

THE AIR FORCE
COLLABORATORY
YOUR IDEA COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING

START COLLABORATING



INTRODUCTORY OFFER:
JUST \$5

Renew | Give a Gift | International

Subscribe with Amazon

REVIEWS  FOLLOW US  SUBSCRIBE


Mazda 6, GT and i Sport

Pretty Enough?

Rating: 7/10 *Very good, but not quite great*

\$21,675 and \$31,490 as tested · [More info from Mazda](#)

Reviewed by [Eric Tegler](#)  August 15, 2013 | 8:39 pm | Categories: [Automotive](#)

 Share

25

 Tweet

60



NEW WORLD'S #1
MOST ADVANCED
ALKALINE BATTERY*

DURACELL
QUANTUM
HI-DENSITY CORE

*Based on Hi-Density Core™ and PowerCheck™

DURACELL [LEARN MORE >](#)



The 2014 Mazda6. Photo courtesy of Mazda USA

I think the [Mazda6](#) is the best-looking car in the mid-size sedan segment. That's a good start for Mazda — which needs a stronger competitor — since good looks always get customers into showrooms. And many of the other elements that go toward making a car a segment leader are here. But do good sense and a bit of flash give the Mazda6 enough momentum to overcome a few flaws?

I drove both the base model i Sport (\$21,675 as-tested) and the top-trim Grand Touring (\$31,490) Mazda6s. The former had a six-speed manual transmission and the latter a six-speed automatic. Both come with Mazda's SKYACTIV-G 2.5 liter four-cylinder engine which makes 184 horsepower and 185 pound-feet of torque. It's an efficient engine and until late 2013, it's the only one available.

Mazda has done an impressive job hitting MPG targets with its normally-aspirated four. With the automatic transmission, it returns a class-leading 38 highway MPG. The EPA puts the both GT and i Sport at about 30 MPG combined. Over 750 miles of mostly highway driving in the Mazda6 GT, I saw an indicated 32.5 mpg. The i Sport averaged 25.6 MPG in mostly city driving. Unfortunately, the numbers are achieved at the expense of



Wired Top 3
Read their advice on what to buy, when to upgrade and which features matter most.



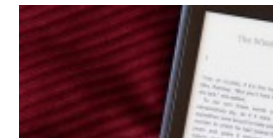
Phones

- [Apple iPhone 5](#)
- [HTC One](#)
- [Google Nexus 4](#)



Tablets

- [Apple iPad](#)
- [Google Nexus 7](#)
- [Amazon Kindle Fire HD](#)



E-Readers

- [Amazon Kindle Paperwhite](#)
- [Barnes & Noble Nook Simple Touch GlowLight](#)
- [Kobo Aura HD](#)

[Top-3](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Automotive](#)

[Desktops](#)

[Digital Cameras](#) +

[Gaming Gear](#)

[Home Audio & Video](#) +

[Household](#)

[Media Players](#)

zoom-zoom.

Despite relatively light curb weights, the GT and i Sport (3275/3183 lbs) are always a bit short on power. The issue is exacerbated by an automatic transmission aggressively programmed to reach for top gear and stay there. Getting it to kick-down in passing situations requires slapping the accelerator nearly to the floor. There's a paddle-shifted manual mode but most drivers rarely think to use it. The three-pedal manual allows you to cope better but the 6 just isn't quick. It takes around eight seconds to get to 60 mph.

The power deficit isn't so much an issue in lower trim 6s but the range-topping Grand Touring competes with the Ford Fusion Titanium, Honda Accord EX-L, Nissan Altima 3.5 SL, Toyota Camry XLE V6 and Hyundai Sonata Limited Turbo — all of which offer more powerful turbocharged four-cylinders or V6s.

[Mobile Audio](#) +

[Mobile Phones](#)

[Notebooks](#)

[Software and Apps](#)

[Sports and Outdoors](#)

[Tablets and Readers](#)

[Televisions](#)



The 2014 Mazda6 in Grand Touring trim. *Photo courtesy of Mazda USA*

Add the 6's electric steering to its blemishes. It weights up OK, but is so strongly allied with the fuel economy mission that it provides almost no feel. The sense of numbness crosses over to the suspension. When you

How We Rate

- 1 A complete failure in every way
- 2 Barely functional; don't buy it
- 3 Serious flaws; proceed with caution
- 4 Downsides outweigh upsides
- 5 Recommended with reservations
- 6 A solid product with some issues
- 7 Very good, but not quite great

corner hard, the damping response feels slow. There's a laziness to it even though the body is decently controlled. The i Sport, riding on 17-inch wheels versus the GT's 19-inchers, is the nimbler, better handler. Ride quality is good however. Still, an Accord, particularly with the V6, offers similar grip and ride comfort, and it makes you want to corner a little harder.

If the dynamic fun is muted, there are other attractions beyond the Mazda6's looks and fuel frugality. While the interior doesn't have quite the bells and whistles of competitors like the Fusion, its relative simplicity averts drawbacks such as overly sensitive touch-screens, distracting digital displays, and likely-to-date chrome and smartphone-inspired dash flourishes. The 6's three-gauge instrument cluster, Audi MMI-like console controller and TomTom navigation are effective. Also, I liked the two-tone black/sand interior color combo of the GT.

Front seat comfort is quite good, while rear seat comfort and space are only adequate. The ability to fold both rear seats down as in a hatchback is great, yielding a pass-thru that accommodates long, low-profile cargo like my stand-up paddle boards.

The Grand Touring trim offers driver aids including [Mazda Radar Cruise Control](#), forward obstruction and lane-departure warnings (often annoying), and a front collision-detecting [Smart City Brake Support](#) system which automatically applies the brakes at low speeds to avoid a collision.

Mazda gets props for offering a manual transmission. And the i Sport Mazda6 is not only attractive when compared with its mid-size competitors but with similarly priced high-content C-segment cars. I'd take the i Sport over a Hyundai Elantra or Dodge Dart any day. You might even prefer it to a Mazda3. If you want the 19-inch wheels and more info-tainment options, you can get them on the mid-level Touring trim with either transmission choice.

- 8 Excellent, with room to kvetch
- 9 Nearly flawless; buy it now
- 10 Metaphysical product perfection



TRENDING NOW ON WIRED

[Student Suspended for Refusing to Wear RFID Chip Returns to School](#)

[Linux Hackers Rebuild Internet From Silicon Valley Garage](#)

[How City Living Is Reshaping the](#)

Brains and Behavior of Urban Animals - Wired Science

Yahoo Takes Web Traffic Crown From Google — But Is It Winning?

We Made an Arty Photo Essay Just by Cropping This 150-Gigapixel Image of Tokyo

The GT again. *Photo courtesy of Mazda USA*

Without any gasoline powerplant distinction, the Grand Touring really is less of a value. That equation may change with the arrival of Mazda's SKYACTIV-D 2.2 liter four cylinder diesel in late summer. Said to offer a high amount of torque, the diesel would address the power deficit, return high MPG and further differentiate the 6.

In any trim, the Mazda6 is a looker. In my travels, it garnered compliments from guys and girls. The Takeri concept on which it is based was a winner, and the [KODO design language](#) it utilizes portends good things for Mazdas yet to come. It is pretty.

WIRED Hot looks for a mid-size sedan. Attractive inside as well. Fold-down rear seats trump pass-throughs. Class-leading highway MPG merges with competent handling and available manual transmission.

TIRED The GT needs power — a turbo, V6, rocket pack, anything. The steering should be sharpened. The

101 Signals
WIRED's essential
reads and feeds for staying
current on business |
culture | design | security |
science | technology

CLICK HERE

Mazda USA - Mazda Cars

MazdaUSA.com

Build your new Mazda car online and search dealer new car inventory.



Do It Yourself Alarm

SimpliSafe.com/DoItYourselfAlarm
CNN Experts Say, "Try It!" Do It Yourself Alarm System



How Much is My Car Worth?

BlackBook.NewCars.com
Find out how Much Your Car is Worth with a Free Black Book Valuation!



New Mazda Mazda6 Prices

Mazda.CarPriceSecrets.com



black cloth interior is hot... as in sweaty. When's the last time you bought a Japanese diesel?

Don't pay more than \$20,000 for a car. Lowest Price on a New Mazda Mazda6! AdChoices

RELATED | YOU MIGHT LIKE | STORY RESOURCES | Related Links by Contextly



Smoothie Operators: 5 Single-Serve Blenders Tested



Taking a Long Shot on a Value-Priced SUP



600 Bucks, and Worth Every Penny



Posture Police

Tags: Japanese Cars, Mazda, Mazda6, Performance Sedans, Sedans
Post Comment | 7 | Permalink

Pricing

No pricing information available for this item.

Share 25 | Tweet 60 | +1 0



Editorial Team

EDITOR Michael Calore (@snackfight)

PHOTO DEPT Keith Axline (@kaxline), Jim Merithew (@tinyblackbox), Ariel Zambelich (@azambelich), Alex Washburn (@alextweeting)

CONTRIBUTORS Mat Honan, Christina Bonnington, Alexandra Chang, Roberto Baldwin, Christopher Null, Billy Brown, Michael S. Lasky, Terrence Russell, Jackson Lynch, Lore Sjöberg, Basem Wasef, Eric Tegler, Dan Havlik, Chuck Squatriglia

REVIEWS FELLOW Valentina Palladino

WIRED INTRODUCTORY OFFER: JUST \$5. Subscribe with Amazon

Quick Links: Contact Us | New sletter | RSS Feeds | Tech Jobs | Wired Mobile | FAQ | Site Map

THE STORY OF A REVOLUTION

The best of WIRED,
1993-2013.

Available for iPad, Kindle,
Nook, and Android tablets.
[Click here to learn more.](#)



7 comments



Leave a message...

Best ▾ Community



John Moss · 4 days ago

Best midsize sedan in the market.
But it won't sell.
Nobody knows Mazda exists.

2 ^ | ▾ Reply Share >



Ashley_Moylan → John Moss · a day ago

just as Angela
responded I'm dazzled that a person able to earn \$6267 in 4 weeks on the
internet. have you seen this www.works77.com

^ | ▾ Reply Share >



ElyasM · 6 days ago

Wow, if the gas 4-banger is down on power, I can't imagine how dismal the performance will be with engine.

^ | v Reply Share >



Jerry Alez → ElyasM · 5 days ago

If people wanted performance they wouldn't buy a 4 door sedan, they'd buy a mustang or so

1 ^ | v Reply Share >



twitchblade → Jerry Alez · 4 days ago

not true, there are plenty of sedans that have performance, it just they cost a little more than mazda..

^ | v Reply Share >



dan1101 · 6 days ago

If those are the only engines available then yes it definitely needs power. It is Mazda after all, zoom-zoom. Consumers decide whether power or efficiency are most important to them.

This sentence is worded confusingly: "While the interior doesn't have quite the bells and whistles of the Fusion, its relative simplicity averts drawbacks such as overly sensitive touch-screens, distracting displays, and likely-to-date chrome and smartphone-inspired dash flourishes."

^ | v Reply Share >



thekeelo_g · 7 days ago

I can't agree that that looks better than a Fusion. Sure, it's a little sleeker than its cousin, but at the expense of the Aston-lite front end the Fusion has.

^ | v Reply Share >

 [Comment feed](#)  [Subscribe via email](#)

NEW **WORLD'S #1 MOST ADVANCED** ALKALINE BATTERY* **DURACELL QUANTUM**

DURACELL *Based on Hi-Density Core™ and PowerCheck™ **LEARN MORE >**

Condé Nast Web Sites:

[Webmonkey](#) | [Reddit](#) | [ArsTechnica](#) | [Details](#) | [Golf Digest](#) | [GQ](#) | [New Yorker](#)

Subscribe to a magazine:

Condé Nast web sites:

International Sites:

Wired.com © 2013 Condé Nast. All rights reserved. Use of this Site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#) (effective 3/21/12) and [Privacy Policy](#) (effective 3/21/12). [Your California Privacy Rights](#).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written [permission of Condé Nast](#).

[Ad Choices](#) 