

Translation: News on „Verkehrsclub Deutschland“ website referring to

The VCD environmental car ratings 2009/2010

In this year of financial and economic crisis, much has also been happening in the transport policy sector. One key component of the national economic programme is support for the car industry. But the Federal Government has wasted the opportunity to take some crucial decisions for the future. Tax giveaways, a scrappage bonus and a minor adjustment to road tax – these are the answers that our Federal Government has to the challenges of a climate-conscious transport policy. Almost eight billion euros are thus being wasted on measures that are not linked to any climate protection objectives. What couldn't they have done with all that money? Perhaps the launch of a new mobility culture, or certainly the promotion of advanced environmental technology.

Once again this year the VCD eco-car ratings show which cars can already be recommended from an environmental point of view. Despite the crisis there are more acceptable vehicles than ever before. The winner is the new Toyota Prius Hybrid, the first petrol-driven car with fuel consumption below four litres per 100 km. And Toyota also took second place with the new iQ. In third place is the Honda Insight. But the German manufacturers are slowly catching up. Three of them are represented in the top ten, and VW is well placed with a few models in the compact class and among the family cars. Despite this the German manufacturers are still lagging behind the foreign manufacturers in terms of environmental protection – especially in the case of the hybrid.

Top Ten of VCD environmental ranking 2009/2010	
1.	Toyota Prius Hybrid ¹ 7,53
2.	Toyota iQ 1.0 VVT-i 7,36
3.	Honda Insight Hybrid ² 7,13
4.	Nissan Pixo 6,83
	Suzuki Alto 6,83
6.	Honda Civic Hybrid ³ 6,66
7.	smart fortwo coupé 45 kW 6,36
8.	smart fortwo coupé cdi 6,35
9.	Daihatsu Cuore 1.0 6,31
10.	Volkswagen Polo 1.6 TDI BlueMotion Tech. 6,30

Rating System:

The final rating of each car is based on four different rating categories: CO₂ emission, noise pollution, health pollution and environmental pollution.

Anniversary: 20 years of the VCD environmental car ratings

The VCD has been following environmentally compatible cars for 20 years. There has been a lot of progress in this period. Now the VCD environmental car ratings are a recognised institution, even accepted by the car manufacturers.

VCD has been testing current car models for their effects on the environment since 1989. The VCD environmental car ratings have become an institution, which is also taken seriously by the car industry. It has not always been that way. Just 20 years ago the VCD's questions triggered everything from astonishment to denial among the manufacturers. In 1989 there was hardly a single car manufacturer that had any idea of the term Life Cycle Assessment. The car producers often did not even know how much fuel their models consumed, or what materials they built their cars out of. There were hardly any environmental experts in the car factories, much less any environmental departments. A lot has happened since the launch of the VCD environmental car ratings. Thanks to the catalytic converter and the long-overdue particulate filters, harmful emissions from cars have been significantly reduced, and fuel consumption has also been brought down. Now the top-ten list is headed by economical, low-emission and low-noise hybrid cars.

The car experts at the VCD have been checking out over 300 current models a year since 1989, asking "Who builds the most eco-friendly car"? It takes top marks in three categories to make the leap into the top ten of the VCD environmental car ratings:

- * fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions per kilometre,
- * noise,
- * quantity and type of pollutants that emerge from the exhaust pipe.

With this environmental ranking system, one of a kind in Germany, the VCD pursues three objectives as an environmental and consumer association:

- * With its environmental car ratings the VCD provides a reliable decision-making aid for all those who want to take ecological aspects into consideration when buying a car. In this way consumers can exert their influence in favour of a more eco-friendly range of vehicles on the car market.
- * With its environmental car ratings the VCD shows car producers what makes an eco-friendly car, what is already possible among the competition, and what has to become even better. In doing so, the VCD spurs the ambition of vehicle engineers to develop more economical and smarter solutions.
- * With its environmental car ratings the VCD also repeatedly provides stimuli for discussions and decision-making in the political arena. This advances the legal basis for stricter limits and tax incentives in favour of more eco-friendly cars.