driver's first set of wheels, many young people and their parents opt for something cute and inexpensive — in other words, small. In terms of safety, that's a mistake.

IIHS recently conducted a pair of front-to-front crash tests demonstrating what happens to small cars and minicars — even new ones with stellar safety ratings — when they collide with larger used vehicles from the same manufacturer. The results show the importance of size and weight when it comes to occupant protection.

The tests reinforce a message IIHS has been sending since it began publishing an annual list of recommended used vehicles for teens in 2014: An older, larger used vehicle is often a safer choice than a newer small vehicle that costs the same. This year's list of recommended vehicles for teens includes 53 Best Choices, which start under \$20,000, and 62 Good Choices, which start under \$10,000. All the models on both lists are midsize cars or larger.

“We know safety is just one of the factors people consider when choosing a vehicle, but we hope parents will give it extra consideration when purchasing a vehicle for a teenager,” says Jessica Cicchino, IIHS vice president for research. “Teen drivers are at greater risk, due to immaturity and inexperience behind the wheel.”

In its regular vehicle ratings program, IIHS evaluates passenger vehicles of all sizes, and even minicars are eligible for the *TOP SAFETY PICK* and *TOP SAFETY PICK+* awards. That's a nod to the reality of the marketplace: Some consumers want small vehicles, and including them in the testing program encourages manufacturers to make those vehicles as safe as possible.

But the vehicles IIHS rates can't be compared across size and weight classes because the severity of the front and rear tests is determined in part by the vehicle's own weight. Consumers who opt for smaller vehicles are choosing a lower level of protection even if they purchase a *TOP SAFETY PICK* winner.

Kia Sorento vs. Kia Forte and Toyota Avalon vs. Toyota Yaris iA

In the first of the two demonstration tests, a used 2016 Kia Sorento, a midsize SUV, and a 2018 Kia Forte, a small car, collided with each other. In the second test, a used 2015 Toyota Avalon, a large car, was paired with a 2018 Toyota Yaris iA, a minicar. Both the Sorento and the Avalon are among the IIHS Best Choices for teens. The Forte and the Yaris iA have good ratings in the five IIHS tests relevant to driver protection, and the Forte is a 2018 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winner.

In each test, the vehicles traveled toward each other at 40 mph, with 50 percent of the smaller vehicle's width overlapping the larger vehicle.



Forces on the driver dummies in the smaller vehicles were much greater than those in the larger vehicles. Measurements indicated a high likelihood of head injuries for the driver of both the Yaris iA and the Forte in a real-world crash of the same severity. Right leg injuries would be likely in the Forte and possible in the Yaris iA. Neck and chest injuries would also be possible for drivers of both vehicles, and left leg injuries would be possible in the Forte.

In contrast, the Avalon and Sorento had mostly good injury measures, aside from a possible right leg injury in both.

The structures of the Forte, which weighs 928 pounds less than the Sorento, and the Yaris iA, which weighs 1,033 pounds less than the Avalon, didn't hold up as well against the larger vehicles as in the car-to-barrier tests that IIHS ratings are based on.

In the crash with the Sorento, the Forte had an acceptable structural rating, with maximum intrusion of 8 inches at the left toepan. In the crash with the Avalon, the Yaris iA also had an acceptable structural rating, with maximum intrusion of 10 inches at the center toepan. In contrast, the Forte and the Yaris iA earn good structural ratings in the moderate overlap and the driver-side small overlap front crash tests.

The Avalon and the Sorento had good structural performance in the paired crashes.

"Bigger vehicles provide greater protection," Cicchino says. "If you're riding in one of the smallest vehicles on the road, you'll be at a disadvantage in a crash with almost any other vehicle around you."

115 vehicles to choose from

IIHS compiles its list of recommended used vehicles for teens to help families choose vehicles with good safety credentials and reasonable price tags. Vehicles must meet specific safety criteria without exceeding the price limits. For the first time, IIHS is also factoring in data on insurance claim rates under first-party injury coverages. Prices for the used vehicles are provided by Kelley Blue Book, based on estimates for a private-party purchase near the Institute's Arlington, Va., office.

In addition to skipping minicars and small cars, the lists avoid excessive horsepower. Young drivers may be tempted to test the limits of a powerful engine. IIHS research has found that high-horsepower vehicles are more likely to exceed the speed limit. Analysis by HLDI, meanwhile, has found that high horsepower is strongly associated with higher insurance losses.

Vehicles that only come with powerful engines have been left off the lists, but some recommended models have high-horsepower versions. Parents are advised to stick with the base engines.

All recommended vehicles come with standard electronic stability control. This technology, which has been required on all new vehicles since the 2012 model year, cuts single-vehicle fatal crash risk in half by helping drivers maintain control on curves and slippery roads.

The models on this year's Good Choices list earn good ratings in the Institute's moderate overlap front, side, head restraints and roof strength tests. This is the first year that roof strength has been factored in for the under-\$10,000 Good Choices list.

Vehicles on the Best Choices list (under \$20,000) must meet the same criteria and also have a good or acceptable rating in the driver-side small overlap front test. This test, which was introduced in 2012, replicates what happens when the front, driver-side corner of a vehicle strikes another vehicle or an object such as a tree or utility pole.

Data on insurance losses were used to further narrow down the Best Choices. Models with substantially higher than average claim rates under medical payment or personal injury protection coverage were scratched from the list. Both coverage types pay for injuries to occupants of the insured vehicle. Which of the two coverages is sold in a given state



depends on the type of insurance system the state has. HLDI publishes insurance loss data by make and model every year.

"The data that HLDI collects provide another perspective on how vehicles keep their occupants safe in the real world," Cicchino says.

Although many options are close to the \$20,000 limit, there are a range of prices. The least expensive Best Choice is the 2005 Volvo XC90, which is estimated at \$3,700.

If rated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), vehicles on either list must earn 4 or 5 stars overall or 4 or 5 stars in the front and side tests under NHTSA's old rating scheme, which was used through the 2010 model year.

"Our list of recommended used vehicles shows you don't have to spend a fortune to keep your new driver safe," Cicchino says. "You just have to be willing to spend a little time looking for a good deal on the right used vehicle."

See following pages for complete lists of Best Choices and Good Choices.

For more information, go to iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing the losses — deaths, injuries and property damage — from motor vehicle crashes. The Institute is wholly supported by auto insurers.



Best Choices: recommended used vehicles for teens starting under \$20,000

Vehicles on this list earn good ratings in the IIHS moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests and good or acceptable ratings in the driver-side small overlap front test. If rated by NHTSA, they earn 4 or 5 stars overall or 4 or 5 stars in the front and side tests under the old rating scheme. All come with standard ESC.

Vehicles with substantially higher than average claim frequency under medical payment or personal injury protection coverage are excluded from this list.

All listed vehicles start under \$20,000. Prices, provided by Kelley Blue Book and rounded to the nearest \$100, are from Sept. 15, 2018, for the lowest trim level and earliest applicable model year. The estimates are based on the following criteria: vehicle in good condition, typical mileage and private party purchase in Arlington, Va.

Some listed models include a “built after” date. This applies when a manufacturer makes changes to improve safety in the middle of a model year. Information about when a specific vehicle was manufactured can be found on the certification label typically affixed to the driver door or near it.

| MIDSIZE CARS | PRICE |
|--|--------------|
| Volkswagen Passat (2013 and newer; built after October 2012) | \$6,600 |
| Volvo S60 (2011 and newer) | \$7,900 |
| Ford Fusion (2013 and newer; built after December 2012) | \$8,100 |
| Subaru Legacy (2013 and newer; built after October 2012) | \$8,300 |
| Honda Accord coupe (2013 and newer) | \$8,900 |
| Volkswagen Jetta (2015 and newer) | \$8,900 |
| Mazda 6 (2014 and newer) | \$9,000 |
| Honda Accord sedan (2013 and newer) | \$9,400 |
| Subaru Outback (2013 and newer; built after August 2012) | \$10,300 |
| Acura TL (2012–14; built after April 2012) | \$10,700 |
| Lincoln MKZ (2013 and newer) | \$11,900 |
| Toyota Prius v (2015 and newer) | \$14,700 |
| Volvo V60 (2015 and newer) | \$14,800 |
| Audi A3 (2015 and newer) | \$15,000 |
| Acura TLX (2015; 2017 and newer) | \$16,500 |
| Infiniti Q50 (2014 and newer) | \$18,600 |
| BMW 2 series coupe (2015 and newer) | \$18,600 |



LARGE CARS

PRICE

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|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Volvo S80 (2007 and newer) | \$3,900 |
| Ford Taurus (2013 and newer) | \$10,000 |
| Chevrolet Impala (2015 and newer) | \$13,200 |
| Infiniti M37/Q70 (2013 and newer) | \$14,400 |
| Toyota Avalon (2015 and newer) | \$17,500 |
| Acura RLX (2014 and newer) | \$18,600 |
| Buick LaCrosse (2017 and newer) | \$19,800 |

SMALL SUVS

PRICE

| | |
|---|----------|
| Mazda CX-5 (2014 and newer; built after October 2013) | \$10,700 |
| Fiat 500X (2016 and newer; built after July 2015) | \$11,300 |
| Nissan Rogue (2014 and newer) | \$11,500 |
| Subaru Forester (2014 and newer) | \$12,000 |
| Buick Encore (2015 and newer) | \$12,300 |
| Honda CR-V (2015 and newer) | \$13,500 |
| Ford Escape (2017 and newer) | \$14,600 |
| Toyota RAV4 (2015 and newer; built after November 2014) | \$14,800 |
| Hyundai Tucson (2016 and newer) | \$15,100 |
| Mazda CX-3 (2016 and newer) | \$15,100 |
| Kia Sportage (2017 and newer) | \$15,900 |

MIDSIZE SUVS

PRICE

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Volvo XC90 (2005 and newer) | \$3,700 |
| Ford Flex (2011 and newer) | \$8,700 |
| Chevrolet Equinox (2014 and newer) | \$11,700 |
| GMC Terrain (2014 and newer) | \$12,900 |
| Volvo XC60 (2013 and newer) | \$12,900 |
| Kia Sorento (2016 and newer) | \$15,900 |
| Nissan Pathfinder (2015 and newer) | \$16,300 |
| Nissan Murano (2015 and newer) | \$17,200 |



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|---|----------|
| Ford Edge (2016 and newer) | \$17,600 |
| Toyota Highlander (2014 and newer) | \$17,600 |
| Hyundai Santa Fe Sport (2017 and newer) | \$17,700 |
| Acura MDX (2014 and newer) | \$19,600 |
| Hyundai Santa Fe (2017 and newer; built after March 2016) | \$19,800 |

MINIVANS

PRICE

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|--------------------------------|----------|
| Honda Odyssey (2014 and newer) | \$12,700 |
| Kia Sedona (2015 and newer) | \$12,800 |
| Toyota Sienna (2015 and newer) | \$17,500 |

SMALL PICKUP

PRICE

| | |
|---|----------|
| Toyota Tacoma Access Cab (2016 and newer) | \$18,100 |
|---|----------|

LARGE PICKUP

PRICE

| | |
|---|----------|
| Toyota Tundra Double Cab (2014 and newer) | \$19,000 |
|---|----------|



Good Choices: recommended used vehicles for teens starting under \$10,000

Vehicles on this list earn good ratings in the IIHS moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests. If rated by NHTSA, they earn 4 or 5 stars overall or 4 or 5 stars in the front and side tests under the old rating scheme. All come with standard ESC.

All listed vehicles start under \$10,000. Prices, provided by Kelley Blue Book and rounded to the nearest \$100, are from Sept. 15, 2018, for the lowest trim level and earliest applicable model year. The estimates are based on the following criteria: vehicle in good condition, typical mileage and private party purchase in Arlington, Va.

Some listed models include a “built after” date. This applies when a manufacturer makes changes to improve safety in the middle of a model year. Information about when a specific vehicle was manufactured can be found on the certification label typically affixed to the driver door or near it.

| MIDSIZE CARS | PRICE |
|---|---------|
| Volkswagen Jetta sedan or wagon (2009-14) | \$3,800 |
| Volkswagen Passat sedan or wagon (2009-12) | \$4,300 |
| Volkswagen CC (2009 and newer) | \$4,700 |
| Chevrolet Malibu (2010 and newer; built after November 2009) | \$4,900 |
| Ford Fusion (2011-12) | \$4,900 |
| Subaru Legacy (2010-12) | \$4,900 |
| Audi A3 (2008-13) | \$5,000 |
| Volvo C30 (2008-13) | \$5,100 |
| Hyundai Sonata (2011 and newer) | \$5,400 |
| Audi A4 sedan or wagon (2009 and newer) | \$6,100 |
| Kia Optima (2011 and newer) | \$6,200 |
| Subaru Outback (2010-12) | \$6,200 |
| Mercedes-Benz C-Class sedan (2009 and newer) | \$6,900 |
| Honda Accord sedan (2012) | \$7,300 |
| Lincoln MKZ (2011-12) | \$7,700 |
| Buick Verano (2012-15) | \$8,000 |
| Toyota Camry (2012 and newer) | \$8,600 |
| Nissan Altima sedan (2013 and newer; built after November 2012) | \$8,900 |
| Toyota Prius v (2012-14) | \$9,100 |
| BMW 3 series sedan (2012 and newer) | \$9,900 |



LARGE CARS

PRICE

| | |
|--|---------|
| Buick LaCrosse (2010-16) | \$6,200 |
| Ford Taurus (2010-12) | \$6,500 |
| Buick Regal (2011-17) | \$6,800 |
| Saab 9-5 (2010-11) | \$7,100 |
| Lincoln MKS (2009-16) | \$7,400 |
| Cadillac CTS sedan (2011 and newer) | \$8,300 |
| Hyundai Azera (2012 and newer) | \$8,400 |
| Hyundai Genesis sedan (2011 and newer) | \$8,600 |
| Dodge Charger (2011 and newer) | \$8,800 |
| Chrysler 300 (2011 and newer) | \$8,900 |
| Toyota Avalon (2011-14) | \$9,300 |

SMALL SUVS

PRICE

| | |
|---|---------|
| Honda Element (2007-11) | \$4,400 |
| Volkswagen Tiguan (2009 and newer) | \$5,100 |
| Mitsubishi Outlander Sport (2011 and newer) | \$5,600 |
| Subaru Forester (2009-13) | \$5,600 |
| Hyundai Tucson (2010-15) | \$5,900 |
| Kia Sportage (2011-16) | \$6,600 |
| Ford Escape (2013-16) | \$8,900 |
| Mitsubishi Outlander (2014 and newer) | \$9,300 |
| Mazda CX-5 (2013) | \$9,500 |
| Buick Encore (2013-14) | \$9,700 |
| Honda CR-V (2012 and newer) | \$9,700 |



MIDSIZE SUVS

PRICE

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Subaru B9 Tribeca/Tribeca (2006-14) | \$4,100 |
| Dodge Journey (2010 and newer) | \$5,100 |
| Hyundai Santa Fe (2011-16) | \$6,500 |
| Chevrolet Equinox (2011-13) | \$7,100 |
| Toyota Venza (2009-15) | \$7,300 |
| Volvo XC60 (2010-12) | \$7,400 |
| Infiniti EX (2008-13) | \$7,700 |
| Toyota Highlander (2008-13) | \$8,100 |
| GMC Terrain (2011-13) | \$8,200 |
| Kia Sorento (2012-15) | \$8,300 |
| Audi Q5 (2009 and newer) | \$9,700 |
| Ford Edge (2012 and newer) | \$9,900 |
| Ford Explorer (2011 and newer) | \$9,900 |

LARGE SUV

PRICE

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Chevrolet Traverse (2012-17) | \$9,300 |
|------------------------------|---------|

MINIVANS

PRICE

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Volkswagen Routan (2012) | \$6,400 |
| Dodge Grand Caravan (2012 and newer) | \$7,400 |
| Honda Odyssey (2011-13) | \$8,100 |
| Chrysler Town & Country (2012-16) | \$8,600 |
| Toyota Sienna (2011-14) | \$9,000 |

LARGE PICKUP

PRICE

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Toyota Tundra Double Cab (2007-13) | \$8,600 |
|------------------------------------|---------|

