

The new sixth-generation 2023 Honda CR-V, equal parts familiar and groundbreaking, is a complete rework. Longer, wider and with a lower beltline, its exterior styling is distinctly beefier, following suit to the newest Ridgeline and Pilot. The interior approaches premium finishes, new seats support posture and prevent fatigue, and standard tech feature inclusions are expanded.

Four trim levels overlap by price and powertrain. Two have a 190-hp 1.5-liter turbo, while two others have a 2.0-liter Atkinson cycle engine and new gen-four hybrid system. The 2.0L has just 145 hp, but new high-efficiency, high-response turbo and exhaust hold peak power over a broader range, and power from the nominal 181-hp two-motor hybrid component dovetails for a total of 204 hp.

While horsepower seems close, torque moves from 179 lb-ft up to 247 on the hybrid, top speed increases from 86 to 114 mph, and stated fuel mileage skyrockets by about 10 to 15 MPG across the board, reaching into the 40s on the hybrids.

All are available as front- or retuned all-wheel drivers, except the top hybrid (driven here), which is AWD-only. Turbo trims tow 1,500 lb, hybrids 1,000. There is easily something for everybody.

We had our new CR-V Hybrid Sport Touring for a very busy week, dashing all over the map on a tight schedule, on a combination of freeways, local streets and gravel, and various parking lots and

structures. For all of this, the CR-V was perfect—maneuverable, reliable and entertaining.

Quiet at slow speeds, it takes a cue from some EVs, adding electronic warning sound effects. Controls and interfaces are generally above average, representative of a well-balanced design mentality throughout. (We did have an issue with the mirrors and rear camera tracking path misaligning; perhaps this can be recalibrated or fixed.)

We don't hypermile or log every liter, but after some 150 miles had a readout of 30.5 MPG average—short of its 40/34/37 ratings, but anything 30s is pretty good when not even trying, and relativity suggests it still beats the regular powertrain.

Ground clearance is healthy, approach and departure angles not so much. That and our trim's stylish 19-inch wheels suggest this is more of an all-weather, all-surface weekend adventure cruiser than rock-crawler. This leaning is also reflected in two new variants just announced: a roughly 800-electrified-hp CR-V Hybrid Racer project; and for 2024, CR-V is the basis for North America's first plug-in fuel cell EV. The 2023 CR-V does have hill descent control, now standard across the lineup, and a new snow mode, suggesting there is little the new CR-V can't do, quickly and efficiently. You can even get a lower trim hybrid at a lower price than a higher trim base engine, if you forgo some features. Each combination is worth a look. ■

**SPECIFICATIONS**

ASSEMBLY / ENG / TRANS	Canada / USA / Japan
ENGINE	2.0L dirk inj Atkinson DOHC dual-VTC
HP	145 hp / 138 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	13.9:1
ELECTRIC MOTOR	AC synch perm magnet
HP/TORQUE	181 hp
HP/TORQUE TOTAL SYSTEM	204 hp / 247 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	E-CVT
DRIVETRAIN	real-time AWD w intelligent control
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut, 26.6mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 13.0 stblzr bar
STEERING	dual pinion asst elec pwr
BRAKES	F: 12.3 vented; R: 12.2 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	19-in Berlina black cut / 235/55R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	184.8 / 106.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.3 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.2 / 38.2 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.3 / 41.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	39.3 / 76.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT / PAYLOAD	3926 lb / 1550 lb
TOW CAPACITY	1000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.87 oct reg / 14.0 gal
MPG	40/34/37 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	<b>\$38,600</b>
DESTINATION CHARGE	1245
TOTAL	<b>\$39,845</b>

(Note: prices have increased; see chart.)

**2023 HONDA CR-V LINEUP**

		FWD	AWD
EX	1.5 Turbo	\$31,610	\$33,110
EX-L	"	34,260	35,760
Sport	2.0L Hybrid	32,950	34,450
Sport Touring	"		39,100

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BY JOE SAGE

