Car Brands Reliability: How They Stack Up

Ranking the brands and showing their most and least reliable cars

By Consumer Reports
October 19, 2017

There was much movement among car brands as we scrutinized this year’s car reliability data to see how the numbers compared with our 2016 survey findings.

Our brand-level rankings are based on the average Predicted Reliability Score for each brand’s model lineup.

Perennially lagging Chrysler is the biggest mover this year, jumping up 10 places, based on just two models: the below-average 300 sedan and the new Pacifica, which was average. Although Chrysler remains in the lower half of all brands, that represents a huge improvement. The other FCA brands, including Jeep, Ram, and Dodge, also improved.

Also moving up the reliability spectrum were Volkswagen, up six spots, and Subaru, up five spots to rank sixth overall, despite the below-average redesigned Impreza. Three brands dropped significantly: Acura, Mazda, and Cadillac. All of them have limited model lineups, so if just one or two models drop in reliability, it can magnify the impact across the brand.

Excluding Volvo, other European brands have performed well. Most GM brands have dropped. Ford moved up slightly, and Lincoln dropped.

Our Predicted Reliability Score is set on a 0-to-100 point scale, with the average rating falling between 41 and 60 points. Better-than-average ratings or worse-than-average ratings fall on either side of that range.

Editor’s Note: This article also appeared in the December 2017 issue of Consumer Reports magazine.