

INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

NEWS RELEASE

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11 VEHICLES EARN *TOP SAFETY PICK* AWARD

ARLINGTON, VA — Four small cars, two midsize cars, two midsize SUVs, one large luxury car, one small pickup, and a midsize convertible are the latest winners of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's *TOP SAFETY PICK* award. Winners afford superior overall crash protection among the vehicles in their classes. To qualify, a vehicle must earn the highest rating of good in the Institute's front, side, and rear tests. It also must be equipped with electronic stability control.

"Criteria to win are tough because *TOP SAFETY PICK* is intended to drive continued improvements such as good crash test ratings and rapid addition of electronic stability control, which is standard equipment on 9 of the 11 new winners," says Institute president Adrian Lund. "Recognizing vehicles at the head of the class for safety helps consumers distinguish the best overall choices without having to sort through multiple test results."

Winners by vehicle class

Small cars: 2009 Honda Civic with optional electronic stability control, 2009 Mitsubishi Lancer with optional electronic stability control, 2008-09 Scion xB, and 2009 Volkswagen Rabbit

Midsize cars: 2009 Volkswagen Jetta and 2009 Volkswagen Passat

Large luxury car: 2009 Lincoln MKS

Midsize SUVs: 2009 Ford Flex and 2009 Honda Pilot

Small pickup: 2009 Toyota Tacoma

Midsize convertible: 2009 Volkswagen Eos

How vehicles are evaluated

The Institute's frontal crashworthiness evaluations are based on results of 40 mph frontal offset crash tests. Each vehicle's overall evaluation is based on

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measurements of intrusion into the occupant compartment, injury measures recorded on a Hybrid III dummy in the driver seat, and analysis of slow-motion film to assess how well the restraint system controlled dummy movement during the test.

Side evaluations are based on performance in a crash test in which the side of a vehicle is struck by a barrier moving at 31 mph. The barrier represents the front end of a pickup or SUV. Ratings reflect injury measures recorded on 2 instrumented SID-IIIs dummies, assessment of head protection countermeasures, and the vehicle's structural performance during the impact.

Rear crash protection is rated according to a 2-step procedure. Starting points for the ratings are measurements of head restraint geometry — the height of a restraint and its horizontal distance behind the back of the head of an average-size man. Seat/head restraints with good or acceptable geometry are tested dynamically using a dummy that measures forces on the neck.

End 2-page news release on crashworthiness ratings of 11 vehicles
For more information go to www.iihs.org