



## IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTORING AT  
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR  
PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

I'm a sales rep and drive from 50 to 170km per day, mainly highway, in my much-loved 2008 Holden Astra. I get a \$15,000 annual car allowance and work's told me to upgrade my bat poo paint-damaged Astra. I want a new small sedan or hatch up to \$25,000 that's quick off the mark and at making lane changes, with good fuel economy. I've always been a Holden man, want value and intend to keep the car for 10 years.

Damien John, email

You plan to keep the car a long time and cover many kilometres so a long, unlimited kilometre warranty is ideal. Kia offer seven-years/unlimited, so consider a Cerato S Auto with safety pack at \$24,990 drive-away. It's not that zippy or economical, but Kia's smaller turbocharged Rio GT-Line (\$23,990 drive-away) would solve this. You're a Holden man, so scour the classifieds for dealers with new/demo Astra RS hatchbacks. Many are under \$25k, feature-packed and have a rapid turbo engine. That'd be my pick, and Holden's committed to providing 10 years servicing and spare parts even with its closure. If they're not too small, a VW Polo Comfortline (\$24,490 drive-away) or Suzuki Swift GLX Turbo (\$22,990 drive-away) also meet your criteria, but the latter needs to be serviced every 10,000km rather than the typical 15,000km.

## FEELING BLUE

Reading Toby Hagon's Outback Explorer feature on ute-based 4WDs, why no mention of the Ford Everest needing Adblue in its tank? I think that's very relevant when buying a 4WD for remote travelling.

Ian Glick, email



Fair point. AdBlue is a fluid (that's one-third urea) stored in a small tank that's automatically injected into the exhaust system to reduce nitrous oxide emissions. Ford says the Everest's 18L tank of AdBlue typically lasts 12-16,000km. That's a long time between drinks, and the vehicle gives plenty of warning before it runs out. Some diesel engines from Audi, Mercedes, BMW, Land Rover, Peugeot and others also need AdBlue.

## WHEEL NUTS

Re Chris Wares' unhappy memories of old cars, as far as safety's concerned, the age of the car is irrelevant. As the old adage goes, the most dangerous part of any car is the nut behind the wheel. Modern cars do way too much for the driver. Older cars forced you to really drive. You had too much to concentrate on so you never got bored, felt the need to check your phone, apply makeup, eat breakfast, whatever. Maybe that made them safer.

Helen Moss, email

A valid point about some modern cars doing too much for the driver. It's hard to not get lazy when a car guides itself between the white lines, checks your blind-spot, parallel parks automatically and autonomously follows the car in front in traffic. But we can't overlook a modern car's vastly better passive safety. That's its ability to protect occupants in an accident, such as its crash



structure and airbags. Even the best drivers make mistakes, or can be innocently caught up in somebody else's accident. I love classic cars, but I'd much prefer my family and I were in a 2020 Volvo than a 1972 Toyota in such circumstances.

## DEPRECIATION APPRECIATION

Folks can put down pre-1970 vehicles all they like, but our 1966 Ford Mustangs (one coupe, one convertible) are worth a lot more today than we've spent on them. They appreciate rather than depreciate, and are much cheaper to service and repair than our modern vehicles. Try changing a headlight bulb on the side of the road in most modern cars.

Frank Basile, email

Lot of truth in what you say, Frank, especially depreciation and the cost of fixing complex (electronics) and supposedly simple (headlight globes) parts on new cars. But I'm forced to remove my rose-tinted specs to champion modern cars' comfort and driveability. I love a classic Mustang, but on a wet, windy, dark, 200-kilometre highway drive to get to the airport on time, hand me the keys to a whitegoods Toyota Corolla.

## TYRE MASTER

Re tyre wear, I sympathise with the reader with the fancy Merc and Audi, even if my 2007 Peugeot diesel is worth the same as his replacement tyres! I use Mastercraft tyres: I've just replaced two at 85,000km and the other two should last another 20,000km. They don't corner as well as some, but they certainly last.

David Bowen, email

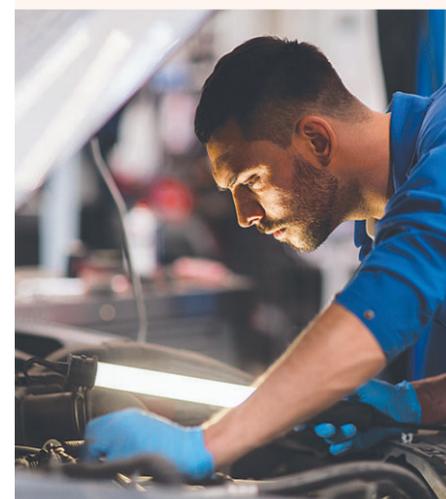
Impressive. Mastercraft — owned by Cooper Tires — prides itself on high mileage tyres, and I notice it offers an "Australia-wide guarantee for up to 60,000km." I've never tested a set, but for grand touring or classic cars they look worth investigating, and they're cheap too. I'd say Mercedes-AMG owners need not apply.

## CUT-PRICE RUBBER

Re tyre wear, the factory-fitted Continentals on my HSV Clubsport R8 wore rapidly, so I've replaced them with Kumhos. They're half the price, quiet, wear better, and seem to have the same grip for day to day use.

Doug Anderson, email

I put Kumho Ecstas on an old BMW I once owned, and was impressed with their roadholding and longevity for the money.



## Tough times ahead

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF,  
LOOK AFTER YOUR CAR



Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO

The coronavirus situation is putting a lot of pressure on households, and this extends to managing the normal round of bills that keep arriving.

History has shown that things tighten up economically in situations like this. In those instances car maintenance — and more specifically its regular servicing — can take a back seat and, in some cases, not get done at all.

There are some major risks here, not least of which is the safety of the vehicle and other road users.

It's too easy to get used to the fact that the brakes feel fine even though the car is well over its service period. But the condition of the brake fluid, the amount of braking friction that can be generated and a lack of observation around the condition of the brake assembly is all a recipe for disaster.

Tyres are another classic example. Sometimes their condition can be 'out of sight, out of mind' — until it's too late.

Engine and transmission oil, and radiator coolant changes are also required at specified intervals. So don't skimp there, either.

Consumers with newer cars need to be mindful of the relationship between regular servicing and warranties. The dealer or the manufacturer cannot be blamed if an engine is destroyed due to a lack of servicing.

Finally, cars that aren't serviced regularly just have a compounding repair liability, which can lead to larger repairs than would have ordinarily been needed.

So, at this time, keep safe, and keep your car safe too.

Prepared by the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce in the interest of better motoring.

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