

If the Subaru Wilderness fitment has—understandably—caught your attention first on the Outback and then the Forester, but you are more of a Crosstrek fan, your wait is over. Subaru has now introduced the Crosstrek Wilderness for 2024.

It's a great combination. Within its compact and nimble profile, Subaru Crosstrek Wilderness delivers 182 horsepower, 9.3 inches of ground clearance, substantial approach-departure-breakover angles of 20-33-21° and 3500 pounds of tow capacity, all with 25 MPG city and 29 highway, and all for \$31,995. Ours, all optioned up, totaled \$35,560.

Crosstrek Wilderness has distinctive exterior style points familiar from other Wilderness models. Underneath that is exclusively upgraded suspension, increasing those key clearances (which were already among the highest in the segment) via longer coil springs and shocks with special dynamic performance tuning. This all meets the sur-

face through advanced dual-function X-MODE and atop Yokohama Geolandar all-terrain tires. The interior showcases StarTex water-repellant upholstery and a Starlink 11.7-inch interface with both Apple and Android wireless connectivity.

More choices means more decisions. Among the three—Crosstrek, Forester and Outback Wilderness—the smaller two have a 182-hp 2.5-liter engine (itself larger than a base Crosstrek), while Outback has a 260-hp 2.4-liter turbo, which admittedly could be an easy decision for a lot of people. On the other hand, Outback Wilderness is about \$40 grand, while Crosstrek is about \$32 grand, with Forester in the lower-middle between them—another clear decision point for many. Outback's more powerful engine does drop MPG by three points across the board, though, and now we are into apples and oranges typical of any such comparison. If you're off-roading, you'll want to parse

the clearances with special thought to your particular needs—all have similar breakover and ground clearance, while Forester is better on approach and Crosstrek is significantly better on departure. Forester does tow a little less, so again, calculate or estimate your likely needs. A surprise, given Forester's taller, boxier profile in particular, is that interior volume is not that different among the three. (See full figures at lower right.)

Of particular note, none of them any longer offer a manual transmission—they are all CVT, the continuously variable transmission many of our colleagues profess to automatically hate. We, on the other hand, suspect that the majority of drivers will never notice nor care—in most cases. This CVT, however, caught our attention continually. Using manumatic (via paddles, but not the shift lever) can help, but we'd always prefer optimum behavior straight out of the box.

We had our Crosstrek Wilderness during a particularly busy stretch—the first half of auction week. On the plus side, this gave us plenty of opportunity to do in-town daily driver duty, with an extra helping of tight maneuvers in a variety of parking situations (including unpaved). Better still, as it was also a particularly stormy stretch, we did find the time to give it a good healthy run up the Beeline Highway, as it was snowing down to well before Payson. In fact, the highway was closed at first, giving us a chance to take it on rugged off-highway vehicle trails. Then, once opened again, we headed north—through a mix of rain, slush, snow and slop, through curves and climbs the whole way, using the manumatic when attention allowed—then off-highway on a trail already deep with snow and still dumping.

Other than also packing this Crosstrek with camping and activity gear, loading more atop the roof rails, and perhaps adding a trailer, we threw everything at this vehicle—and it was superb.

We'd still love an available manual, though. ■

Continuously variable

DUTIES, TRANSMISSION —AND WEATHER

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Lafayette, Indiana (along with other 2.5L models)
ENGINE	2.5L 4-cyl boxer, DOHC, dir inj
HP/TORQUE	182 hp / 178 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	Lineartronic CVT
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
SUSPENSION	4-wheel independent, raised, longer coils, longer stroke shocks.
F: MacPherson-type, lower l-arms, coils, dampers, stblzr bar, hydraulic engine mts;	
R: dbl wishbone, coils, dampers, stblzr bar	
STEERING	dual pinion elec pwr assist
BRAKES	F: 12.4-in vented, dual-piston; R: 11.2-in vented, single-piston
WHEELS	17x7 alum alloy, matte black
TIRES	Yokohama Geolandar 225/60R17 99T raised white letter all-terrain
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	176.4 / 104.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	9.3 in
APPR / DEP / BRKOVER	20.0 / 33.0 / 21.1°
TURNING CIRCLE	34.78 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w moonrf) 38.7 / 38.0 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.9 / 36.5 in
WEIGHT	3369 lb
CARGO CAPACITY	20.0 / 54.9 cu.ft
ROOF RAIL LOAD	dynamic 165 / static 700 lb
TOW CAPACITY	3500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY87 regular / 16.6 gal
MPG	25/29/27 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$31,995
OPTION PKG: (Code 23) power moonroof, power driver's seat, Harman Kardon audio	2270
DESTINATION CHARGE	1295
TOTAL	\$35,560

2024 SUBARU CROSSTREK LINEUP

Base	2.0L	\$24,995
Premium	"	26,145
Sport	2.5L	28,995
Limited	"	30,895
Wilderness	"	▼ 31,995

2024 WILDERNESS EDITIONS

Crosstrek Wilderness	2.5L
HP/Torque	182 hp / 178 lb-ft
Interior volume	100.5 cu.ft
Ground clearance	9.3 in
Approach/depart/brkvr	20.0 / 33.0 / 21.1°
Tow capacity	3500 lb
MPG	25/29/27 (city/hwy/comb)
Base price	\$31,995
Forester Wilderness	2.5L
HP/Torque	182 hp / 178 lb-ft
Interior volume	111.6 cu.ft
Ground clearance	9.2 in
Approach/depart/brkvr	23.5 / 25.4 / 21.0°
Tow capacity	3000 lb
MPG	25/28/26 (city/hwy/comb)
Base price	\$34,720
Outback Wilderness	2.4L turbo
HP/Torque	260 hp / 277 lb-ft
Interior volume	109.0 cu.ft
Ground clearance	9.5 in
Approach/depart/brkvr	20.0 / 23.6 / 21.2°
Tow capacity	3500 lb
MPG	22/26/24 (city/hwy/comb)
Base price	\$39,960

