

2022 Kia Carnival versus 2021 Honda Odyssey

November 17 2021, by Mike Schmidt



This photo provided by Honda shows the 2022 Honda Odyssey, which has been Edmunds' top-rated minivan since this generation was introduced in 2018. For 2021 it received a mild update. Credit: America Honda Motor Co. via AP

If ever there was a vehicle segment ready for a shake-up, it's the

minivans. For three years running, Edmunds' experts have considered the [Honda Odyssey](#) one of the top rated in the class. The Odyssey set the minivan bar high with supreme versatility, car-like driving and thoughtful features. Now there's finally a new rival in town: the [2022 Kia Carnival](#).

This all-new minivan replaces Kia's previous minivan, the Sedona. The Carnival takes the traditional minivan formula and infuses it with the luxury-for-less personality that is now a Kia vehicle trademark. It also has some SUV-like styling cues to help it stand out. Edmunds compared the Carnival to the Odyssey to see which is [the better minivan](#).

ENGINES AND MPG

The V6 engine has become a minivan norm. The Odyssey's V6 produces 280 horsepower and is joined to a 10-speed automatic transmission. Fuel economy is estimated by the EPA at 22 mpg during combined city and highway driving. The Honda is front-wheel-drive only.

The Carnival also has a V6 engine. It produces 290 horsepower and is paired with an eight-speed automatic transmission. EPA estimates list the Kia's combined city/highway [fuel economy](#) at 22 mpg. At this time, the Carnival, too, is front-wheel-drive only.

WINNER: Tie

PRICING AND VALUE

An entry-level 2022 Kia Carnival LX costs \$33,275 (including destination). Notable standard equipment includes power-sliding doors and an 8-inch touchscreen plus Apple CarPlay and Android Auto smartphone integration. The Carnival also comes standard with numerous driver assistance technologies such as lane departure warning

and collision mitigation.

The 2022 Honda Odyssey LX starts at \$34,215 (including destination), a few dollars less than the Kia. At this trim level, however, you get only manual sliding doors and a smaller 5-inch display screen that lacks smartphone integration. Driver assistance tech is similar to the Kia's.

On the fully loaded side of the spectrum, the Kia and Honda can be equipped with similar tech features—for the most part. But at this level, the \$47,770 Carnival SX Prestige has a 12.3-inch infotainment display and lounge chair-like recliners in the second row that the Honda does not offer. The top-tier Odyssey Elite, at \$49,245, costs more than the Carnival with less style.

Warranty coverage is another Kia strength, as its basic and powertrain warranties are considerably longer than Honda's.

WINNER: Carnival



This photo provided by Kia is of the 2022 Kia Carnival. It is all-new for this year and Kia's best chance at dethroning the Odyssey as Edmunds' top-rated minivan. Credit: Kia Motors America via AP

INTERIOR AND TECHNOLOGY

Both minivans can be had in seven- and eight-passenger configurations and boast flat load floors and available rear seats that you can fully remove if you need the extra space. They were clearly engineered with adults and children in mind. While the Odyssey has nice interior materials, the Carnival's feel a bit softer and more luxurious.

Technology should also be a highlight for the Carnival. It offers a huge touchscreen, crisp graphics, a multitude of parking cameras and more.

But it's not all as refined as we expect. Some main cabin controls lack a haptic response when touched. Voice control prompts aren't intuitive. And the Carnival's driver aids don't operate as smoothly as those in other vehicles we've tested.

The Odyssey's primary controls are a mixture of easy-to-use buttons and knobs. Our expert opinion on minivans is this: Function outweighs form. We'd prefer it work as expected than be the most attractive. We give the Honda an ever-so-slight win here.

WINNER: Odyssey

HOW THEY DRIVE

The Carnival's engine makes more power than any other in the minivan segment right now. Yet it's no quicker than average. The gas pedal is a little slow to respond in stop-and-go traffic and its brake pedal is sensitive at first touch. Yet with time we adjusted to both qualities. The steering is on par with most minivans in the segment.

The Odyssey drives more like a car than any other minivan. Its steering is precise and it brakes confidently whether the road is straight or winding. That doesn't mean that it is sporty. But these characteristics equate to a really cohesive, easy driving experience. Add its smooth transmission to the mix and you have a minivan that is enjoyable to drive. Here, this van stands out from its peers.

How you like a car to drive is a personal feeling. Minivans tend to be more leisurely in the areas of performance and handling. That's normal. If you want something a little more engaging to drive, you're going to appreciate what the Odyssey offers. It is the most engaging [minivan](#) to drive.

WINNER: Odyssey

EDMUNDS SAYS:

The Kia Carnival is a style and value leader, yet some of its more interactive technology performed below our expectations. The Odyssey is strong overall and shines performing the one thing we spend most of the time doing: driving. This is a quality our experts rate highly. In this comparison test, it gives the win to the Honda Odyssey.

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