

Mini review of 2008 Honda Civic 1.8 auto

I have owned one of these for exactly 2 years having bought it new in March 2008. This isn't so much a technical review but more about fuel economy and cost of ownership.

Overall Impression

The Civic in the 2 years has never had a mechanical problem and gives the impression of modest refinement and solidity. Road noise is commendably low. Of course it has rattles from the plastic and fittings in and around the dashboard, particularly on the typical New Zealand coarse chip seal roads. However, these are somewhat less than what I have noticed from previous cars.

Engine noise is reasonably low until the revs get up at which point the tone becomes a bit raspy in nature. The auto gearbox is smooth enough except for a minor lurch between first and second. On downhill runs the gearbox will sometimes, but not always drop down a gear with a sudden lurch. My only real negative is that owing to the thick, sloped drivers side windscreen pillar, visibility into gradual right turns is reduced and it can be hard to see pedestrians about to step onto a crossing from the right. (*RH drive in N.Z*)

Economy

The car has travelled 18,550 km in 2 years.

I have poured in 1709.43 litres of 91 octane petrol.

Overall economy is **10.85km/litre** (*or 9.22litres/100km, 30.65 miles/imp gallon, 25.52 miles/US gal*)

Of the total distance travelled, 18% is on journeys of 250km or more, 52% is on medium distances of between 50km and 250km and 30% is for short city trips.

Best economy (85th percentile) is 12.94km per litre (*7.73 litres/100km*). My driving style is gentle, always trying to anticipate ahead in city traffic especially. I accelerate and brake smoothly.

I suspect these numbers are quite good but not as good as the Honda promotional material would lead one to expect. Car manufacturers seem to only quote numbers achieved during eco-driving trials and of course the economy looks rather good. Reality is somewhat different. I equate advertised petrol economy to ISP quoted broadband

speeds, which are the absolute theoretical maximum, and never possible to achieve in practice.

Cost of Ownership: (for the 2 year term)

Petrol:	\$2,952.54 (average price \$1.73 per litre)
Registration:	\$436.16
Warrants:	\$90.67
Insurance:	\$812.64
Servicing:	\$470.15

Total Operating Costs: \$4,762.16 (or \$2,381.08 per annum)

Deprecation: \$6,000 over the two years.

Total cost of ownership for 2 years is therefore: \$10,762.16

Cost per km in my case is: \$0.58

(These are all NZ dollars. At 30 March 2010, 1NZ dollar buys US\$0.70)