

WHATCAR?

Insight

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Board member for Sales and Marketing at VW Commercial Vehicles Lars Krause accepted the What Car? Car of the Year trophy at the event



WHATCAR?

CAR OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2023

In association with


motoreasy

WHAT CAR? AWARDS

Volkswagen ID Buzz named What Car? Car of the Year for 2023

The Volkswagen ID Buzz electric car has scooped the biggest prize in motoring, being named What Car? Car of the Year, as part of a glittering ceremony for the annual What Car? Car of the Year Awards in London.

The ID Buzz won the overall Car of the Year title having already been named Large Electric Car of the Year – a category where it beat other electric cars including the BMW i7 and Mercedes-Benz EQE.

Despite having retro-inspired looks which invoke those of the iconic Volkswagen Type 2 camper van of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the ID Buzz is actually a cutting-edge electric car. Praising the ID Buzz, What Car? judges noted that it stood out for offering huge practicality, appealing comfort and a highly enjoyable driving experience at a price that

undercuts those of rivals. Adding to its appeal, the ID Buzz has an official all-electric range of 260 miles and can charge from 10-80% in less than half an hour. It also offers a commanding raised driving position, superb visibility, is extremely comfortable and quiet and has space to take three children or adults in the back, as well as having an enormous boot.

What Car? editor Steve Huntingford said: “The ID Buzz has been eagerly anticipated because of its nostalgic styling, but all of our judges were blown away by the fact it didn’t just live up to expectations but, in fact, was even better than the hype.

“It’s great to drive, wonderful to be in, has more space than most families could ever ask for and – thanks in part to incredible predicted resale value – ▼



WHAT CAR? AWARD WINNERS IN FULL



What Car? Car of the Year Awards 2023 winners in full, in association with Motoreasy

Car of the Year:

Volkswagen ID Buzz Style

Category winners:

Small car: Honda Jazz
1.5 i-MMD Hybrid SR

Family car: Honda Civic
2.0 e:HEV Sport

Hot hatch: Hyundai i20N

Small SUV: Volkswagen T-Roc
1.0 TSI 110 Life

Family SUV: Kia Sportage
1.6 Turbocharged Petrol 3

Seven Seater: Hyundai Santa Fe
4WD Premium

Executive car: Tesla
Model 3 RWD

Luxury car: Range Rover Sport
P440e Dynamic SE

Hybrid (plug-in): Lexus NX
450h Premium Pack

Small electric car: MG4 EV SE

Large electric car:

Volkswagen ID Buzz Style

Estate: Skoda Superb Estate
1.5 TSI 150 SE L

Coupé: BMW 4 Series 420i
M Sport (M Sport Pro Package)

Electric SUV: Genesis GV60
RWD Premium

Convertible: BMW 4 Series
Convertible 420i M Sport
(M Sport Pro Package)

Sports car: Porsche Cayman
4.0 GTS

Sports SUV: Ford Puma ST
1.5 Ecoboost 200
Performance Pack

Performance car: Porsche Taycan
Cross Turismo 4S

Special awards:

Reader Award: Kia EV9

Tow Car Award:
Audi Q5 40 TDI quattro Sport

Reliability Award: Lexus

Technology Award: BMW i7

Efficiency Award:

Tesla Model 3 RWD

Safety Award: Tesla Model Y



substantially undercuts many SUV rivals on a monthly finance deal. This is a car that wins over your head as well as your heart and one that will bring huge amounts of joy to lucky buyers at a time when the costs and challenges of motoring are under huge pressure.”

Other big winners on the night included Land Rover, whose big-selling Range Rover Sport was hailed the Best Luxury Car. At the other end of the scale, celebrated British brand MG – now under Chinese ownership – won Best Small Electric Car for its MG4 EV, a car that undercuts rivals from more established European brands.

The Tesla Model 3 was also honoured, dethroning the BMW 3 Series as Best Executive Car after the German marque had won the category for the past four years. Significantly, it also marks the first time that an electric car has won the category.

However, BMW did enjoy huge success on the night, taking three category wins for the Best Coupé (4 Series), Best Convertible (4 Series Convertible) and the Technology Award (BMW i7). That placed it first equal with Volkswagen, which won with the ID Buzz (Car of the Year, and Best Large Electric Car) and Volkswagen T-Roc (Best Small SUV), and Tesla (Executive Car, Efficiency Award and Safety Award) in the manufacturer rankings, with three overall wins apiece.

Another notable winner was the Genesis GV60, which won the Best Electric SUV category. Genesis was launched in the UK in 2021 as an alternative to established premium brands such as Audi, BMW and Mercedes-Benz, and is part of Hyundai Motor Company.



What Car? Car of the Year Awards included 24 category winners, plus one overall Car of the Year

“The Volkswagen ID Buzz is a car that wins over your head as well as your heart.”

Making headlines this month

EXTREME FAST-CHARGING BATTERIES VALIDATED BY INDEPENDENT SPECIALISTS

Electric car batteries which can charge in just five minutes have had claims that they will last for 1000 fast-charging cycles corroborated by independent laboratory Shmuel De-Leon Energy. These batteries will be used in cars by 2024.



CLEAN AIR ZONE INTRODUCED IN BRISTOL

A new Clean Air Zone is targeting private cars, taxis and commercial vehicles entering Bristol city centre 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Drivers of older, more polluting cars will be forced to pay £9 per day, while electric vehicles are currently exempt from the charge.

NEW TOOL TO CALCULATE EV ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

A new tool which allows users to calculate the environmental impact of a car based on its manufacturing, usage and disposal has been launched. The tool, released by environmental group Green NCAP, highlights the differences in emissions and energy usage by EVs compared with traditional combustion-engined models.

BMW M DEVELOPING

QUAD-MOTOR SUPER SALOON

BMW is testing an electric four-wheel drive performance car where each wheel will be driven by its own motor, to allow more precise control of power delivery. Testing so far has involved a modified version of the BMW i4, so it's likely that an M version of this will be the first car to utilise the new system.

HOME-CHARGING NOT USED BY SOME EV DRIVERS

Almost one-in-five (16%) of EV drivers do not regularly charge their car at home. Despite the majority (84%) saying they do plug in at home sometimes, most also use public chargers, suggesting a combination of both is the most popular method of charging an EV.



Upcoming BMW i4M will be the first model to use BMW's quad-motor design



The best and worst discounts around right now

TOP 5 HIGHEST % TARGET PRICE DISCOUNTS THIS MONTH

These are the largest discounts revealed by What Car?'s mystery shoppers over the past month. They highlight slow-selling and run-out models or, occasionally, models in which there is a fierce battle for market share.



BMW X4 SUV is ridiculously fast in M Competition form

1 BMW X4 xDrive M Competition Step Auto	17.5%
2 Volkswagen Arteon 1.5 TSI R Line	17.0%
3 Volkswagen Passat Estate 1.5 TSI SEL	15.9%
4 BMW 530d MHT xDrive M Sport Auto	12.7%
5 Seat Arona 1.0 TSI SE Edition	12.2%

TOP 5 TARGET PRICE DROPS THIS MONTH

These are the discounts that have been reduced by the greatest amount in the past month, as found by What Car?'s mystery shoppers. Often they show a cut in incentives on a discounted model, but they can also signal increased demand.



Lexus UX 300e EV can cover 150 miles in real-world

1 Lexus UX 300e models	-2.8%
2 Volvo C40 Recharge models	-1.8%
3 Hyundai Bayon models	-1.5%
4 Hyundai i10 models	-1.3%
5 BMW 2-Series Gran Coupé models	-1%

This month's Target Price report

The average cash Target Price discount finished 2022 more than 18% down, year on year, at 3.8% or £1791 per car. Over the same period, the average PCP APR increased by 75% to 8.4%, while the average finance deposit contribution fell by more than 13% to £1038 per car.

Despite being bad news for consumers, this means that car buyers can still take advantage of a total average Target Price saving of £2829 when buying a new car.

And with the pressures that caused such an unprecedented decline in discounts beginning to recede, we expect the value and range of transaction price savings to consistently trend higher throughout 2023.

Salespeople will, of course, try to maintain the low, or zero, discount policies that they have successfully deployed over the past two years, but with the balance of supply and demand starting to shift back in the

customer's favour, buyers should actively shop around and use our Target Price data to haggle for better deals.

The trend in increasing average PCP APRs and finance deposit contributions has continued, with a month-to-month increase of 1.3% and £141 per car respectively.

The average Buying Cost Premium (BCP) across the Target Price inventory is

14.1%, which represents how much over a car's list price consumers must pay when buying a car using a manufacturer's best available PCP deal.

Cars with a low BCP include the Audi A5 Sportback, at 1.4%, Nissan Qashqai at 3.1%, and the Fiat 500 at 6.5%.

However, consumers will pay a much higher premium over list price when buying cars on a PCP finance deal, such as the Audi Q4 e-Tron (26.6% BCP) and Land Rover Discovery (21.8% BCP) SUVs and BMW 220i Active Tourer (20.4%) people-carrier.

Peugeot

dealers are currently the most generous when offering an average cash Target Price discount across a model range at **6.7%**, followed by Renault at **6.5%** and Nissan at **6.1%**.



Savvy buyers can save an average of 6.7% across Peugeot's model range

Target Price market watch

FAMILY CARS

While the average cash Target Price discount among family cars is marginally down compared with the past month, it has increased by more than 13% (in relative terms) over the past six months.

This means that consumers can expect to negotiate a typical 3.9%, or £1242-per-car saving when buying a family car.

The cash saving reduces to £1086 per car when models are bought using a manufacturer's PCP deal, but this comes with an additional £901-per-car average finance deposit contribution, based on a typical 8.8% PCP APR.

The average finance deposit contribution is up by £89 per car over past month, but this is outweighed by an increase of 1.4% in the average PCP APR.

Consumers have huge variety to choose from, from zero-discount cars such as the electric Cupra Born, Hyundai Ioniq 5 and MG5, to



All-electric Nissan Leaf is available with savings of up to 8.6%

LARGE SUVs

While the average Target Price discount among large SUVs has improved over the past quarter (up by 7.4% in relative terms) we are yet to see significant momentum towards consistently higher transaction price savings. This is partly due to the enduring desirability of large SUVs, and the effect of zero discounts and long delivery lead times on electric cars such as the Kia EV6, Mercedes EQB and the Skoda Enyaq iV. Consumers can expect to haggle an average 2.6% or £1311 per car cash Target Price discount. This total saving increases to £1923 per car when dealer contributions towards finance offers are accounted for. DS, Peugeot, and Volvo dealers are offering the best average transaction price discounts, with savings of up to £3435 possible for buyers willing to shop around for the best deals.



Kia EV6 is a former Car of the Year winner

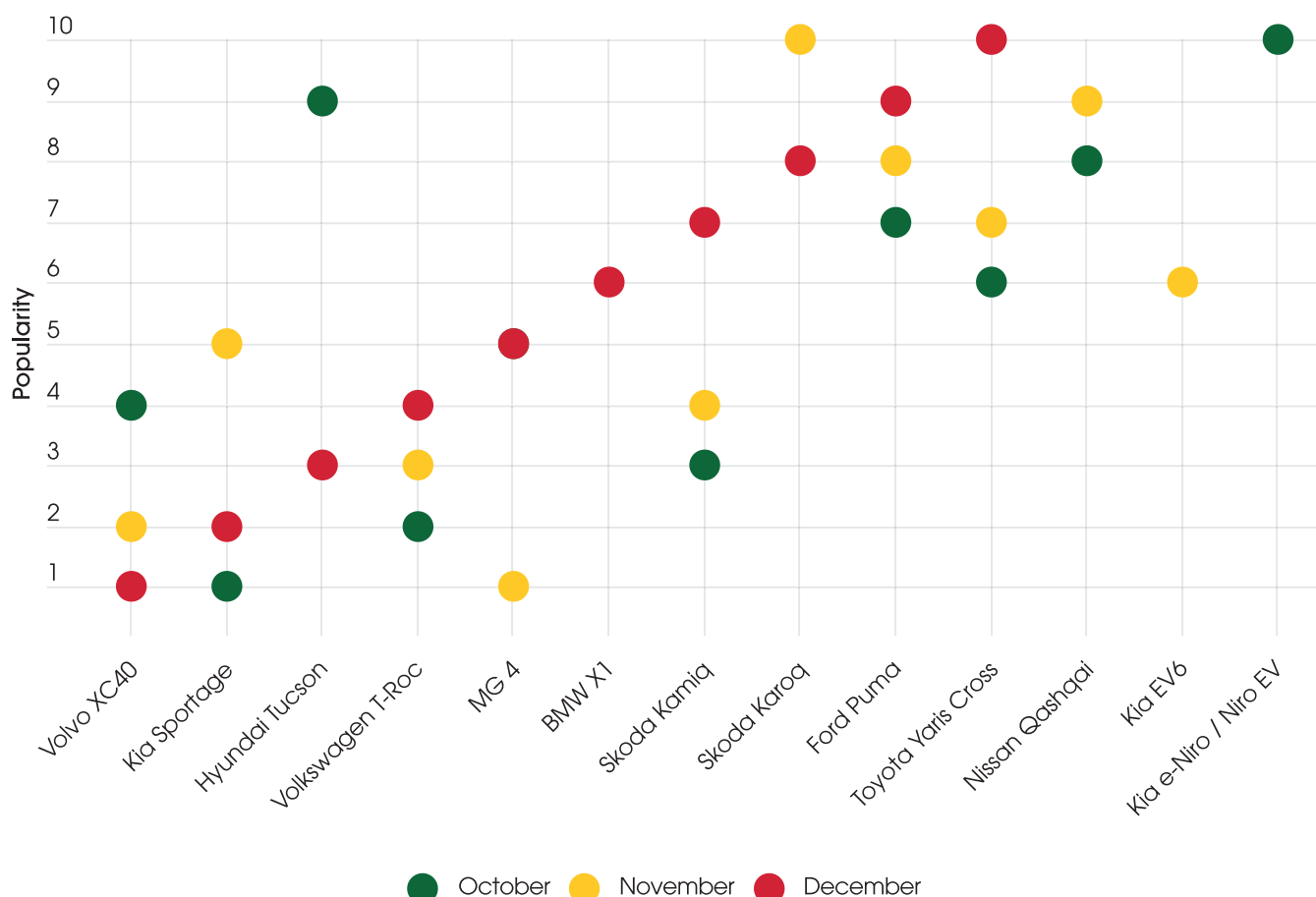
higher average savings from models such as the Peugeot 508 (10.4% or £3893 per car) Nissan Leaf (8.6% or £2723 per car) and Citroën C4 (7.5% or £1886 per car).

Ford dealers are currently offering the best-value average PCP APR, at 3.9% on Focus models. The average Target Price discount here remains weighed down by a range of niche models, cars with restricted supply and cars with low sales expectations. We believe that this effect will reduce over the next two quarters, because competitive pressure combined with better vehicle supply across the segment will result in discounts rising.



Most popular new car reviews

MOST POPULAR NEW CAR REVIEWS ON WHATCAR.COM



For the first time in almost a year, the Volvo XC40 family SUV was the most-read review on Whatcar.com in December, beating the Kia Sportage into second place and helping to send November's most popular car, the MG 4 electric hatchback, back into fifth position.

The biggest rise of the past month came from the Hyundai Tucson family SUV, which rose to third position from 11th place in November. This was no doubt helped by that car's review being promoted on our daily newsletters over the Christmas period, and also by tempting Target Price discounts

being available. Indeed, at the time of writing, buyers could save up to £2150 on the price of a new Tucson – that's one of the larger discounts available within the family SUV segment.

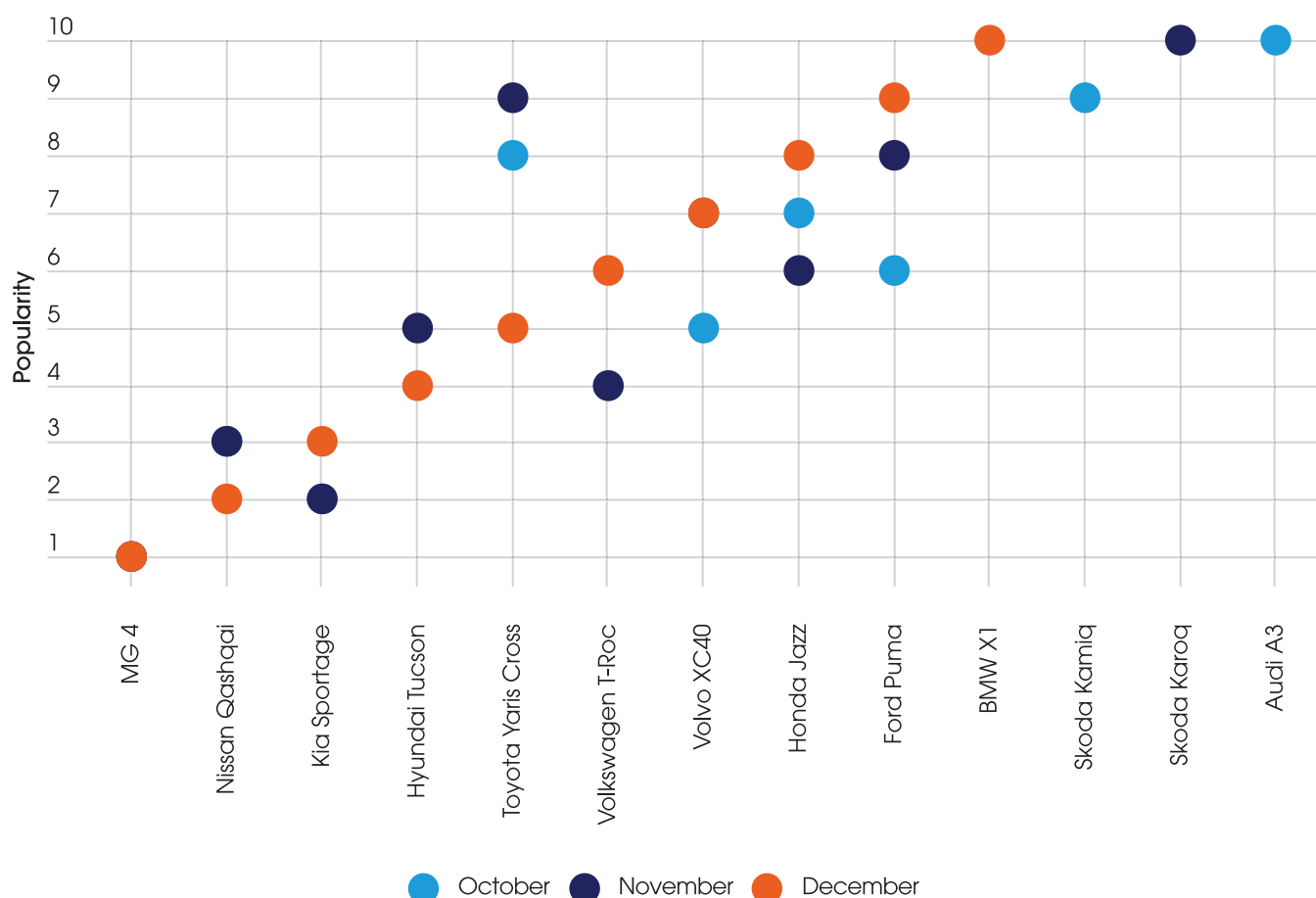


Volvo XC40 family SUV rose back to prominence in December



The cars generating the most leads

CARS GENERATING THE MOST LEADS FROM BUYERS AT WHATCAR.COM



If ever you needed a sure-fire signal of a car being a hit with What Car?

Readers, consider this: the MG 4 has now been the car to generate the most leads through our New Car Buying website for four months in a row.

That popularity is helped by its five-star rating, but also by its keen pricing – at the time of writing, cash prices started from £29,495, while PCP costs began from £347 per month. In both cases, the MG 4 represents one of the cheapest ways to

get into a new electric car of any size.

Elsewhere, both the BMW X1 and Kia EV6 rose seven places in the past month, while the biggest fall came from the Kia Niro SUV, which fell from 14th place in November to 20th in December. Discounts on the Niro are relatively small, with savings of just

£822 being available at the time of writing. Even without those savings, the Niro is more expensive to buy than the rival Skoda Karoq – which appears above it in our rankings.





Briefing notes

Facts, stats and quotes from a month in motoring

£182m

Paid by dealer group Vertu Motors to acquire Helston Garages Group, which has bolstered its dealership locations to 188.

10%

Drivers who say they have been victims of fraud when buying a new car, according to a survey by Close Brothers Motor Finance.

INDUSTRY
VOICE



"[The] ACEA will continue to advocate for a balance between what is good for the environment, what is good for Europe's economy and what is good for society," said Renault Group CEO **Luca de Meo**, who was recently appointed to lead the ACEA European lobbying group.

INDUSTRY
VOICE



"There's a lot of work going on to try to understand what's possible to develop accelerated wear on [EV] battery packs, because reducing the amount of time to gather all the data will be genuinely revolutionary." Millbrook Proving Ground battery tests manager **David Prigg**.

152 miles



Estimated range of the Sono Sion, a five-seat people-carrier that features bodywork made from solar panels. The company is currently fighting to survive, having started a crowdfund campaign.

52%

Drivers who think they can buy 'self-driving' cars today, despite none being legally able to do so.



WHATCAR?

WHATCAR?

Britain's biggest and best car buyer's guide Awards 2023

BEST
CARS FOR
EVERY
BUDGET

2023 AWARDS SPECIAL

CAR OF THE YEAR

23 category winners • One overall champion



Awards 2023 New BMW M2, Jeep Avenger, Toyota bZ3X

PLUS

Self-driving
cars tested



New Civic Type R vs Golf R



Hyundai's Tesla fighter driven



Save up to £6316 on a new car



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW EVERY MONTH