

Which were the best selling cars of 2009?

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7 January 2010

Car sales bounced back from the worst of the recession in 2009, climbing by 21% between June and December. But which were the best selling cars last year?

At the start of 2009 the motor industry was tanking, with sales down by nearly 26% from the previous year. But a remarkable recovery seemed complete last month, with December registration figures showing that sales were 38.9% higher than the same month in 2008. It means that total new cars sold in 2009 fell by just 6.4% compared to 2008. The number of new vehicles registered in 2009 was 1,994,999, according to the **Society of Motor Manufacturers**. For most of last year sales were helped by the Government's car-scrappage scheme, which offers drivers £2,000 towards the cost on a new car if they trade in an older model. Since its introduction in May, the scheme has accounted for up to a fifth of all new registrations and is said to represent 20% of December sales. RAC motoring strategist Adrian Tink said: 'The 2009 car sales figures clearly show the positive impact of the car scrappage scheme on the struggling motor industry.' Figures showed that 2009 had the lowest year-end total of sales since 1995, but that the December sales rose well above **SMMT's** original forecast. SMMT chief executive Paul Everitt said: 'The December new car market was boosted by the scrappage scheme and consumers looking to avoid January's VAT increase.'

The retuning appetite of car buyers was underlined by online used car retailer Carsite.co.uk, which saw its sales double this week due to the heavy snowfall.

The car scrappage scheme - How does it work?

On Tuesday Carsite.co.uk reported a 112% increase in sales compared to the average daily sales over the past two months. It claims that the 40cm of snow that covered the UK that day led many online to purchase cars rather than venture out onto the treacherous roads. Alistair Jeff from Carsite.co.uk said: 'When conditions make it near impossible to visit dealer forecourts, more people are turned on to just how easy and convenient it is to buy a used car online. Choose, click, reserve and wait for delivery – all without venturing out on to dangerous snow-covered roads.' The SMMT have announced that on average, new cars registered in 2009 emitted 149.5g of CO₂, a reduction of 5.4% from 2008.

What were the best-selling cars of 2009?

1. Ford Fiesta
2. Ford Focus
3. Vauxhall Corsa
4. Vauxhall Astra
5. Volkswagen Golf
6. Peugeot 207
7. Mini
8. BMW 3 Series
9. Vauxhall Insignia
10. Ford Mondeo

But what of 2010's car sales, what can we expect?

David Raistrick, the UK manufacturing leader at professional services firm Deloitte, said: 'My prediction is that there will be a dip in 2010 to around £1.7 to £1.8m units, with the figures balancing out in 2011 to a long-term annual average of just under £2m units.'

2010 figures are likely to be affected by the end of the car-scrappage scheme, the VAT increase and the fall of the sterling.