

LIKES	DISLIKES
Long list of standard features Build quality Attention to detail to interior	High clutch pedal travel. Can't hear blinker operation

The original Suzuki Swift was launched in Australia in 1984, and with a zippy 1.3 litre engine, good build quality and attractive pricing, soon became a favourite with consumers. Owners that have kept Swift's long term have also been rewarded with class leading reliability, and there plenty of originals still on the road today.

The new model was previewed at the Sydney Motor Show, in 2004 and released in February 2005. Developed in Europe, Suzuki believe the new Swift will have wide international appeal., it's available as a five door in Australia, with a 1.5 litre engine with a choice of either manual or automatic transmission It replaces the Suzuki Ignis in the Suzuki model line up.

## VALUE FOR MONEY:

### PRICING

Pricing for the new range starts at \$15,990. The Swift S tested is \$17,990 an additional \$2,000. Automatic versions of both are available as a \$2,000 option. In the small car class pricing is critical for sales volume wise and looking over the field the Suzuki seems well positioned. The Hyundai Getz [\$13,990] and Ford Fiesta LX three door [\$14,990] two of the most popular choices in the class are slightly cheaper, and the Maxda2 Neo \$16,990 and Honda Jazz VTI [19,990] are more expensive.

### STANDARD FEATURES

The New Swift is a well appointed small car. It has a standard features list that beats some of its cheaper rivals and equals its more expensive opposition. Standard features include air-conditioning, Power Steering, Dual front air bags, ABS brakes with Brake assist and Electronic Brake Force Distribution, Power windows, a CD player and remote central locking. The Swift S gains some additional features, 15 inch alloy wheels, additional side air bags, and fog lamps.

## DESIGN & FUNCTION

### SPACE & PRACTICALITY

Luggage space with the rear seats in the upright position is tight, and the hatch opening is fairly narrow at the bottom, with the seats folded the floor is uneven, you can pivot the seat base into the back of the front seats which then makes the floor space flatter and allows you to carry loads of around 1 metre.

Entry into the front and rear is fine, the new Swift feels spacious when first seated. Two cup holders are provided in the centre console,

and there is plenty of storage for small odds and ends and a map pocket is in the rear of the passenger seat only. The glove box is small and fairly shallow.

### COMFORT

Front seat occupants get a supportive front seat that has enough side support to keep you in place through twisty sections of road. Rear legroom is a little tight, and taller passengers will find their knees are pushed into the back of the front seats but is still fine for most trips. The steering wheel is adjustable for reach and I found it quiet easy to adjust the seat and controls for a comfortable driving position.

### ERGONOMICS

Sitting behind the wheel for the first time the driving position feels quite high, the nose of the Swift drops away sharply from the front screen, so the high position helps in parking.

Dash design is simple and straight forward, a large speedometer is in the centre of the dash with the tacho positioned to its left. Two smaller dials for fuel and temperature are either side, all the instruments are easy to read.

Audio controls are in the leather bound steering wheel, the main controls for the audio system and air-conditioning are positioned centrally in the dash and are easy to use and operate first up.

The clutch pedal sits higher in relationship to the brake pedal and as well the clutch take up is towards the end of its travel, making it awkward to operate.

### SAFETY

The base model Swift has front air bags, and the S gains additional side air bags. Front seat belts have pre tensioners and load limiters. Being a new design incorporating the latest thinking in body rigidity the Swift scores well in the EuroNCAP safety ratings with a four star out of five rating for occupant safety.

### BUILD QUALITY & FINISH

Building on the platform laid by the previous generation of Swifts the latest version feels like a much better quality car than the price suggests. The interior treatment particularly to the dash has some real quality touches, and at this price a leather bound steering wheel is not usually found. Externally the new Swift is finished to a high standard.

### SECURITY

The New Swift has remote central locking and an engine immobiliser as standard. The Swift receives a score of 57.5 which is below average for vehicles in its class.



## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### ENGINE

Type..... Inline alloy DOHC four cylinder  
 Capacity in litres.....1,490  
 Induction.....Multi point fuel injection  
 Fuel recommendation ..... ULP  
 Claimed max. power..... 74kW@6,000  
 Claimed max. torque..... 133Nm@4,000

### TRANSMISSION

Type.....Five speed manual  
 Driving wheels .....Front

### WHEELS

.....Alloy 15x5.5  
 Tyres .....Bridgestone 185/60x15  
 Spare .....Space saver

### STEERING

Type.....Power assist rack and pinion  
 Turns lock to lock.....3.2  
 Turning circle..... 10 Metres

### DIMENSIONS

Mass.....1040kg  
 Length.....3695mm  
 Width (incl. mirrors)1935 mm).....1690mm  
 Height .....1510mm  
 Ground clearance (measured) .....141mm  
 Seating capacity.....5  
 Fuel tank capacity.....43 litres

### TOWING

Max. towed mass (trailer plus load)1,000 Max.  
 towball download (laden trailer).....NS

### NRMA THEFT RATING

Points on 0-120 scale (high score best).....57.5

WARRANTY .....Three years/100,000

MANUFACTURED IN ..... Japan

## TEST RESULTS

### ACCELERATION

50 - 80 km/h (in third gear).....6.3 sec  
 60 -100 km/h (in third gear).....8. sec  
 0 -80 km/h.....8.2 sec  
 0 - 100 km/h.....12.7 sec  
 0 - 400 metres .....18.4 sec

### FUEL CONSUMPTION (litres/100 km)

ADR81 .....7.

### BRAKING

Distance to stop from 80 km/h....29.6 metres

### NOISE

Interior at constant 80 km/h..... 71dB(A)

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 Suzuki Australia  
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## **ON THE ROAD**

### **PERFORMANCE**

Powering the new Swift is an all alloy 1.5 litre engine developing 74kW at 6,000 rpm and 133Nm of torque at 4,000 rpm. Design features include double overhead camshafts with variable valve timing and the unit has four valves per cylinder. It's designed to run happily on unleaded fuel.

Its on road performance is measured without being lively, it doesn't have that brisk feel that earlier models, especially the 1.3L GTI had. The five speed manual transmission is easy to operate, the high clutch pedal makes it a little awkward to use initially.

### **RIDE**

The European design influence is apparent in the Swifts on road characteristics, with the ride being firmer and more sports like than some of its opposition. There is plenty of well damped travel built in to the suspension that insulates passengers from rough, uneven surfaces.

### **HANDLING & STEERING**

Front suspension is the tried and proven Mac Pherson strut design the rear is a torsion beam with coil spring design. Steering is handled by a power assisted rack and pinion system, at higher speeds some steering kickback was evident, overall though the steering was communicative and the Swift displayed the on road confidence that only comes from a well thought out package.

### **BRAKING**

A front disc /rear drum combination with ABS is a little unusual in these times, disc brakes on all four wheels are becoming commonplace and the resulting braking performance wasn't the sharpest tested recently. On test though the brakes were consistent without any noticeable fade.

### **SMOOTHNESS & QUIETNESS**

Out on the open road, the new Swift was extremely quiet with little noticeable wind noise from around the external mirrors to distract the driver. The alloy 1.5 litre engine was refined and pushed up to its maximum revs without any fuss or increase in engine noise.

### **SUMMARY:**

The market place has changed dramatically since the launch of the Suzuki Swift back in the eighties, with new manufacturers and models now available in the small car class that weren't on the radar years ago. Back then the Suzuki Swift won a solid following by providing a lively, reliable small car at the right price. The New Swift captures enough of these original elements and adds a comprehensive list of standard features and a fresh, contemporary design to the mix.

Anyone thinking of purchasing a new small vehicle should consider adding the new Swift to their shopping list.