

OVERALL SCORE

84

CR Recommended

2021 Subaru Legacy

CR MPG Overall 28/ City 19/ Hwy 39 mpg
#3 of 11 Midsize Cars

ROAD TEST

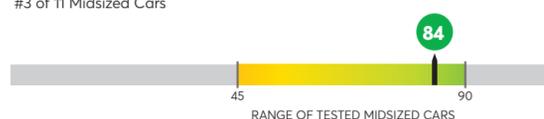
89/100

PREDICTED RELIABILITY

3/5

PREDICTED OWNER SATISFACTION

4/5



- HIGHS**
- Ride
 - Transmission
 - Trunk space
 - Standard automatic emergency braking

- LOWS**
- Some controls require multiple steps

Road Test Results

Performance

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Acceleration | 3/5 |
| 0 to 60 mph | 8.9 sec |
| Transmission | 5/5 |
| Fuel Economy | 4/5 |
| CR's Overall Mileage | 28 mpg |
| CR's City Mileage | 19 mpg |
| CR's Highway Mileage | 39 mpg |
| Annual Fuel Cost | \$1,040 |
| Braking | 4/5 |
| Emergency Handling | 4/5 |

Comfort/Convenience

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Ride | 5/5 |
| Noise | 4/5 |
| Front Seat Comfort | 4/5 |
| Rear Seat Comfort | 4/5 |
| Interior Fit & Finish | 4/5 |
| Trunk/Cargo Area | 4/5 |

Survey Results

Reliability History



Owner Satisfaction



CR Road Test Results

Subaru loyalists will be pleased that the redesigned-for-2020 Legacy doesn't stray far from the previous model, and that a host of improvements helps it rank among the top midsize sedans. The Legacy is sensible, comfortable, quiet, and easy to live with in almost every way, plus it comes with all-wheel drive, a unique standard feature in the class.

One of the first things you'll notice when driving the Legacy is its superbly smooth ride. Its suspension soaks up bumps and potholes with an uncanny fluidity that's better than some luxury sedans costing three times as much. The cabin remains hushed, too, though the standard four-cylinder engine can get boisterous when pushed. The uplevel turbocharged engine has a quieter demeanor.

The Legacy tackles corners with restrained levels of body lean, feeling responsive and secure, but it isn't as sporty as a Ford Fusion or Mazda6. The steering could use a bit more feedback to the driver regarding road texture and cornering loads. Still, its 54.5 mph speed through our accident avoidance maneuver test is impressive, and a testament to the Legacy's utterly controllable, driver-friendly nature.

The Legacy's driving position accommodates many body types, with plenty of headroom, cushy armrests, and a well-designed center console with a cutout for right knee space. Slim roof pillars and generously-sized side windows allow excellent outward views. Other high points include a roomy rear seat and large trunk.

If you're looking for a peppy personality, though, the standard engine may not be for you. The 182-horsepower, 2.5-liter four-cylinder needs

to be revved pretty high on the tachometer to make significant power, and it can feel strained when climbing hills or merging onto highways. And the 8.9 seconds it takes the Legacy to run from 0-60 mph is nearly one second slower than the Honda Accord and Toyota Camry. The Legacy's 28-mpg overall fuel economy is good for an all-wheel-drive sedan, but that's a few mpg behind those same front-wheel-drive rivals.

The uplevel turbocharged 260-hp, 2.4-liter (denoted as XT) engine transforms the Legacy, providing it with effortless punch, but at the expense of fuel economy. We tested an Outback (basically a raised wagon version of the Legacy) with this engine and it sprinted from 0-60 mph in 7.1 seconds, but dropped 4 mpg overall. The continuously variable transmission (CVT) fitted to either engine mimics the shift pattern of conventional automatic transmissions. This helps it mask some of the common CVT quirks, such as the engine revs rising more quickly than the speed of the car.

Unfortunately, Subaru has taken a turn for the worse with its infotainment system. The large screen, fitted to all versions except the base model, requires multiple steps to perform some common tasks, mostly ones related to the climate-control system.

Standard advanced driver assistance features include forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection, lane departure warning, and adaptive cruise control. It's disappointing that blind spot warning and rear cross traffic warning cost extra.

It also shares most components with the Outback. An optional 260-hp, 2.4-liter four-cylinder turbocharged engine replaces the previous six-cylinder option. Starting with the 2021 model year, steering responsive headlights, which are designed to swivel according to steering input to give added visibility in corners, are standard on all trims.

To read the full road test, visit www.consumerreports.org/cars/subaru/legacy/2021/road-test

Best Version to Get

Whether opting for the standard 2.5-liter or 2.4-liter turbo (XT) engine, we would gravitate toward the Limited trim level to get the more supportive leather seats, including a power front passenger seat. Shoppers opting for the lower Premium trim should make sure to choose the optional package with blind spot and rear cross traffic warning systems.

Notable changes:

The Legacy is new for 2020, and is based on Subaru's latest platform.

New Cars

(as of November 2020)



| CR Recommended | Make & Model | Overall Score | Road Test Results | | Survey Results | | Highs | Lows |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | Road-test score | Overall mpg | Predicted reliability | Owner satisfaction | | |
| ✓ | 2021 Toyota Camry | 88 | 86 | 32 | ⬆️ | ⬆️ | Comfortable ride, excellent fuel economy, braking (non hybrid), easy-to-use controls, hybrid gets great mpg and doesn't rob trunk space, standard automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection. | Low stance hurts access, engine sound can be unpleasant (non hybrid), transmission not always smooth (non hybrid), pairing a phone is not easy. |
| ✓ | 2021 Honda Accord | 84 | 89 | 31 | ⬇️ | ⬆️ | Responsive handling, comfortable ride, fuel economy, controls, standard advanced safety features. | Low stance hurts access. |
| ✓ | 2021 Subaru Legacy | 84 | 89 | 28 | ⬇️ | ⬆️ | Ride, transmission, trunk space, standard automatic emergency braking. | Some controls require multiple steps. |
| ✓ | 2021 Mazda 6 | 83 | 79 | 28 | ⬆️ | ⬆️ | Handling, ride, fit and finish, standard forward collision warning and automatic emergency braking. | Relatively tight quarters, acceleration with standard engine. |
| ✓ | 2021 Honda Clarity | 80 | 74 | 102 | ⬆️ | ⬆️ | Acts as an EV for short distances, ride comfort, interior room. | Clumsy handling, front seat comfort, confusing controls, small gas tank for long trips. |
| ✓ | 2021 Nissan Altima | 79 | 81 | 31 | ⬆️ | ⬇️ | Controls, fuel economy, standard automatic emergency braking. | Agility, ease of entry. |
| ✓ | 2020 Ford Fusion | 78 | 81 | 24 | ⬇️ | ⬆️ | Nimble handling makes it fun to drive, supple ride and quiet interior makes it feel substantial and upscale; hybrid version delivers outstanding fuel economy, optional Sync 3 infotainment system is easy to use, AWD is available, standard forward collision warning and automatic emergency braking. | EcoBoost 15-liter engine falls short in performance and fuel economy, the cabin is slightly snug, the rear-seat space is tight, and the view out is limited; sticker prices typically higher than some competitors, although discounts are commonplace; cloth front seats are unsupportive. |
| ✓ | 2021 Kia K5 | 73 | 86 | 28 | ⬇️ | ⬆️ | Controls, fuel economy, interior room, braking. | Hesitation from rolling stop, access, no power seat on LXS, likely confusion between GT-Line and GT variants. |
| ✓ | 2021 Volkswagen Passat | 72 | 77 | 28 | ⬇️ | ⬇️ | Controls, rear seat, visibility. | Abrupt launch, on-limit handling. |
| ✓ | 2021 Hyundai Sonata | 71 | 81 | 31 | ⬇️ | ⬆️ | Fuel economy, trusty handling, braking (non-hybrid), available tech features. | Ride, gear selector, rough shifts for hybrid's transmission |
| | 2021 Chevrolet Malibu | 45 | 80 | 29 | ⬇️ | ⬇️ | Quiet cabin, comfortable ride, roomy rear seat, very easy-to-use controls. | Cloth seats short on support, style hurts visibility and access, base 1.5-liter engine has a raspy tone. |

HOW TO READ THE RATINGS

Recommended vehicles, indicated with a check mark (✓), are the models with the highest Overall Scores that meet the threshold in their category.

Make • Model reflect the vehicle we tested and its engine displacement.

Overall Score reflects a vehicle's performance in our road tests; the latest results from the reliability and owner satisfaction sections of CR's exclusive Annual Auto Surveys; the availability of frontal crash prevention systems with forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking, and pedestrian detection, along with blind spot warning; and, if available, results from government and insurance-industry crash tests.

Survey Results reflect findings from CR's Annual Auto Surveys, completed by Consumer Reports members.

Predicted reliability is our determination of how well a model will hold up, based on the problems that members reported in CR's Annual Auto Surveys, which include data on around 420,000 vehicles.

Owner satisfaction is based on the percentage of surveyed owners who said they would definitely buy the same car again. We use a model's latest three years of data to determine the prediction, provided it hasn't been redesigned or significantly updated. In cases where we have insufficient survey responses, or when a model is all-new or redesigned, we use our expert judgment based on brand track record and similar models to predict reliability and owner-satisfaction ratings.

Road-Test Results include CR's test findings that we feel are the most relevant. We buy and test between 50 and 60 vehicles each year, driving them for thousands of miles and putting them through more than 50 tests and evaluations. The results of these tests make up our road-test score. Some tests, such as those for braking and fuel economy, are measured with instruments; categories such as seat and ride comfort, noise, and fit and finish are graded by our experts. The Usability rating is a combination of our testers' assessments of the ease of performing everyday driving tasks, as well as cockpit ergonomics and interface design. The energy consumption of electric vehicles is expressed in a miles-per-gallon equivalent rating (MPGe). Energy consumption for plug-in hybrids is listed in electric and gas modes.

Highs and Lows give a quick summary of a model's notable strengths and weaknesses.

What Our Ratings Symbols Mean



Go to CR.org/newcarbuyingguide for advice on whether you should buy or lease your next new car, and other car shopping tips.