

December 10, 2015

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VNR: THUR. 12/10/2015, 10:30-11 a.m. EST; repeat 1:30-2 p.m. EST (KU) GALAXY 17
SD transponder 18/slot 3 (dl12057V) bandwidth 6 MHz; symbol rate 3.9787 FEC $\frac{3}{4}$
HD transponder 18-upper (dl12069V) bandwidth 18 MHz; symbol rate 13.235 FEC $\frac{3}{4}$

**Small overlap crash protection, front crash prevention key to 2016 awards;
48 models earn *TOP SAFETY PICK+* award, 13 earn *TOP SAFETY PICK***

ARLINGTON, Va. — Nearly 50 vehicles meet tougher criteria for 2016 to take home the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's *TOP SAFETY PICK+* award, earning good ratings in all five IIHS crashworthiness evaluations and an advanced or higher rating for front crash prevention. An additional 13 models qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK*.

"We asked auto manufacturers to do more this year to qualify for our safety awards, and they delivered," says Adrian Lund, IIHS president. "For the first time, a good rating in the challenging small overlap front crash test is a requirement to win, in addition to an available front crash prevention system. How that system rates determines whether a vehicle will earn *TOP SAFETY PICK+* or *TOP SAFETY PICK*."

The baseline requirements for both awards are good ratings in the small overlap front, moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests, as well as a standard or optional front crash prevention system. The 48 winners of the "plus" award have a superior- or advanced-rated front crash prevention system with automatic braking capabilities. These vehicles must stop or slow down without driver intervention before hitting a target in tests at 12 mph, 25 mph or both. Models with a basic-rated front crash prevention system, which typically only issues a warning and doesn't brake, qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK*.

IIHS inaugurated *TOP SAFETY PICK* in the 2006 model year to help consumers home in on vehicles with the best safety performance. The *TOP SAFETY PICK+* accolade was introduced in 2012 to recognize vehicles that offer an advanced level of safety.

Last year when IIHS announced the initial winners of the 2015 awards, 33 models qualified for *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and 38 qualified for *TOP SAFETY PICK*. The ranks then grew to 51 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and 48 *TOP SAFETY PICK* winners. IIHS releases ratings as it evaluates new models, adding to the ranks of winners throughout the year.

The 2016 winner's circle includes some redesigned models with improved frontal crash protection and autobrake features, which help to prevent or mitigate certain frontal crashes. (See attached list of 2016 model winners.)

The 2016 Nissan Maxima and Volkswagen Passat, for example, earn good ratings in the small overlap front test, while earlier models were rated acceptable. Nissan also improved occupant protection in rear crashes and rollovers, boosting the Maxima's head restraints and seats rating from marginal to good and its roof strength rating from acceptable to good. The Maxima's optional front crash prevention system is rated superior, and the Passat's is rated advanced. Both midsize cars earn the plus award.



The Scion iA is rated good in the small overlap front test and is the first low-priced model with standard autobrake.

Toyota added autobrake to the Avalon, a large family car, and the RAV4, a small SUV, to qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK+*. Both are rated superior for front crash prevention.

In the award count, Toyota leads manufacturers with nine 2016 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners, including the popular Camry midsize car, while Honda picks up eight *TOP SAFETY PICK+* awards and one *TOP SAFETY PICK*. Volkswagen/Audi has seven plus-award winners. Six Subaru models qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK+*.

The Chrysler 200 is the only domestic model to qualify for a 2016 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* award. One other vehicle from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, the Fiat 500X, earns the Institute's highest award for 2016.

Ford has just one winning model this year, the F-150 SuperCrew, which earns *TOP SAFETY PICK*. The large pickup is the only Ford with a good small overlap rating.

Tougher criteria thwart many vehicles

A number of previous winners are missing from the new lists, including many small and midsize cars. Last year, vehicles with an acceptable small overlap rating could qualify for either award if their other four crashworthiness ratings were good. An available front crash prevention system was required only for *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and not *TOP SAFETY PICK*. More than 20 winners of the 2015 *TOP SAFETY PICK* award and four plus-award winners don't qualify under the 2016 criteria.

The Toyota Highlander and Sienna, for example, are available with an advanced-rated autobrake system, but less-than-good ratings in the small overlap front test put the midsize SUV and minivan out of contention for a 2016 accolade. The pair earned 2015 plus awards.

Lack of an available front crash prevention system is the issue with several vehicles with good small overlap ratings. The Audi Q3, for example, no longer qualifies for *TOP SAFETY PICK* because it doesn't have front crash prevention.

IIHS wasn't able to test the autobrake systems on the Mercedes-Benz GLE-Class (formerly the M-Class), Nissan Rogue and Nissan Sentra in time for this initial release of winners. These *TOP SAFETY PICKs* may be upgraded to *TOP SAFETY PICK+* following IIHS tests. The M-Class earned a 2015 *TOP SAFETY PICK+* and is rated superior for front crash prevention. The Rogue and Sentra earned 2015 *TOP SAFETY PICK* awards.

"Consumers who purchased a winning 2015 model that doesn't qualify this year needn't worry that their vehicles are now less safe," Lund says. "As vehicles continue to improve, however, we think it's important to recognize that progress and encourage further advances by making our ratings more stringent. This year's winners are certainly safer than the vehicles that earned our first *TOP SAFETY PICK* awards 10 years ago."

Autobrake availability to increase

Among the *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winners, there are 31 models with an available superior-rated front crash prevention system and 17 models with an advanced rating.

The Scion iA, a *TOP SAFETY PICK+* winner, is the first low-priced car with a standard autobrake system. With a base price of about \$16,000, the iA is rated advanced for front crash prevention and is the only minicar to earn a 2016 IIHS award. Besides the iA, autobrake is standard on just a few luxury vehicles. These include all Volvo models, some Mercedes-Benz models and the Acura RLX.

More automakers are expected to make autobrake standard equipment in the near future under a voluntary agreement being developed by automakers, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and IIHS.

“Ask for autobrake and forward collision warning features when you’re out shopping for a new vehicle,” Lund says. “Look for good ratings in IIHS evaluations and at least 4 of 5 stars from NHTSA. And remember that larger, heavier vehicles offer the best protection in a crash.”

See page 4 for full list of winners.

For more information, go to iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing the losses — deaths, injuries and property damage — from crashes on the nation's roads. The Institute is wholly supported by auto insurers.

2016 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK+

Minicar

Scion iA

Small cars

Acura ILX
Lexus CT 200h
Mazda 3
Subaru Crosstrek
Subaru Impreza
Subaru WRX
Volkswagen Golf 4-door and SportWagen models
Volkswagen GTI 4-door

Midsize moderately priced cars

Chrysler 200
Honda Accord 2-door coupe
Honda Accord 4-door sedan
Mazda 6
Nissan Maxima
Subaru Legacy
Subaru Outback
Toyota Camry
Toyota Prius v
Volkswagen Jetta
Volkswagen Passat

Midsize luxury/near-luxury cars

Audi A3
BMW 2 series
Lexus ES
Volvo S60
Volvo V60

Large family car

Toyota Avalon

Large luxury cars

Acura RLX
Audi A6 *built after January 2015*
Hyundai Genesis
Infiniti Q70 *does not apply to V8 4-wheel drive models*
Lexus RC
Mercedes-Benz E-Class
Volvo S80

Small SUVs

Fiat 500X *built after July 2015*
Honda CR-V
Hyundai Tucson
Mazda CX-5
Mitsubishi Outlander
Subaru Forester
Toyota RAV4

Midsize SUVs

Honda Pilot
Nissan Murano

Midsize luxury SUVs

Acura MDX
Acura RDX
Audi Q5
Lexus NX
Volvo XC60
Volvo XC90

2016 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK

Small cars

Chevrolet Sonic
Kia Soul
Nissan Sentra *autobrake not tested*

Midsize moderately priced car

Chevrolet Malibu Limited *fleet model*

Small SUVs

Buick Encore
Nissan Rogue *autobrake not tested*

Midsize SUVs

Chevrolet Equinox
GMC Terrain
Kia Sorento

Midsize luxury SUV

Mercedes-Benz GLE-Class *autobrake not tested*

Minivans

Honda Odyssey
Kia Sedona

Large pickup

Ford F-150 SuperCrew