

The Honda Civic Hatchback is defined by its form factor, though more of a utility hatch than a hot hatch by most comparisons. Cargo volume behind the seats increases from 14.8 cu.ft. in the sedan to 24.5 in the hatchback (not quite apples-to-apples, as the two styles are measured a little differently), plus you can carry larger items with rear seats down—the tradeoff, as always, being lockability of a separate trunk in a sedan.

It is in fact fairly hot in its hybrid form, an option on the Civic Hatchback Sport and baked in on the Hatchback Sport Touring we're driving here—a combined system bumping total horsepower from 150 in the base LX (sedan only) or non-hybrid Sport (sedan or hatch) from a 2.0-liter four-cylinder, to 200 in the hybrid, and torque from 133 to a whopping 232 lb-ft combined in the hybrid variant. Note that all of these, as well as their sedan cousins, have a CVT (continuously variable transmission).

Civic does not stop there. You can still opt for the Si, with 200 hp from a 1.5-liter engine, smaller but turbocharged, a more potent sedan priced in the middle of the hatches. Civic Si—also a front-

driver—does have a manual transmission, a big plus to us. On the other hand, it brings you back to the sedan's format and cargo volume.

Or you can push the budget from there, topping out with the Civic Type R, bearing more of a boy racer look and a 2.0-liter turbo (bigger again AND turbocharged) with 315 hp and 310 lb-ft. Priced at \$45,895, Type R's 39 percent higher price tag delivers 57.5 percent higher horsepower and 33.6 percent more torque, a solid value by pure relativity. As with the Civic Si, Civic Type R remains a front-driver but does have a manual transmission.

This gives you a lot of choices, but it can be distilled down to just a few—three by base powertrains (regular 2.0, 1.5 turbo or 2.0 turbo); four when you split out the hybrid 2.0s; five when you factor in the sedan-hatch variable on the 2.0s; and a few more when you compare trim levels just on the 2.0s. Honda does keep things simple with each trim level clearly self-defining and complete.

The hybrid is the headline news this year, though, coming in as the most powerful non-Type R Civic ever, and at its very favorable price point.

Not to be overlooked in the power comparisons, the hybrids also deliver 50/45/48 mpg in hatchback form, 50/47/49 as sedans. Compare this with 22/28/24 mpg in the Type R, and the value differential has a whole new dimension.

You just have to accept the hybrids' lack of a manual transmission—or go with the Si (rated at 27/37/31 mpg) or the Type R, also factoring in the hatch-sedan variables.

All that said, we had a lively week with our Civic Hybrid Hatch. Power is prompt and plentiful (with more of a zippy than throaty soundtrack), handling is precise, belying virtually any traces of its front-drive architecture. It's also a handsome unit, both in its hatchback form and in our sample's Boost Blue paint, a traffic or parking lot standout.

Put it all together and, even as a new offering, Honda—who have been quietly building great hybrids for years—expect the new Civic Hybrids to promptly comprise 40 percent of sales. Despite the usual handful of nitpicks with interface, settings and such, overall (although we don't actually rate this way) we give this five stars. ■

## Turn up the volume

### POWER, UTILITY AND FUEL EFFICIENCY IN A SOLID VALUE FORMAT

BY JOE SAGE



#### SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Greensburg, Indiana
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 50% / Japan 20%
ENGINE	2.0L Atkinson inline-4, 16v DOHC Dual-VTC
HP/TORQUE	141 hp / 134 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	13.9:1
ELECTRIC MOTOR	AC synchr perm-magnet
HP/TORQUE	181 hp / 232 lb-ft
COMBINED SYSTEM OUTPUT	200 hp
TRANSMISSION	two-motor hybrid system
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
DRIVE MODES	econ/normal/sport/indiv
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut, 26.5x4.5 tubular stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 17.5 solid stblzr bar
STEERING	var ratio elec pwr-asst rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 11.1 vented; R: 10.2 solid
WHEELS	18-in alloy, matte shark gray inserts
TIRES	235/40R18 91W all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	179.0 / 107.7 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	37.6 / 37.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.3 / 37.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	na
TURNING CIRCLE	38.1 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	24.5 cu. ft
WEIGHT	3289 lb
WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION	62/38%
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 12.4 gal
MPG	50/45/48 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	<b>\$32,950</b>
PAINT: Boost Blue Pearl	455
DESTINATION CHARGE	1095
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,500</b>



#### 2025 HONDA CIVIC LINEUP

CIVIC SEDAN	MPG	
LX	32/41/36	\$24,250
Sport	31/39/34	26,250
Sport Hybrid	50/47/49	28,950
Sport Touring Hybrid	"	31,950
CIVIC HATCHBACK	MPG	
Sport	30/38/34	\$27,450
Sport Hybrid	50/45/48	\$29,950
Sport Touring Hybrid	"	32,950
CIVIC Si	MPG	
Si	27/37/31	\$30,250
Si w summer tires	"	30,550
CIVIC TYPE R	MPG	
Type R	22/28/24	\$45,895