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'Test drive' checklist - the 13 things to check

- Is your driving position at the wheel comfortable?** Can the seat slide, rise and tilt? Can you adjust the steering wheel position? Can you see all the mirrors and through the windows?
- If you'll be fitting a child car seat, will this go in easily?** Or if you need to carry large items such as golf clubs, will they fit?
- Try different routes.** You should include the motorway if you'll be driving on this.
- Do an emergency stop on an empty road to double check the brakes.** Try the handbrake on a hill and listen for any unusual rattling or banging sounds.
- Check that the brakes and clutch function smoothly and effectively.** Plus do a three-point turn to check for play in the steering.
- Does it veer?** Is the car veering, or does it feel balanced?
- Bonnet, doors and boot.** Are the bonnet, doors and boot easy to open?
- What's the passenger space like?** Will people be comfortable on a long journey?
- Boot space.** If you're likely to be carrying heavy or bulky items, will it be easy to lift them into the boot?

- Is it smooth?** Does the car pull away smoothly?
- What's the power like?** Is it powerful enough to pull away from traffic lights and to keep going up hills without requiring endless gear changes?
- What's the engine noise like?** Are there any irritating rattles or buzzes?
- Check the suspension.** How well does it soak up bumps and take corners?