

OVERALL SCORE **RECOMMENDED**

**86**

# 2020 Mazda CX-9

CR MPG Overall 22/ City 15/ Hwy 32 mpg  
#4 of 30 Mid-sized Sport-utility Vehicles

**86**



**ROAD TEST**



**PREDICTED RELIABILITY**



**PREDICTED OWNER SATISFACTION**



**FRONTAL CRASH PREVENTION**

Forward Collision Warning	Standard
Automatic Emergency Braking (City)	Standard
Automatic Emergency Braking (Highway)	Standard

## Road Test Results

### Performance

<b>Acceleration</b>	4/5
0 to 60 mph (sec.)	7.9 sec
<b>Transmission</b>	5/5
<b>Fuel Economy</b>	3/5
CR's Overall Mileage	22 mpg
CR's City Mileage	15 mpg
CR's Highway Mileage	32 mpg
Annual Fuel Cost	\$1,290
<b>Braking</b>	3/5
<b>Emergency Handling</b>	3/5

### Comfort/Convenience

<b>Ride</b>	4/5
<b>Noise</b>	4/5
<b>Front Seat Comfort</b>	4/5
<b>Rear Seat Comfort</b>	5/5
<b>Interior Fit &amp; Finish</b>	4/5
<b>Trunk/Cargo Area</b>	3/5

## Road Test

"Driving Matters" is the tagline Mazda uses to promote its CX-9 three-row family mover, casting it as the driver's choice among the soccer-mom mobile crowd. Turns out that this slogan is quite apt; the CX-9 is particularly agile, comfortable riding, and quiet among affordable mid-sized three-row SUVs. Long, sleek, and rakish, the CX-9 has a presence that contrasts with some rivals that come across as tall wagons in a "rugged" off-roader costume. Although we have some quibbles over accommodations, controls, and feature content, the CX-9 is a

## Owner Reports

WORSE BETTER

### Reliability History



### Reliability Trouble Spots

This car is new and detailed reliability trouble spots will be available at a later date.

<b>Engine Major</b>		N/A
<b>Engine Minor</b>		N/A
<b>Engine Cooling</b>		N/A

### Owner Satisfaction

This car is new and detailed owner satisfaction will be available at a later date.



<b>Driving Experience</b>	86/100
<b>Comfort</b>	79/100
<b>Value</b>	68/100

compelling alternative to the more popular players.

Making just 227 horsepower on regular fuel, the CX-9 is eclipsed on paper by V6-powered rivals like the 280-hp Honda Pilot, 290-hp Kia Sorento, and 270-hp Toyota Highlander. But don't let that spec-sheet comparison fool you. With about 50 lb.-ft. more torque than its peers, the CX-9 feels fleet and responsive. A welcome swell of thrust comes early on, effortlessly propelling this sizable SUV in everyday driving. That said, the Mazda's turbo four cylinder lacks the slickness and polished sound of a V6. At 22 mpg overall, fuel economy is one better than most rivals.

Most mid-sized three-row SUVs feel rather mundane to drive.

By contrast, the CX-9 is an inspired revelation, feeling alert and hunkered-down through the corners. As such, it drives more like a German luxury SUV than the lumbering competition.

Ride comfort is commendable as well, with the CX-9 absorbing bumps with aplomb. It's also quiet inside, lending it a substantial, upscale feel.

Inside, the CX-9 looks more plush than the purposeful Pilot or Highlander rivals. Swanky top-trim Signature models have rich brown leather and chunks of real wood, but even our mid-trim Touring is nicely trimmed. But the narrow cockpit might compromise comfort.

Cabin room falls behind the cavernous standards of the class; the Pilot and Highlander feel more like a minivan inside than the CX-9. While most competitors go for a relaxed fit, the Mazda's narrow cockpit comes in slim-fit cut.

The second-row seat is very roomy and slides fore-aft. Third-row passengers better be kids, but teens can fit in a pinch. Some luxuries that are available on competitors, like a panoramic sunroof are absent from the options list.

That rakish sloping roof line contributes to a sleek design but ultimately limits cargo volume and compromises visibility. A backup camera and blind spot warning are standard.

The Mazda Connect infotainment system seems like it's trying to emulate BMW's iDrive, complete with a console-mounted controller knob and screen, but the Mazda system is tedious and cumbersome.

Standard equipment includes forward collision warning and

automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection. Convenience features, adaptive cruise control, and lane keeping assistance are also standard.

All in all, the CX-9 provides a welcome alternative from the herd of similar three-row family SUVs. Its upscale feel and satisfying road manners are pluses, even if the car falls short on some details. The CX-9 shines brighter on the road than it does in a spec-chart comparison.

## Best Version to Get

The Touring with the Touring Premium package is the best value; it includes a lot of features for right around \$40,000. That said, we wouldn't look askance if you bought a Grand Touring for its added safety equipment. Only get a Signature if you really want the brown leather or the real wood trim; it adds no functional advantage over the Grand Touring.

Note that on Touring and Grand Touring buyers can opt for captains chairs in the second row which reduces passenger capacity from seven to six.

### Notable changes:

For 2020, captain's chairs in the second row are optional on Touring and Grand Touring. Pedestrian detection is standard.

To read the full road test go to <https://www.consumerreports.org/cars/mazda/cx-9/2020/road-test/?pagestop>

## Highs

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- ✓ Nimble handling for its size

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  - ✓ Effortless power delivery

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  - ✓ Comfortable ride approaches luxury-SUV levels

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  - ✓ Very quiet cabin

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  - ✓ Above-average fuel economy

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  - ✓ Grand Touring and Signature versions plusher than the competition

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  - ✓ Standard forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection.

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## Lows

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- ✗ Infotainment system's learning curve

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  - ✗ Not as roomy as some competitors, including a tight third-row seat

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  - ✗ Short on towing capacity compared to V6-powered rivals

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