What was tested? 2020 Hyundai Santa Fe Limited ($35,650).
Wheelbase: 108.9 in.
Length: 187.8 in. Width: 74.4 in. Height: 66.1 in.
Engine: 2.4-liter four cylinder (185hp, 178 lbs. ft.).
Transmission: Eight-speed automatic.
Fuel economy: 22 city, 29 highway.

Why buy it?
It's a safe choice in midsize crossovers, with an all-around appeal that delivers a lot of practicality and comfort for the money.

Hyundai Santa Fe Stands Out For Lack of Weaknesses

By Derek Price
Cargazing.com

With so many competent mid-size crossovers for sale today, it’s easy to overlook this one, the Hyundai Santa Fe. Ignoring it would be a mistake.

This isn't a flashy, in-your-face vehicle that demands attention. You're not likely to see it on the cover of car magazines, but it's still one of the best vehicles in its class for a simple reason: it has no weaknesses.

To me, the Santa Fe feels like a 1990s Toyota, and I mean that in the best possible way. It stands out not for any one attribute — its styling, performance, gas mileage and spaciousness are all decent — but because it doesn't have a single unforgivable weakness.

For many American families, it checks off all the right boxes: affordable, practical, efficient, comfortable and good-looking.

Introduced as a completely new model for 2019, the 2020 version continues with a few tweaks. There are some new safety features available, including BlindView Monitor and Rear Occupant Alert that draws attention when a child or pet could have accidentally been left in the back seat. Dark chrome exterior trim is now standard on all the Limited models, and some safety and tech features are now available on more trim levels.

Beyond that, the Santa Fe continues as its consistently competent self.

The 2019 redesign gave it a sharper body with sleeker lines and slim, modern-looking headlights, but the overall appearance is understated. It's handsome, just not a vehicle you'd buy to turn heads.

If you want to get extremely picky, the performance is underwhelming with the base engine. It makes 185 horsepower, which is enough for the class but hardly exciting.

If you want a more thrilling feel from the gas pedal, a 2.0-liter turbocharged engine is available. It makes 235 horsepower and — even more importantly — 260 pound-feet of torque for drivers who want the extra oomph.

The base engine is rated for 22 miles per gallon in city driving and 29 on the highway, which is good but not best-in-class. The turbo engine burns more fuel but not unreasonably so for the amount of power it generates, dropping the ratings down to 20 city and 25 highway.

All-wheel drive is available for people who appreciate the extra traction in icy or wet weather. It drops the fuel-economy ratings by 1 mpg on most models, not a bad tradeoff at all.

As a small SUV-like vehicle, it's also designed to do some towing. With the base engine, it can tow up to 2,000 pounds, or up to 3,500 on the turbo model.

Its real strength, though, is how it drives. The new generation Santa Fe is exceptionally quiet for the money, feeling just as smooth and well sorted on the highway as some luxury-brand competitors. An eight-speed automatic transmission makes crisp, well-timed shifts, and what little engine noise enters the cabin is buttery and inoffensive.

Pricing starts at $25,900 for the base SE trim with the 2.4-liter engine and frontwheel drive. The mid-trim SEL starts at $27,650, while the luxury-oriented Limited starts at $35,650.

The most affordable turbo-charged model is the SEL with Convenience and Premium packages, priced at $34,500.

Pricing tops out at $39,200 for the Limited with all-wheel drive and the turbocharged engine.