

980-HP HEAD 2 HEAD CAMARO Z/28 VS 911 GT3

ELECTRONICALLY
REPRINTED FROM

MOTOR TREND

MARCH 2015 MOTORTREND.COM



**TWIN
TURBO**

NSX

MID-ENGINE ALL-WHEEL-DRIVE HYBRID DOES THE LEGEND LIVE ON?



MOTORTREND

THE BIG TEST

MINIVANS

| | |
|---|----------|
| Chrysler Town & Country S | \$37,030 |
| Honda Odyssey Touring Elite . | \$45,430 |
| Kia Sedona SXL | \$43,295 |
| Nissan Quest LE | \$45,315 |
| Toyota Sienna SE | \$38,085 |



Words Christian Seabaugh Photographs Brian Vance



Growing up, I had a lot of fun in our family's minivans. Our family's first car was a 1999 Dodge Grand Caravan SE that my dad used to shuttle me to early-morning hockey practice. (My little brothers would hide half-eaten bagels in the seats.)

When it wasn't schlepping hockey gear and old bagels around, our family used it for

our annual summer vacation from Brooklyn to Bethany Beach, Delaware. Filled with boogie boards, Game Boys, and what felt like everything my mom owned, our forest-green Grand Caravan became everything from an Army helicopter to a karaoke room as my brothers and I entertained ourselves on the journey.

To my 9-year-old self, nothing was cooler

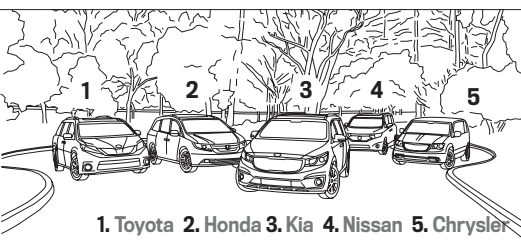
than that van and the fun-filled vacations it promised.

Sometime between the time our family's second minivan caught fire in 2002 (long story) and the end of the decade, the popularity of the minivan plummeted. The market went from more than 11 models at its peak to just eight or so, depending on who's counting. The meat of the market is covered

FAMILY VACATION



AMERICA'S BEST-SELLING MINIVANS DUKE IT OUT FOR OUR BIG TEST CROWN



by the five Big Test competitors you see here: the 2014 Chrysler Town & Country S, 2015 Honda Odyssey Touring Elite, 2015 Kia Sedona SXL, 2014 Nissan Quest LE, and the 2015 Toyota Sienna SE.

We asked each of the five manufacturers to provide us with a fully optioned minivan so we could test all the family-friendly amenities each has to offer. Most complied,

though Chrysler and Toyota both sent us mid-level models. We left the lame-duck Dodge Grand Caravan on the sidelines because for all intents and purposes it's identical to its Chrysler stablemate. We left the Mazda5 and Ford Transit Connect Wagon (see sidebar on page 110) out, as well, as both are smaller than the traditional American minivan.

COMPARISON

Ride & Handling

Although going fast can be nice, for most minivan buyers there's no driving trait more important than ride and handling—after all, poor ride and handling characteristics can result in carsick children stuck in the third row. (Ask me how I know.) To test each van's ride and handling abilities, we devised a drive loop in Los Angeles' ritzy Palos Verdes area. This diverse loop included stop-and-go suburban traffic, bits of highway speeds, and a rough section of road.

Of our five contenders, the Kia Sedona found the most favor with our Big Test judges. "Driving this thing is actually a lot of fun," digital director Chris Clonts said. "This is the car that encourages me to be myself in it, to push it a little bit. If I had my family with me, it would give me confidence that I could be safe in it under any conditions." The Sedona's body was exceptionally well-controlled in both the twisty and rough road portions of our loop, without the shimmies and shakes some of its competitors had.

The Honda Odyssey also impressed during our drive loops. Though some judges thought the steering felt a bit on the light side, all agreed it was accurate. The ride was comfortable, too, without much roll and harshness from road imperfections, but we dinged the Odyssey for its road noise. The Honda's engine sounds smooth and refined (even if it insists on being in sixth gear), but it was one of the noisiest vans here, with road, wind, and rain resulting in a loud and lively cabin.






Both Kia and Honda managed to fit their minivans with suspensions that

help cornering performance in addition to providing compliant and well-sorted rides in the rough stuff, but the Nissan Quest wasn't so lucky. Nissan appears to have fit the Quest with the softest springs possible. The end result is lots more noise, pitch, roll, and overall harshness transmitted to the cabin than in the Honda or Kia. "I'd hate to be stuck in back of this thing," I wrote in my notes. "An absolute vomit comet."

Opposite the Quest on the ride spectrum were the Town & Country and Sienna. The

sport-trimmed Toyota, with sporty steering feel and a stiff suspension, is surprisingly nice to drive in corners, but that's at the detriment of its overall ride quality, which tosses and bounces its occupants around on rough pavement. "The ride around town is rough but tolerable," opined senior production editor Zach Gale.

The similarly sport-oriented Chrysler took bumps in the same vein as the Sienna, though without the benefit of the Toyota's sharp steering. The sole spot where the Town

| 0-60 mph | | Quarter Mile | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Chrysler Town & Country | 7.8 | 16.1 sec @ 86.4 mph |  |
| Honda Odyssey | 7.9 | 16.1 sec @ 87.1 mph |  |
| Kia Sedona | 7.8 | 16.1 sec @ 88.8 mph |  |
| Nissan Quest | 7.9 | 16.1 sec @ 90.1 mph |  |
| Toyota Sienna | 7.6 | 15.8 sec @ 89.9 mph |  |
| Chrysler Town & Country S | | Honda Odyssey Touring Elite | |
| ACCELERATION TO MPH | | | |
| 0-30 | 2.9 sec | 0-30 | 2.7 sec |
| 0-40 | 4.2 | 0-40 | 4.2 |
| 0-50 | 5.8 | 0-50 | 5.8 |
| 0-60 | 7.8 | 0-60 | 7.9 |
| 0-70 | 10.1 | 0-70 | 10.3 |
| 0-80 | 13.5 | 0-80 | 13.2 |
| 0-90 | 17.7 | 0-90 | 17.3 |
| PASSING, 45-65 MPH | | PASSING, 45-65 MPH | |
| | 4.0 | | 4.1 |
| LATERAL ACCELERATION | | LATERAL ACCELERATION | |
| | 0.76 g (avg) | | 0.74 g (avg) |
| MT FIGURE EIGHT | | MT FIGURE EIGHT | |
| | 28.5 sec @ 0.60 g (avg) | | 28.7 sec @ 0.60 g (avg) |
| TOP-GEAR REVS @ 60 MPH | | TOP-GEAR REVS @ 60 MPH | |
| | 1,500 rpm | | 1,750 rpm |

Notable Features

Kia Sedona

The Sedona's First Class Lounge second-row seats were inspired by and designed during a Trans-Pacific flight to Seoul.

Honda Odyssey

The HondaVac's hose is long enough to stretch all the way to the front-passenger's footwell.

Toyota Sienna

The center seat of the Sienna's second row pops out and stows in the cargo area.

Nissan Quest

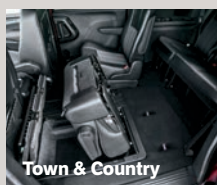
The Quest is the only van here with a power-folding third row and cargo-tub cover.

Chrysler Town & Country

The Chrysler's Stow 'n Go second- and third-row seats fold easily into the floor.



Odyssey



Town & Country



& Country differentiated itself from the Sienna was in noise, as there was a worrying amount of shakes, squeaks, and rattles coming from the cabin.

Performance

Ever wonder why the space shuttle and the Soviet version, Buran, looked almost identical? That's (mostly) because American and Soviet engineers both overcame the same set of engineering obstacles with the same design solutions. What does this have to do

with minivans? It appears that at some point over the development life of the minivan, all major manufacturers came to the same conclusion about engine size, type, and power. All five of our contenders sport V-6 engines with around 3.5 liters of displacement, around 260 horsepower, and about 250 lb-ft of torque. All but one feature six-speed automatic transmissions.

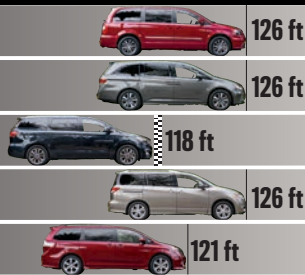
Performance numbers might seldom matter to minivan buyers, but here goes: The Sienna SE is the hot rod of the group. With its 3.5-liter V-6 making 266 hp and 245 lb-ft of torque, the "Swagger Wagon," as Toyota is eager to call it, hustles to 60 mph in 7.6 seconds and goes through the quarter mile in 15.8 seconds at 89.9 mph. Though the Sienna's brakes initially feel a bit mushy, stomping on the brake pedal will stop the vehicle from 60 mph in 121 feet, the second-shortest distance of the five vans.

The Kia Sedona was hot on the Sienna's tail. The heaviest van here also packs the

smallest yet second most powerful engine of the bunch. The Sedona's 3.3-liter V-6 makes 276 ponies and 248 lb-ft of twist, good for a 7.8-second 0-60 mph run and a 16.1-second quarter mile with a time-traveling trap speed of 88.8 mph. Despite its heft and relative speed, the Kia had the shortest stopping distance at 118 feet.

The remaining three were neck and neck with the Kia, with the Chrysler ahead by a nose. The Town & Country packs the biggest punch, its 3.6-liter V-6 making 283 hp and 260 lb-ft of torque. The Chrysler matched the

Braking 60-0



AGING WELL The Town & Country still looks sharp.

| Kia Sedona SXL | | Nissan Quest LE | | Toyota Sienna SE | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACCELERATION TO MPH | | | | | |
| 0-30 | 2.8 sec | 0-30 | 3.2 sec | 0-30 | 2.7 sec |
| 0-40 | 4.2 | 0-40 | 4.5 | 0-40 | 4.0 |
| 0-50 | 6.0 | 0-50 | 6.1 | 0-50 | 5.8 |
| 0-60 | 7.8 | 0-60 | 7.9 | 0-60 | 7.6 |
| 0-70 | 10.4 | 0-70 | 10.1 | 0-70 | 9.9 |
| 0-80 | 13.3 | 0-80 | 12.7 | 0-80 | 12.7 |
| 0-90 | 16.5 | 0-90 | 16.0 | 0-90 | 15.9 |
| PASSING, 45-65 MPH | 3.9 | PASSING, 45-65 MPH | 3.6 | PASSING, 45-65 MPH | 3.8 |
| LATERAL ACCELERATION | 0.77 g (avg) | LATERAL ACCELERATION | 0.74 g (avg) | LATERAL ACCELERATION | 0.73 g (avg) |
| MT FIGURE EIGHT | 28.4 sec @ 0.62 g (avg) | MT FIGURE EIGHT | 28.9 sec @ 0.60 g (avg) | MT FIGURE EIGHT | 28.8 sec @ 0.61 g (avg) |
| TOP-GEAR REVS @ 60 MPH | 1,750 rpm | TOP-GEAR REVS @ 60 MPH | 1,650 rpm | TOP-GEAR REVS @ 60 MPH | 1,750 rpm |



For most minivan buyers there's no driving trait more important than ride and handling.

BY THE NUMBERS
Americans bought 373,233 of these vans combined through November 2014. The Town & Country accounts for 127,331 of those sales.



The Chrysler Town & Country packs the biggest punch under the hood.

Kia to 60 mph and through the quarter mile but was traveling slower (at 86.4 mph). The Town & Country needed 126 feet to halt from 60 mph.

The Quest was close behind. The only van here to eschew a six-speed automatic for a CVT, it features a 3.5-liter V-6 good for 260 hp and 240 lb-ft. The combo gave the Nissan a 7.9-second 0-60 mph time and allowed it to go through the quarter mile in 16.1 seconds with a 90.1 mph trap speed. The big, boxy Nissan needed 126 feet in our 60-0 mph panic stop test.

Honda's Odyssey was last by a hair. With a 3.5-liter V-6 making 248 hp and 250 lb-ft of torque, the Odyssey accelerated from 0-60



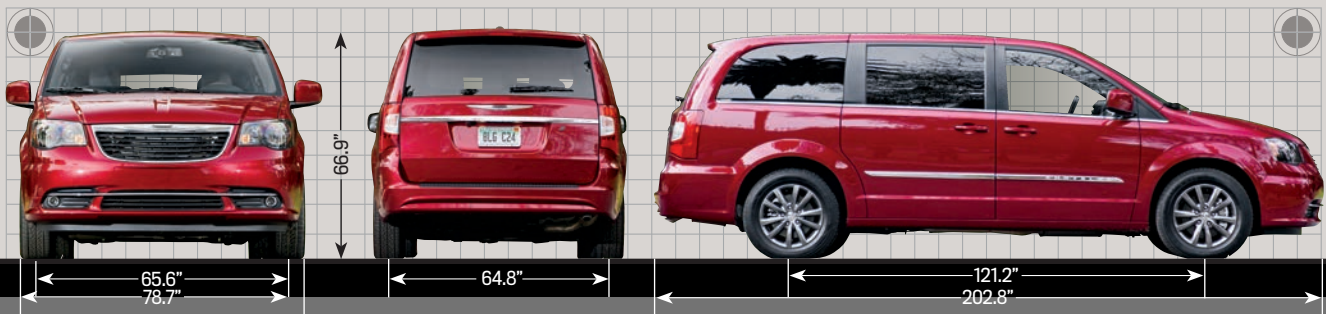
| Chrysler Town & Country S | Dimensions |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| HEADROOM, F/M/R | 39.8/39.3/37.9 in |
| LEGROOM, F/M/R | 40.7/36.5/32.7 in |
| SHOULDER ROOM, F/M/R | 63.7/64.1/62.0 in |
| CARGO VOLUME BEH F/M/R | 143.8/83.3/33.0 cu ft |
| CURB WEIGHT | 4,562 lb |
| WEIGHT DIST, F/R | 56/44 % |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 39.1 ft |

mph in 7.9 seconds and rolled through the quarter mile in 16.1 seconds at 87.1 mph. The Odyssey tied the Quest and Town & Country for the longest 60-0 mph stopping distance, needing 126 feet.

Efficiency

Fuel costs currently are dropping, but we can't count on them to stay low. We need to consider the hit to the wallet filling these 20-plus-gallon fuel tanks could pose. Although EPA fuel-economy numbers are helpful, they're not always real-world representative, so we tossed the keys to our Emissions Analytics crew to generate some accurate fuel-economy data.

LAYOUT FWD, 7-PASS, MINIVAN





The Odyssey is stellar from a practicality and comfort standpoint.

Not surprising given its relative age, the Chrysler Town & Country brought up the rear. EPA-rated at 17/25/20 mpg city/highway/combined, the Chrysler van achieved 16.4/25.3/19.5 Real MPG with our test crew.

The Kia Sedona's performance, however, was a surprise. The Sedona slightly outperformed its admittedly low 17/22/19 mpg EPA rating, achieving 17.3/23.8/19.7 R-MPG. That's a slight improvement versus EPA on the combined cycle and an 8-percent improvement on the highway.

Next up is the Toyota Sienna. We weren't expecting that much given its middling 18/25/21 mpg EPA rating, yet shockingly the Sienna outperformed the whole segment,

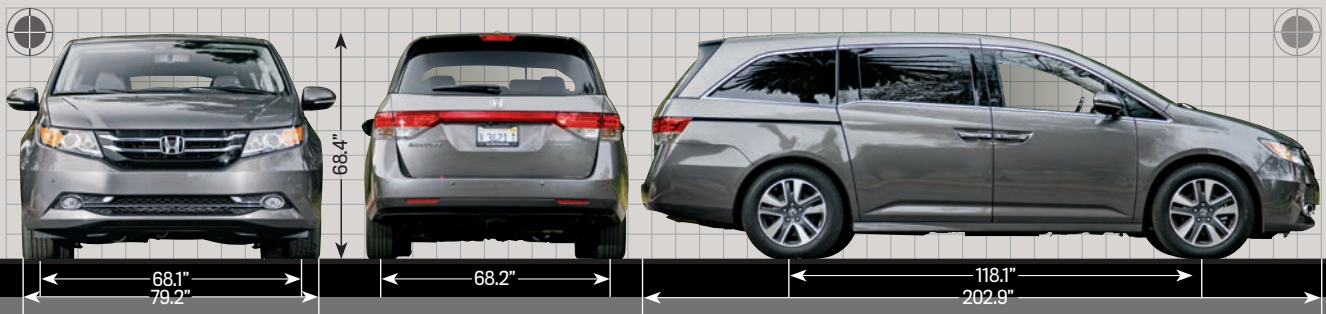


| Honda Odyssey Touring Elite | Dimensions |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| HEADROOM, F/M/R | 38.3/39.4/38.0 in |
| LEGROOM, F/M/R | 40.9/40.9/42.4 in |
| SHOULDER ROOM, F/M/R | 64.4/63.5/60.9 in |
| CARGO VOLUME BEH F/M/R | 148.5/93.1/38.4 cu ft |
| CURB WEIGHT | 4,592 lb |
| WEIGHT DIST, F/R | 56/44% |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 36.7 ft |

netting the best fuel economy in this test: 19.4/27.1/22.2 R-MPG. That trumps EPA's numbers by an impressive 8 percent around town and on the highway and 6 percent combined.

Although the Sienna's Real MPG performance was a pleasant surprise, the 2014 Nissan Quest underachieved. EPA-rated at 19/25/21 mpg, the Quest returned 18.6/24.3/20.8 on the Real MPG cycle, a noticeable dip across the board. Last but certainly not least is the Odyssey. Boasting the most impressive EPA numbers of the group at 19/28/22 mpg, the Honda slightly underperformed in the hands of our Emissions Analytics team. It achieved 18.7/27.0/21.7

LAYOUT FWD, 8-PASS, MINIVAN



2014 Chrysler Town & Country S: Dark, drab, and old sum up the Chrysler's cabin.



Although the Chrysler's dash is intuitively designed and easy to use, it's let down by dated electronics.



Now you see them, now you don't; the Town & Country's Stow 'n Go seats mean you no longer have to make the choice between hauling passengers or cargo, as the captain's chairs simply fold flat into the floor.



The Chrysler's third row is tight, but the seats do have a neat party trick, flipping 90 degrees back for tailgate seating.

2015 Kia Sedona SXL: Luxury-car and CUV owners will be at home in the Sedona's upscale cabin.



Handsome and high tech is how we'd describe the view from up front, thanks to real wood trim and a rock-solid infotainment system.



The Sedona's "First Class Lounge" seats are the best in the house, even if they are a bit heavy and cumbersome to operate.



Adults will probably want to avoid the third row as head and shoulder room are tight; children will be fine, though.

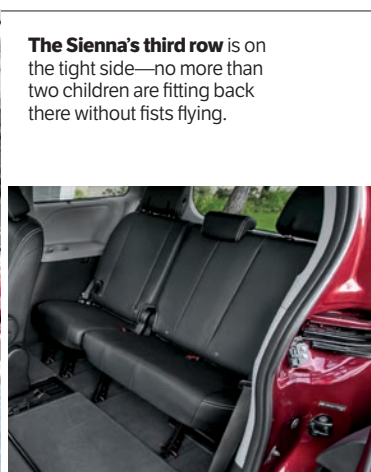
2015 Toyota Sienna SE: Recent updates improve the Sienna's cabin, but not by much.



The Sienna's dash is simple and straightforward, but looks and feels bargain basement.



Kudos to Toyota for the Sienna's eighth seat. The center-mounted jump seat quickly pops out and stows in the trunk.



The Sienna's third row is on the tight side—no more than two children are fitting back there without fists flying.



The dash is laid out nicely, but the split infotainment screens found few friends among our judges.



The roomy second row quickly and easily slides forward to allow access to the third row. Though heavy, the seats also remove with no muss or fuss. The center seat can be removed and replaced with the front center console.

Surprisingly, the Odyssey's third row offers up plenty of room for two adults on short trips. Those in the third row also have their own HDMI port to display video on the Honda's 16.2-inch screen.



2014 Nissan Quest LE: For better or worse, the funky designs carry over into the Quest's interior.



The Quest's center stack is a bit difficult to get used to. The audio controls hide behind the gear lever while driving.



Nissan's "Zero Gravity" seat cushions are up there on the comfort scale. That said, the LATCH anchor points in the Quest's second row were hard to locate and use.

Despite the twin sunroofs, the Quest's power-folding third row has best-in-segment headroom.



R-MPG, which are all just slightly below what the EPA measures.

Of course, always remember that your mileage may vary.

Cockpit/Cabin

According to automotive market research data, almost half of minivan buyers don't have any children at home. We therefore evaluated the cabins of our Big Test minivans with the needs of both families and empty nesters in mind.

The Kia Sedona is the clear choice for childless buyers. The newest van in the segment had the nicest cabin of the bunch, thanks to Nappa leather, real wood, and a segment-best infotainment system. Behind the front seats, the Kia has one of the most comfortable second rows of the group. Though complicated, the second row's captain's chairs have

leg rests and the ability to both recline and slide fore and aft and side to side, giving the second row the best seats in the house.

The same can't be said about the Sedona SXL's third row, which is cramped and has the smallest amount of headroom in the test thanks to the standard twin sunroofs. Although the third row folds down easily, those neat captain's chairs can neither fold forward nor be removed, limiting the cargo space of this particular model. (Non-SXL Sedonas feature second row seats that slide

up and "spoon" with the front seats, boosting cargo volume.) Buyers with children will be better served by the Odyssey. Although the Odyssey shows its age on the technology and materials-quality front, it's stellar from a practicality and comfort standpoint. The roomy second-row bench flips down and folds forward to ease access into the third row, and although they're heavy, the seats remove completely in three pieces for cargo hauling. The third row is pretty comfortable, too, with plenty of room for two adults or





Driving the Sedona is actually a lot of fun.

three children to fit comfortably. Toss the Honda's vacuum and cooler into the mix, and you've got a serious family-favorite. "The HondaVac is a novel touch," Clonts said. "What a fabulously useful built-in accessory. Same goes for the Cool Box up front."

Thanks to its "zero gravity" seats and an air conditioner that never blew enough cold air, the Quest figuratively put our judges to sleep. "Weak-sauce A/C + cushy seats = naptime," I wrote in my notes. Aside from its comfortable seats, the Quest won points from judges for its power-folding third row and the hidden storage tub underneath a trunk panel. Though the Quest was recognized for the high quality of its interior, the LATCH anchor



| Kia Sedona SXL | Dimensions |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| HEADROOM, F/M/R | 38.7/37.4/36.6 in |
| LEGROOM, F/M/R | 40.9/40.6/34.8 in |
| SHOULDER ROOM, F/M/R | 63.9/63.1/59.4 in |
| CARGO VOLUME BEH F/M/R | 142.0/78.4/33.9 cu ft |
| CURB WEIGHT | 4,750 lb |
| WEIGHT DIST, F/R | 55/45 % |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 36.8 ft |

points were the only ones in the test that were hard to locate.

Although the Toyota got a thorough refresh for the 2015 model year, you can't tell from sitting in its cabin. Hop in and you're welcomed by a sea of hard, dark plastics and some questionably styled "sport" gauges, which Clonts called "Walmart-ish, or something." The Sienna's materials may be low-grade, but the Toyota still packs a handful of thoughtful touches—take its second-row center seat, for instance: The featherweight center seat quickly and easily removes, folds up, and stows in a compartment in the cargo hold. If you want to lose the center seat on the Odyssey, you'd better make room in your garage.

LAYOUT FWD, 7-PASS, MINIVAN





Nissan appears to have fit the Quest with the softest springs possible.

There's no getting around the fact that the Chrysler Town & Country is nearing the end of its product cycle, and nowhere is that more evident than in its interior, which was ranked by judges as the most uncomfortable, with hard seats, tight legroom, and complicated folding mechanisms. That said, the Chrysler still has an ace up its sleeve that no other minivan has: Stow 'n Go seats—both the third- and second-row seats fold flat into the floor.

Safety

Safety is important for all new-car shoppers, but it's especially so for minivan buyers. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is incomplete for



| Nissan Quest LE | Dimensions |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| HEADROOM, F/M/R | 40.9/39.9/38.0 in |
| LEGROOM, F/M/R | 43.8/36.7/40.5 in |
| SHOULDER ROOM, F/M/R | 64.5/63.2/61.2 in |
| CARGO VOLUME BEH F/M/R | 108.4/63.6/37.1 cu ft |
| CURB WEIGHT | 4,505 lb |
| WEIGHT DIST, F/R | 55/45 % |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 36.7 ft |

our contenders, but crash testing by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) reveals not all of our competitors are built equally. Just three earned the IIHS' coveted Top Safety Pick nod: the 2015 Kia Sedona, 2015 Honda Odyssey, and 2015 Toyota Sienna.

Both the Sedona and Odyssey earned a Good (highest possible) score on moderate-overlap front, side-impact, rear-impact, roof strength, and the small-overlap front collision tests. The Sienna earned a Good score on all of the above tests with the exception of its Acceptable score on the incredibly difficult small-overlap test, which simulates what would happen in an offset collision with an object such as a tree.

LAYOUT FWD, 7-PASS, MINIVAN





The Sienna really punches above its weight in the numbers.

The other two minivans didn't perform well on the IIHS tests. The better performing was the Chrysler Town & Country. The Town & Country earns Good scores all around with the exception of the small-overlap front test, where it earns a lowest possible Poor score.

The Quest managed to do worse than the Chrysler—its roof-strength score was rated as Acceptable, and its small-overlap score was Poor.

According to an IIHS video, the Quest is one of the worst-performing vehicles in the small-overlap front crash test, and that weighed heavily on the minds of our Big Test judges. "No vehicle can ever be optimized for every organization's safety standards," Gale said, "but I don't like that the Quest got only Acceptable



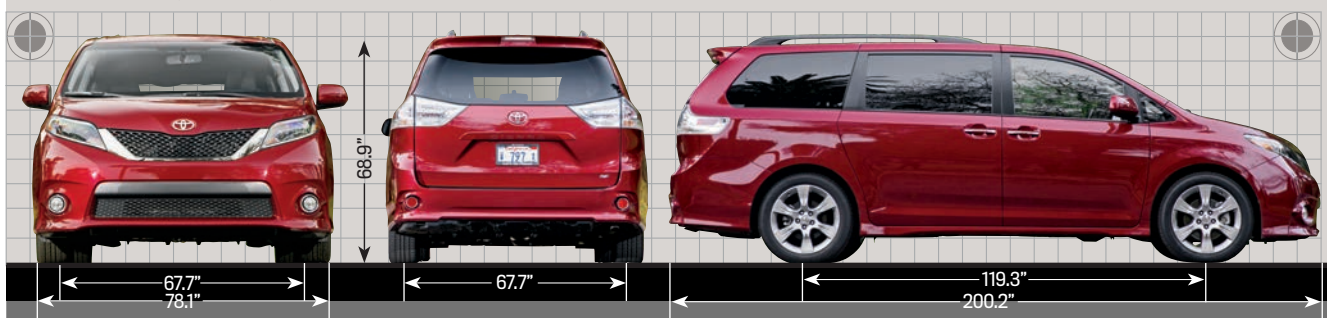
| Toyota Sienna SE | Dimensions |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| HEADROOM, F/M/R | 41.0/39.7/38.3 in |
| LEGROOM, F/M/R | 40.5/37.6/36.3 in |
| SHOULDER ROOM, F/M/R | 65.0/64.6/61.1 in |
| CARGO VOLUME BEH F/M/R | 150.0/871/39.1 cu ft |
| CURB WEIGHT | 4,544 lb |
| WEIGHT DIST, F/R | 57/43 % |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 37.5 ft |

for roof strength and Poor for the newer and admittedly difficult small-overlap front test." Clonts weighed in, too: "If anybody thinks safety ratings don't matter, consider this: Almost every single one of the judges mentioned that it was a little uncomfortable being in the Quest knowing about its poor safety showing."

Value

"Value" is a relative term. Some might look at our list of Big Test contenders and determine that the cheapest van offers the best value. Others might look at the same exact chart and determine the van with the most content offers up the best value. For those in the

LAYOUT FWD, 8-PASS, MINIVAN





4TH NISSAN QUEST

A comfortable cabin isn't enough to overcome the Quest's lackluster crash-test scores or driving dynamics.

3RD TOYOTA SIENNA

It doesn't blow our socks off subjectively, but it's tough to argue with the Sienna's stellar efficiency and performance.

1ST KIA SEDONA

A van with this much style, substance, and safety might be all it takes to make the minivan cool again.

2ND HONDA ODYSSEY

A long-time MT favorite is still a segment standout and excellent hauler, but it's not our Big Test winner.

5TH CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY

The long-in-the-tooth Chrysler is tops in sales but last in our Big Test. Still, the T&C is a great value and shows promise for the future.

former camp, the Chrysler Town & Country really can't be beat. Our Town & Country S tester's \$37,030 as-tested price includes second and third row Blu-ray screens and convenience features such as navigation and blind-spot and park-assist tech.

As for those who look at content when determining value, look no further than the \$43,295 Sedona. Simply put, the Kia blew the judges away with the amount of technology

and content it offers. Not only did the Sedona's cabin feature Nappa leather and real wood cribbed from the K900 sedan, but it also featured those trick second-row lounge seats, a 360-degree camera system, and collision mitigation technology.

The Odyssey also makes a good case for itself on the value front—its Touring Elite Trim means it comes loaded with everything, including the HondaVac. However,

its \$45,430 sticker price made the Odyssey the most expensive van by far, and that price becomes hard to swallow when you compare the quality of the Kia's cabin to the Honda's.

Cost of Ownership

Cost of Ownership goes hand in hand with value—after all, what good is value if you're paying extra for it five years down the road? We went to sister company IntelliChoice to assess how much each minivan would cost its owner after five years of ownership. IntelliChoice takes depreciation, insurance, fuel, maintenance, repairs, and more into account in its five-year cost of ownership figure. (The full breakdown is to the left.)

The Toyota and Chrysler both have the lowest five-year cost of ownership, with the slightly more expensive Sienna edging out the Town & Country, costing its owner only \$43,377 after five years versus \$44,692.

The other three minivans sit closely together on the opposite end of the cost-of-ownership spectrum. The Nissan Quest is the most expensive to own and operate, with a \$53,973 cost of ownership, and close behind were the Sedona at \$52,227 and the Odyssey at \$50,043.

| IntelliChoice CHOOSE YOUR CAR WISELY | Chrysler Town & Country S | Honda Odyssey Touring Elite | Kia Sedona SXL | Nissan Quest LE | Toyota Sienna SE |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| AVG STATE FEES | \$482 | \$409 | \$403 | \$519 | \$387 |
| DEPRECIATION | \$19,500 (53%) | \$24,824 (53%) | \$26,119 (58%) | \$25,244 (57%) | \$18,238 (46%) |
| FINANCING | \$3,848 | \$4,921 | \$4,721 | \$4,658 | \$4,147 |
| INSURANCE | \$6,454 | \$6,383 | \$6,994 | \$8,510 | \$6,474 |
| FUEL | \$11,955 | \$10,685 | \$11,626 | \$11,332 | \$11,626 |
| MAINTENANCE | \$1,925 | \$2,227 | \$2,202 | \$3,116 | \$1,944 |
| REPAIRS | \$528 | \$594 | \$162 | \$594 | \$561 |
| 5-YEAR COST OF OWNERSHIP | \$44,692 | \$50,043 | \$52,227 | \$53,973 | \$43,377 |
| INTELLICHOICE Target Purchase Price | \$36,809 | \$47,083 | \$45,174 | \$44,568 | \$39,672 |

PURCHASE PRICE: Target purchase price includes destination and average applicable state taxes applied to a transaction price between invoice and retail, based on applicable incentives.

THE BIG TEST

POWERTRAIN/CHASSIS

Chrysler Town & Country S



Honda Odyssey Touring Elite



Kia Sedona SXL



Nissan Quest LE



Toyota Sienna SE



| DRIVETRAIN LAYOUT | Front-engine, FWD | Front-engine, FWD | Front-engine, FWD | Front-engine, FWD | Front-engine, FWD |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| ENGINE TYPE | V-6, aluminum block/heads | V-6, aluminum block/heads | V-6, aluminum block/heads | V-6, aluminum block/heads | V-6, aluminum block/heads |
| VALVETRAIN | DOHC, 4 valves/cyl | SOHC, 4 valves/cyl | DOHC, 4 valves/cyl | DOHC, 4 valves/cyl | DOHC, 4 valves/cyl |
| DISPLACEMENT | 219.6 cu in/3,605 cc | 211.8 cu in/3,471 cc | 203.9 cu in/3,342 cc | 213.4 cu in/3,498 cc | 210.9 cu in/3,456 cc |
| COMPRESSION RATIO | 10.2:1 | 10.5:1 | 11.5:1 | 10.3:1 | 10.8:1 |
| POWER (SAE NET) | 283 hp @ 6,400 rpm | 248 hp @ 5,700 rpm | 276 hp @ 6,000 rpm | 260 hp @ 6,000 rpm | 266 hp @ 6,200 rpm |
| TORQUE (SAE NET) | 260 lb-ft @ 4,400 rpm | 250 lb-ft @ 4,800 rpm | 248 lb-ft @ 5,200 rpm | 240 lb-ft @ 4,400 rpm | 245 lb-ft @ 4,700 rpm |
| REDLINE | 6,400 rpm | 6,400 rpm | 6,750 rpm | 6,600 rpm | 6,500 rpm |
| WEIGHT TO POWER | 19.2 lb/hp | 18.5 lb/hp | 17.2 lb/hp | 17.3 lb/hp | 17.1 lb/hp |
| TRANSMISSION | 6-speed automatic | 6-speed automatic | 6-speed automatic | Cont-variable auto | 6-speed automatic |
| AXLE/FINAL-DRIVE RATIO | 3.16:1/2.07:1 | 4.25:1/2.36:1 | 3.04:1/2.35:1 | 4.87:1/2.14:1 | 3.94:1/2.39:1 |
| SUSPENSION, FRONT; REAR | Struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar; torsion beam, coil springs | Struts, coil springs anti-roll bar; multi-link, coil springs | Struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar; multilink, coil springs, anti-roll bar | Struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar; multi-link, coil springs | Struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar; torsion beam, coil springs, anti-roll bar |
| STEERING RATIO | 14.3:1 | 16.4:1 | 15.9:1 | 18.6:1 | 15.5:1 |
| TURNS LOCK-TO-LOCK | 2.9 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| BRAKES, F;R | 13.0-in vented disc; 12.9-in disc, ABS | 12.6-in vented disc; 13.1-in disc, ABS | 12.6-in vented disc; 11.9-in disc, ABS | 11.4-in vented disc; 12.1-in vented disc, ABS | 12.9-in vented disc; 12.2-in disc, ABS |
| WHEELS | 6.5 x 17-in, cast aluminum | 7.0 x 18-in, cast aluminum | 6.5 x 19-in, cast aluminum | 7.0 x 18-in, cast aluminum | 7.0 x 19-in, cast aluminum |
| TIRES | 225/65R17 102T M+S Yokohama Avid S33 | 235/60R18 102T M+S Michelin Primacy MXV4 | 235/55R19 101H M+S Continental CrossContact LX Sport | 235/55R18 99T M+S Toyo A22 | 235/50R19 99V M+S Dunlop SP Sport 7000 A/S |

| CONSUMER INFO | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| BASE PRICE | \$33,990 | \$45,480 | \$40,595 | \$43,755 | \$35,785 |
| PRICE AS TESTED | \$37,030 | \$45,430 | \$43,295 | \$45,315 | \$38,085 |
| STABILITY/TRACTION CONTROL | Yes/Yes | Yes/Yes | Yes/Yes | Yes/Yes | Yes/Yes |
| AIRBAGS | Dual front, f/r curtain, driver knee | Dual front, front side, f/r curtain | Dual front, front side, f/r curtain | Dual front, front side, f/r side, f/r curtain | Dual front, front side, f/r curtain, front knee |
| BASIC WARRANTY | 3 yrs/36,000 miles | 3 yrs/36,000 miles | 5 yrs/60,000 miles | 3 yrs/36,000 miles | 3 yrs/36,000 miles |
| POWERTRAIN WARRANTY | 5 yrs/100,000 miles | 5 yrs/60,000 miles | 10 yrs/100,000 miles | 5 yrs/60,000 miles | 5 yrs/60,000 miles |
| ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE | 5 yrs/100,000 miles | 3yrs/36,000 miles | 5 yrs/60,000 miles | 7 yrs/100,000 miles | 2 yrs/Unlimited |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 20.0 gal | 21.0 gal | 21.1 gal | 20.0 gal | 20.0 gal |
| EPA CITY/HWY/COMB ECON | 17/25/20 mpg | 19/28/22 mpg | 17/22/19 mpg | 19/25/21 mpg | 18/25/21 mpg |
| ENERGY CONS., CITY/HWY | 198/135 kW-hrs/100 miles | 177/120 kW-hrs/100 miles | 198/153 kW-hrs/100 miles | 177/135 kW-hrs/100 miles | 187/135 kW-hrs/100 miles |
| CO2 EMISSIONS, COMB | 0.98 lb/mile | 0.87 lb/mile | 1.02 lb/mile | 0.91 lb/mile | 0.94 lb/mile |
| REAL MPG, CITY/HWY/COMB | 16.4/25.3/19.5 mpg | 18.7/27.0/21.7 mpg | 17.3/23.8/19.7 mpg | 18.6/24.3/20.8 mpg | 19.4/27.1/22.2 mpg |
| RECOMMENDED FUEL | Unleaded regular | Unleaded regular | Unleaded regular | Unleaded regular | Unleaded regular |



Fuel costs are dropping, but we can't count on them to stay low.

Conclusion

Four of these minivans might have the Chrysler Town & Country to thank for their existence, but heritage doesn't win awards. The Town & Country is the best-selling minivan in the country, but there's no overcoming its dated and cramped interior, lackluster driving dynamics, and poor crash-test scores.

The same safety concerns that sunk the Chrysler sink the Nissan Quest, as well. As comfortable as the Quest's seats are, its awful crash-test performance coupled with its lackluster fuel economy and driving dynamics went over like a lead balloon.

Toyota fares better than its Chrysler and Nissan rivals. Yes, its black hole of an interior and a rock-hard suspension are less than ideal, but the Sienna really punches above its weight in the numbers with the lowest cost of ownership of the bunch and impressive fuel economy and safety scores.

There was little doubt in our minds on the finishing order for the bottom three contenders, but judges went back and forth between this Big Test's top two finishers for weeks—so little differentiates the two. Although both minivans are clearly complete packages above and beyond the rest, ultimately the Odyssey earns the silver medal.

We love the Honda's versatility, roominess, and features, but we aren't completely sold on its fuel-economy merits given its Real MPG numbers. Nor can we justify giving its lackluster cabin materials a pass considering its sticker price.

And that leaves us with the new kid on the block. The Kia Sedona might not sport segment-leading fuel economy or cargo volume, but it is hands-down the most stylish, comfortable, and best-driving minivan on the road. The Sedona is a value-rich vehicle that its owners are sure to enjoy, whether they're schlepping to work or down the coast for another fun-filled family vacation. ■