



2007 Suzuki SX4

The Good 😊 Easy entry and exit. Good ride height. All wheel drive.

The Bad ☹ Little trunk space. Pinto-like rear end design and overly elongated front end. No armrests or leather.

Engine	4 cyl, 2.0 Liters
Output	143 hp / 136 lb-ft
Top Speed	120 mph
0-60 mph	9.5 sec (est.)
Weight	2849 lbs
Price As Tested	\$14,999

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Americans are an interesting bunch of people. They probably change their cars faster than anyone on the planet. Put an oil man in the White House and obviously he will help oil companies, so over the last six years, truck sales have virtually come to a halt while small car sales are up drastically. In today's market, car makers who deliver vehicles with excellent fuel economy are going to beat the competition. More of us are looking for the right size vehicle that can morph to fit our hectic lives, which include daily commutes to work and weekend getaways.

Suzuki has been making small cars for a long time and has been very successful in Asia where small cars dominate. However, their road to

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success in America has been slow thanks to our appetite for all things super-sized. We can remember in 1985 when Suzuki introduced the Samurai, a rival for the Jeep Wrangler, without much fanfare. The Samurai did poorly for several reasons, mainly due to its small size and low quality. However, recent models from Suzuki combine impressive interior and exterior styling with high quality parts throughout. Just this past January sales were up 13 percent over last year and this is when most American automakers are seeing declining sales. With more buyers flocking to smaller cars, Suzuki seems positioned to reap the benefits by focusing on its traditional compact segment.

Suzuki calls the SX4 a crossover SUV. Its' name comes from (S)port (X)-over and for (4) seasons. At first sight, you might of the SX4 as a micro-car that can go off-road. The SX4 has hints of SUV in its styling, mixed with hints of a subcompact vehicle that crowds the streets of India. We think that the proportions are a bit off, with a long front hood and a very short rear end. However, unlike in a compact car, the SX4 does have beefy tires and a very open and tall cabin that provides spacious interior room with unobstructed views of your surroundings.

The front end is sporty with a wrap around theme to the headlights, lower bumper, and hood. The SX4 is reminiscent of an off-road buggy ready for the sand dunes. Or is it a buggy for the urban jungle we humans call a city? Considering the Suzuki has a big market share with its small cars in third world countries, the SX4 was intended as your do anything vehicle that can zip around Manhattan yet still be content on unpaved dirt roads in Mumbai or Guangdong. Get this, the SX4 is the lowest priced all-wheel drive vehicle sold in the U.S.

The SX4 rides nicely with a stable feeling on highways and is relatively quiet inside. Overall width is quite low, perhaps six more inches would have done the trick for an roomier cabin feeling. The seating position is quite high and feels like your sitting in an office chair. This is definitely good for your posture, but terrible when you drive fast through corners. It is quite remarkable to see the SX4, with only 143 horsepower, cruise at highway speeds with ease and minimal engine noise. Who needs 300+ horsepower anyway when you still get a ticket for driving above the measly 65 mph in a 143 horsepower car. We got pulled over on the freeway by a state trooper who ignored the large speeding Chevrolet Suburban in front of us and instead pulled us over in our compact Techno Blue Metallic SX4. When we asked the trooper "Why didn't you pull over the speeding Suburban?" the officer replied, "I didn't see any Suburban". Perhaps people are so used to seeing large American SUV's on the road that it doesn't even register in their mind when one drives by. However, we have solace in the fact that the money we saved in gas will help pay for the unjust ticket.

The SX4 produces 143 horsepower at 5,800 rpm with 136 lbs.-ft. of torque at 3,500 rpm from a 2.0 liter four cylinder engine. This is mated to a five speed transmission. Power is delivered through a three mode all-wheel



drive system. The i-AWD system operates in three modes via a console-mounted switch; 2WD mode for maximum fuel economy on dry pavement; AWD Auto mode, which controls the drive power distribution ratio to the rear wheels from 0-50 percent, depending on available traction; and AWD Lock mode designed to facilitate traction in case of snow or mud. When in Lock mode, power is distributed to the rear wheels in the range of 30-50 percent. When the vehicle reaches 36 mph in AWD Lock mode, the system automatically switches to AWD Auto mode.

An independent front suspension is offered, however the rear suspension uses a fixed torsion beam which lowers the quality of the overall ride. Go over some large bumps and you have the feeling of being inside a truck at times. The large 16 inch wheels with thick all-season tires gives the SX4 a go anywhere look-and-feel that is typically seen in a SUV. If the SX4 was just a bit longer and wider, perhaps it would have a greater charisma on the road.

One thing we can't stand is how government is forcing designers to change their vehicle designs for things like license plates. A license plate was made to identify a car, but is there really a need for two plates? The front plate simply ruins any vehicle's front end design; do a poll and most citizens would ban it. As for the rear plate, we think designers should move the plate as low to the ground as possible so as not to interfere with the design of the rear end. More and more cars have integrated bumpers that blend flawlessly into the design of the rear. Making an abrupt stop to the flow of the design to place the plate squarely in the center of the bumper just ruins the design. One solution would be to place the plate inside the rear glass, thus not obstructing the design of the car.

Interior styling is quite nice with a tall dash and smooth flowing parts. The SX4 also offers higher than normal quality for the parts used inside. The upper dash is made of leather look material and this extends to the doors as well. This material looks better than rigid plastic parts used in many domestic brands and is similar to the softer material used by many German manufacturers. The center console features the use of smooth black plastic surrounded by silver painted trim.

The center console also has a simple trip computer display showing you instant miles per gallon as well as average miles per gallon. Dials and buttons on the stereo and climate control feel good to the touch. The doors offer fabric trim material and a hard flat black trim piece for your armrest. The roof material is a thin scratchy cardboard type material with fuzz which we think should be covered in better quality fabric. The SX4 also comes with power outside mirrors and a rear windshield wiper. Available is a keyless entry system and a six disc CD changer built into the dash with XM satellite radio pre-wired.

Passenger doors are lacking grab handles in the ergonomic seating position. Door handles on the inside are made of plastic and feel a bit



cheap. Lacking is a leather steering wheel and shift knob which would have made a big difference in this car. Suzuki has dropped the base price quite low but has left some essential items as options which will raise the price from the initial 'wow' price which one sees on the window sticker. For example, optional is a leather wrapped steering wheel with stereo controls.

Seats are covered in fabric and are comfortable. They do lack height adjustment which is an important factor but we found them to be placed in a good position for various size drivers. The seating position is straight and high thus you have a SUV like seating position. This is possible due to the tall roof line of the SX4 and makes driving comfortable even though you are in a small compact car. Getting in and out is also very easy.

The rear seat bench is quite flat and sits higher than the front seats for better passenger view. Legroom is quite scarce if you have tall passengers in back. Lacking in front and back is a center armrest. Rear seats have headrests which are a bit too far back from the seat so it was quite hard to get comfortable. The rear bench can fold forward with the seats flipping forward making a flat area for more cargo space.

On our tester, which was a base model, the stereo system was easy to use but had low quality speakers. Rear speakers also produced scratchy reverb. Optional is a stereo with nine speakers and 6-disc in-dash CD changer. An iPod integration option allows you to view song titles in the stereo display.

The tiny amount of storage space in the trunk area is just enough for groceries for two people. The rear seats are pushed back very far so room is at a premium in this compact vehicle. Folding down the rear seats adds more cargo room but then you lose passenger room. The roof-rack offers the ability to store items on top if interior room is not enough for your road trips.

Two trim levels are offered for 2007, the SX4 and SX4 Sport. In addition, the base SX4 offers an optional Convenience Package. All trims are available in manual or automatic transmission and standard AWD.

The SX4's standard features include six airbags; front driver and passenger airbags, driver and passenger side-impact airbags and side curtain airbags; four-wheel ABS with EBD, tire pressure monitoring system, front seatbelt pretensioners, power windows, power locks and mirrors, remote keyless entry, air conditioning, AM/FM/CD/MP3 audio system with four speakers, tilt steering wheel, 16-inch alloy wheels, black roof rails, daytime running lights, fender flares and bumper cover plates. The starting MSRP for the SX4 is \$14,999.

The Convenience Package adds cruise control and a leather-wrapped steering wheel with integrated audio controls. The starting MSRP for the SX4 with the Convenience Package is \$15,299.

The SX4 Sport trim adds standard ESP with TCS, SmartPass keyless entry and start system, automatic climate control, six-disc in-dash CD changer with nine speakers (including subwoofer), heated mirrors, cruise control, leather-wrapped steering wheel with integrated audio controls, silver color roof rails and fog lamps. The starting MSRP for the SX4 Sport trim is \$16,399.

In the SX4 what is missing is the high gas mileage we expect from buying a car this size. Yes you have four-wheel drive but what many people will need more and want more of is higher gas mileage. We will likely never go off-road in this vehicle and it will mostly be used as a daily commuter. Gas mileage is reported at 23 mpg city and 28 mpg highway. Our average in mixed driving was at 24.7 mpg. This is quite low considering that a similarly priced Honda Civic or Toyota Corolla get over 40 mpg. The final assembly point is Kosai, Japan with 100% of all parts coming from Japan. America's best warranty by Suzuki offers a 7-year/100,000 mile power train warranty. Included is a courtesy vehicle for up to five days of service when you have to take the car in for warranty repairs.



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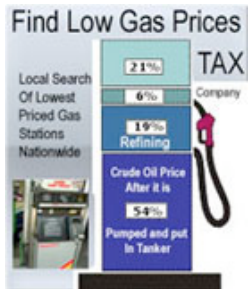
COMPARISONS	2007 Suzuki SX4 4dr	2007 Volkswagen Rabbit 4dr	2007 Kia Spectra Spectra5 SX 4dr	2007 Chevrolet Aveo 5 Special	2007 Honda Fit 4dr Hatchback
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	Wagon AWD (2.0L 4cyl 5M)	Hatchback (2.5L 5cyl 5M)	Wagon (2.0L 4cyl 5M)	Value 4dr Hatchback (1.6L 4cyl 5M)	(1.5L 4cyl 5M)
MSRP	\$14,999	\$16,990	\$15,995	\$9,995	\$13,850
Invoice	\$14,399	\$16,277	\$14,955	\$9,445	\$13,287
Basic	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	4 yr. / 50000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	3 yr. / 36000 mi.
Drivetrain	7 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.	10 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.
Roadside	3 yr. / 36000 mi.	4 yr. / Unlimited mi.	5 yr. / 60000 mi.	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	Being Researched / Being Researched
Rust	3 yr. / Unlimited mi.	12 yr. / Unlimited mi.	5 yr. / 100000 mi.	6 yr. / 100000 mi.	5 yr. / Unlimited mi.
Base Engine Type & Cylinders	inline 4	inline 5	inline 4	inline 4	inline 4
Base Engine Displacement	2.0 liters	2.5 liters	2.0 liters	1.6 liters	1.5 liters
Valvetrain	16 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	20 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	16 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	16 Valves double overhead cam (DOHC)	16 Valves single overhead cam (SOHC)
Horsepower	143 hp @ 5800 rpm	150 hp @ 5000 rpm	138 hp @ 6000 rpm	103 hp @ 6000 rpm	109 hp @ 5800 rpm
Torque	136 ft-lbs. @ 3500 rpm	170 ft-lbs. @ 3750 rpm	136 ft-lbs. @ 4500 rpm	107 ft-lbs. @ 3600 rpm	105 ft-lbs. @ 4800 rpm
Driven Wheels	all wheel drive	front wheel drive	front wheel drive	front wheel drive	front wheel drive
Wheels	alloy 16 x 6.5 in.	steel 15 x 6.0 in.	alloy 16 x 6.0 in.	steel 14 x 5.5 in.	steel 14 in.
Power Steering	power steering	electric speed-proportional power steering	speed-proportional power steering	power steering	electric power steering
Steering	tilt-	tilt and	tilt-	tilt-	tilt-

3M PERFECT-IT Gloss Enhancer	Adjustment	adjustable	telescopic	adjustable	adjustable	adjustable
More Info 	Air Filtration	interior air filtration	interior air filtration	Not Available	interior air filtration - Optional	interior air filtration
Our Price: \$6.75	Anti - Lock Brakes	4-wheel ABS	4-wheel ABS	4-wheel ABS - Optional	Not Available	4-wheel ABS
	Traction Control	Not Available	Standard	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Wheel Mist Wheel Cleaner for Wire, Chrome, Mag Wheels 05822	Stability Control	Not Available	Optional	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
More Info 	CD In-Dash	single CD player	6 CD player	single CD player	Not Available	single CD player
Our Price: \$6.79	Total Number of Speakers	4	10	6	4	4
	SPECS					
Park Smart Garage Door Seal 10 Feet (Gray or Brown)	Handling	SX4	Rabbit	Spectra	Aveo	Fit
More Info 	City	23 mpg.	22 mpg.	27 mpg.	27 mpg.	33 mpg.
Our Price: \$42.95	Highway	28 mpg.	30 mpg.	33 mpg.	37 mpg.	38 mpg.
	Exterior	SX4	Rabbit	Spectra	Aveo	Fit
	Length	162.8 in.	165.8 in.	171.3 in.	152.7 in.	157.4 in.
	Width	69.1 in.	69.3 in.	68.3 in.	65.7 in.	66.2 in.
	Height	63.2 in.	58.2 in.	57.9 in.	58.8 in.	60 in.
	Weight	2904 lbs.	2858 lbs.	2950 lbs.	2343 lbs.	2432 lbs.
	Wheel Base	98.4 in.	101.5 in.	102.8 in.	97.6 in.	96.5 in.
	Interior	SX4	Rabbit	Spectra	Aveo	Fit
	Front Headroom	39.6 in.	39.3 in.	40 in.	39.2 in.	40.6 in.
	Rear Headroom	37.5 in.	38.5 in.	38.8 in.	37.6 in.	38.6 in.
	Front Shoulder Room	53.3 in.	54.7 in.	55.1 in.	53.6 in.	52.8 in.
	Rear Shoulder Room	52.8 in.	54.6 in.	53.9 in.	52.7 in.	50.6 in.
	Front Leg Room	41.4 in.	41.2 in.	42.8 in.	41.2 in.	41.9 in.
	Rear Leg Room	35.9 in.	35.3 in.	35.4 in.	35.3 in.	33.7 in.

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