

NISSAN X-TRAIL ST 2.5 litre manual

FEATURES	
BEST	WORST
Engine performance	Low level in-cabin vents
Level of standard equipment	Handbrake operation
Functional interior	Unconventional dash layout

In recent times light duty or small four wheel drive vehicles have proven to be one of the most popular segments of the new car market in Australia. Prospective buyers have had a good range of vehicles to choose from that offer an extra bit of versatility over a conventional two wheel drive passenger car. One of the latest offerings to the market is an all-new model called the X-Trail from Japanese car manufacturer, Nissan.

The new Nissan X-Trail is available in a choice of two models. The ST is the entry level X-Trail and the Ti is the more upmarket, higher specified version. Pricing for the X-Trail starts at \$31,990 for an ST equipped with a manual gearbox, while the Ti is priced from \$35,990. An automatic transmission is available as an option on both models for an extra \$2000. Dealer and on road charges are in addition to the above quoted prices.

Nissan still calls the new X-Trail a compact four wheel drive, but it is quite a spacious vehicle with a functional interior. Externally, the X-Trail's styling manages to combine a robust look with a modern appearance. The X-Trail features quite aggressive wheel arch flares and body coloured front and rear bumpers on both models.

One of the best features of the new X-Trail is the way it performs. The engine powering the X-Trail models is a newly designed 2.5 litre petrol engine that uses double overhead camshafts and 16 valves. Producing 132 kW of power at 6000 rpm and 245 Nm of torque at 4000 rpm, the engine is quite a gutsy unit that is reasonably smooth and quiet in its operation and offers respectable fuel economy.

Like Honda's CRV, the new X-Trail actually drives through the front wheels most of the time. Nissan has utilised its All Mode 4x4 system to provide four wheel traction in the X-Trail when required. A dash mounted push button selector allows the driver to select between 2WD, AUTO mode and LOCK. In AUTO mode, torque is distributed to the rear wheels when sensors detect the need for extra traction. LOCK mode provides maximum traction by setting a front to rear torque distribution ratio of 57:43.

Although the X-Trail is available in two models, the entry level model is still equipped with an impressive level of standard features. Some of the more notable items fitted to the ST include air conditioning, power steering, electric windows, body coloured power door mirrors, keyless entry, AM/FM radio CD

player, split fold rear seats, engine immobiliser and two in-dash drink coolers. Additional safety features include driver and front passenger SRS airbags, front seatbelt pretensioners, and anti-lock brakes (ABS) with brake assist. At a glance, the Ti version also receives alloy wheels, climate control air conditioning, cruise control, fog lamps, a six stacker CD player, leather steering wheel and different cloth trim.

The X-Trail is quite a roomy and comfortable vehicle for its size. Head and leg room in both the front and the rear seating positions is adequate for most adults. The front bucket seats offer reasonable support and shape, although the cushions could do with some additional bolstering to further improve lateral support. The rear luggage area is quite spacious with the added versatility of a split fold rear seat. A hard plastic finish is used in the cargo area that is practical and easy to clean, but tends to look cheap.

One of the first things you'll notice once seated in the driver's position of the X-Trail is that all the instruments are located in the centre of the dash, rather than behind the steering wheel. In fact, the entire layout of the dash is rather unusual. Nissan claims that it is an innovative design, but I found the unconventional positioning of the controls and instruments a little annoying. In particular, all the vents are located below the level of the steering column and failed to blow enough cool air towards your face on a hot day. The handbrake lever felt particularly flimsy and the bold interior trim is certainly not conservative.

The X-Trail has quite a robust feel on the road that is typical of many larger four wheel drive vehicles. The all-new 2.5 litre engine delivers strong performance throughout the rev range that is on par with Honda's new 2.4 litre engine, found in the CRV. Generally, the suspension of the X-Trail copes well with uneven surfaces and potholes, providing a comfortable and sure-footed ride. ABS brakes are an added safety bonus for an entry level model.

SUMMARY:

The new X-Trail is the latest compact four wheel drive vehicle from Nissan. Powered by a new 2.5 litre petrol engine, the X-Trail delivers good performance and a comfortable ride. An impressive level of standard equipment and a functional design are highlights of the new model, while an unconventional dash layout has some shortcomings.



NISSAN X-TRAIL ST

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE:

Type Four cylinder, DOHC, 16 valves
 Capacity in litres 2.488
 Induction Multipoint fuel injection
 Fuel recommendation ULP
 Claimed max. power 132 kW at 6000 rpm
 Claimed max. torque 245 Nm at 4000 rpm
 Specific power output 53.1 kW/litre

TRANSMISSION:

Type Five speed manual
 Driving wheels Front, with driver selected
 four wheel drive operated by in-cabin switch
 Speed per 1000 rpm in top gear 39.7 km/h

WHEELS: Steel, 6JJ x 15

TYRES: P215/70 R15

Spare: Full size spare

STEERING:

Type Power assisted rack and pinion
 Turns lock to lock 3.0
 Turning circle 10.6 metres

DIMENSIONS:

Mass 1440 kg
 Length 4510 mm
 Width (incl. mirrors 2020 mm) 1765 mm
 Height 1675 mm
 Ground clearance (measured) 155 mm
 Seating capacity 5
 Fuel tank capacity 60 litres

TOWING:

Max. towed mass (trailer plus load) 2000 kg
 Max. towball download 150 kg

NRMA THEFT RATING:

Points on 0-110 scale (high score best) 52.5

WARRANTY: Three years, 100 000 km

TEST RESULTS

ACCELERATION:

50 - 80 km/h (in 3rd) 4.9 sec
 60 - 100 km/h (in 3rd) 6.6 sec
 0 - 80 km/h 6.6 sec
 0 - 100 km/h 10.0 sec
 0 - 400 metres 17.2 sec

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Litres/100 km in city 11.0
 Litres/100 km on highway 9.2
 Litres/100 km overall 10.1

BRAKING:

Distance to stop from 80 km/h 28.7 metres

NOISE:

Interior at constant 80 km/h 69 dB(A)

● Test vehicle supplied by Nissan Motor Company (Australia) Pty Ltd

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