2020 Subaru Legacy

Road Test

Subaru loyalists will be pleased that the redesigned-for-2020 Legacy doesn’t stray far from the previous model, and that a host of improvements helps it rank among the top mid-sized sedans. The Legacy is sensible, comfortable, quiet, and easy to live with in almost every way, plus it comes with all-wheel drive, a unique standard feature in the class.

One of the first things you’ll notice when driving the Legacy is its superbly smooth ride. Its suspension soaks up bumps and potholes with an uncanny fluidity that’s better than some luxury sedans costing three times as much. The cabin remains hushed, too, though the standard four-cylinder engine can get bothersome when pushed. The uplevel turbocharged engine has a quieter demeanor. The Legacy tackles corners with restrained levels of body lean, feeling responsive and secure, but it isn’t as sporty as a Ford Fusion or Mazda6.

The Legacy’s driving position accommodates many body types, with plenty of headroom, cushy armrests, and a well-designed center console. Front seat comfort is excellent, with adjustable lumbar support and a supportive lower backrest. The uplevel turbocharged 260-hp, 2.4-liter engine replaces the previous six-cylinder option.

The uplevel turbocharged 260-hp, 2.4-liter engine transforms the Legacy, providing it with effortless punch, but at the expense of fuel economy. We tested an Outback (basically a raised wagon version of the Legacy) with this engine and it sprinted from 0-60 mph in 7.1 seconds, but dropped 4 mpg overall. The continuously variable transmission (CVT) fitted to either engine mimics the shift pattern of conventional automatic transmissions. This helps it mask some of the common CVT quirks, such as the engine revs rising more quickly than the speed of the car. Unfortunately, Subaru has taken a turn for the worse with its infotainment system. The large screen, fitted to all versions except the base model, requires multiple steps to perform some common tasks, mostly ones related to the climate-control system.

Standard advanced driver assistance features include forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection, lane departure warning, and adaptive cruise control. It’s disappointing that blind spot warning and rear cross traffic warning cost extra.

Best Version to Get

Whether opting for the standard 2.5-liter or 2.4-liter turbo (XT) engine, we would gravitate toward the Limited trim level to get the more supportive leather seats, including a power front passenger seat. Shoppers opting for the lower Premium trim should make sure to choose the optional package with blind spot and rear cross traffic warning systems.

Notable changes:
The Legacy is new for 2020, and is based on Subaru's latest platform. It also shares most components with the Outback. An optional 260-hp, 2.4-liter four-cylinder turbocharged engine replaces the previous six-cylinder option.

To read the full road test go to https://www.consumerreports.org/cars/subaru/legacy/2020-road-test/pagetestop

Highs

✔ Ride
✔ Transmission
✔ Trunk/Cargo

Lows

✗ Some controls require multiple steps