

We've had the Hyundai IONIQ 5 EV SUV in our weekly fleet twice, liking it quite well and calling it centered—a performance, engineering and styling home run. Enter the IONIQ 6, new for 2023, an EV sedan entry. Nice. Great to see, as many try to declare the death of the sedan.

We've also had two of its corporate cousins, the Genesis GV60 and Kia EV6, in our fleet and liked them equally well. And we'll have its other cousin, the Kia EV9, in an upcoming issue.

The IONIQ name was originally applied to a then-breakthrough family of Hyundai electrified (or at that time called alternative) liftback sedans—hybrid, plug-in hybrid (PHEV) and full EV. We drove that full set in 2017. The passing of that lineup and birth of the new IONIQ EV family share only the name and an evolution of general philosophies.

The IONIQ 6 looks very different from IONIQ 5,

even in the front where they could look the same. IONIQ 6 has a wheelbase two inches shorter, but is almost nine inches longer, while the IONIQ 5 sits about half an inch higher off the ground.

Hyundai's design compass directed the IONIQ 6 toward "Electrified Streamliner" styling, appropriately applied, as it did remind us—not specifically, but in flavor—of streamlining from the 1930s.

We had had an opinion about its shape before receiving it, and we were fairly obsessed with it during our week, per many ongoing comments in our logbook recordings (see insets at right).

Our sample driven here is the next-to-bottom of seven versions from \$37,500 to \$53,650, simplest in features but with a long range battery (the battery is about 300 pounds, or 38 percent, heavier). The chart at lower right compares powertrain basics, where you can see power and range do not

always go hand in hand. Features do vary by trim, as is typical. But at just over \$40,000 for an EV, our single-motor rear-drive SE hits an enticing spot.

We zipped through busy errands like normal, almost forgetting it was an EV, which should appeal to many. One reminder was an occasionally prominent growl. We speculated whether this was just its wheels on asphalt, in the absence of powertrain noise, or whether it was connected to its regenerative braking, more of a matter of timing.

Handling is solid, noted as being smooth and in your control—until it is not. Driver assist systems fought us for control at times, while sudden, loud alerts could be triggered even just rolling gently toward a red light stop. You'll probably want to dial a lot of this down, which we minimize in someone else's vehicle in case of any mishap. We did tamp down smart cruise settings, though, suspecting it

may have contributed to what had seemed proximity or obstacle alarms, and it did seem to help. Interestingly, on a long 90-degree sweep through a surface street, when lane assist seemed to take control, it was momentarily enjoyable, but only momentarily. Suspension was superb over sizable drainage troughs. Other than the lane control struggles, we did usually feel in command.

We receive a lot of top trim samples, but there's something appealing about the base level; in fact, there are cases for making a point of it. The IONIQ 5's clean, modern, even spartan base interior is handsome (we haven't seen whether this varies on its other trims). At base level, we missed having auto-dip rear mirrors, which varies, or seat-mirror memory at all, a rare exclusion. Then again, it's almost \$8,000 to move up to Limited with our same powertrain, or over \$11 grand more for the very top version, Limited with the dual motor powertrain.

With a high degree of value at hand here, this car is a reminder that you don't have to spend as much as you may think on an EV—nor on a car of any powertrain type with such spacious dimensions. Moving up the lineup would only be icing on the cake. Where you take your own build simply depends upon your budget for icing. ■



We've been intrigued by the IONIQ 6's shape in the rear half, thinking it's distinctive, and that's certainly rare, but to our eye, well, droopy. That's subjective, but what is not is the shallow trunk this produces, just 11.2 cu.ft total (and the frunk just half a cubic foot). But with it in hand for a week, we discovered other looks and feels. From above, it can look like it's rising on its haunches with a powerful thrust forward. The shape continued to grow on us, equal parts completely modern and retro streamlined. At ground level, it could one minute look to us from the side like an unfinished circle we're itching to see the rest of (sort of a waterwheel effect). It varied over and over with angle of view—front or rear 3/4, top view, or randomly walking back up to it from a lower spot, where that healthy haunch and lurch shape again emerges. Still intriguing.

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Asan, South Korea
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	SKorea / SKorea
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 0% / SKorea 95%
MOTOR	permanent-magnet synchronous
BATTERY	(long range) Li-ion 697V 77.4 kWh, output 277 kW
HP/TORQUE	225 hp / 258 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	single spd reduction gear, shift-by-wire, front dog clutch disconnect
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (AWD available on Dual Motor version)
TOP SPEED	115 mph
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut, gas damper; R: multi-link, gas damper
STEERING	motor-driven power-assist rack-mounted rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.8x1.2 vented; R: 12.8x0.5 solid, regenerative brake control paddles
WHEELS	18x7.5J alloys (20-in avail)
TIRES	225/55R18 Hankook Ventus S2 a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	191.1 / 116.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.8 ft
HEADRM (F/R)	(no snrf) 40.2 / 36.9 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	(practical) 42.3 / 39.2 in (max) 45.4 / 34.7
CARGO CAPACITY	11.2 cu.ft + frunk 0.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4222-4376 lb
CHARGING TIME:	
AC LVL II 240V	(to 80%) 6 hr 55 min
DC 50 kW	(to 80%) 73 min
DC 350 kW	(to 80%) 18 min
MPGe	153/127/140 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$42,450
CARPETED FLOOR MATS	210
DESTINATION CHARGE	1150
TOTAL	\$43,810

2024 HYUNDAI IONIQ 6 LINEUP

	RWD	AWD
STANDARD RANGE:	111 kW motor, 480V, 53.0 kWh, 173 kW battery; 149 hp / 258 lb-ft, range 240 miles est	
SE	\$37,500	
LONG RANGE:	168 kW motor, 697V, 7.4 kWh, 277kW battery; 225 hp / 258 lb-ft, range 361 or 305 miles est (longer or shorter range per 18- or 20-in wheels)	
SE	42,450	
SEL	45,250	
Limited	50,150	
DUAL MOTOR:	165 kW + 74 kW motors, 697V, 7.4 kWh, 277kW battery; 320 hp / 446 lb-ft, range 316 or 270 miles est (longer or shorter range per 18- or 20-in wheels)	
SE	45,950	
SEL	48,750	
Limited	53,650	

Distinctively different

BY JOE SAGE

