

Review: Honda CR-V Hybrid vs Kia Sportage Hybrid

February 22 2023, by Michael Cantu



This photo provided by Kia shows the 2023 Kia Sportage, a compact SUV with a first-time hybrid variant. The Sportage is all-new for 2023 and adds more interior space and technology. Credit: Courtesy of Kia America via AP

The [2023 Honda CR-V](#) and [2023 Kia Sportage](#) are two [highly rated](#)

[small SUVs](#) by Edmunds. Notably, they also come in hybrid versions that offer some compelling advantages. The big one is significantly better fuel efficiency than the regular gas-only versions. They're also more powerful and have the same interior space. Altogether, it's pretty easy to justify the slight price premiums that the hybrid CR-V and Sportage command. But which SUV should you get?

The Honda CR-V has long been considered a benchmark of the class and it receives a full redesign for 2023 that ushers in a roomier interior, enhanced technology features and an improved hybrid powertrain. The Kia Sportage also received a 2023 redesign. It's got a bold new look, up-to-date tech and an all-new hybrid powertrain to rival the CR-V's. Edmunds experts compare them to find out [which one is the fuel-sipping SUV champ](#).

FUEL ECONOMY AND POWER

Both hybrid SUVs are efficient, but there's a clear winner. The front-[wheel drive](#) version of the Sportage Hybrid gets an impressive EPA estimate of 43 mpg combined (44 mpg city/42 mpg highway). The front-wheel-drive hybrid version of the CR-V gets 40 mpg combined (43 mpg city/36 mpg highway). When all-wheel drive is equipped, the estimates become closer: 38 mpg combined for the Sportage and 37 mpg combined for the CR-V.

Edmunds has also driven the all-wheel-drive versions of both SUVs on its real-world test route. Here, the results were less than the EPA's estimates but still respectable: 34.5 mpg for the Sportage and 33.3 mpg for the CR-V.

Hybrids were once known for their lack of power, but these two hybrid SUVs provide a suitable amount of grunt. The CR-V combines a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine with a hybrid system for a total output of

204 horsepower. The Sportage one-ups it with its hybrid system and turbocharged 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine that combine for 227 horsepower. The Sportage puts it to use and sprints from 0 to 60 mph in 7.7 seconds. The hybrid CR-V is decently quick, too, but needs 8 seconds to get to 60 mph.

Winner: Kia Sportage Hybrid

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERIOR SPACE

The base Sportage Hybrid trim has an average-size 8-inch center touchscreen. But all other trims get a large and sharp-looking 12.3-inch unit. The Sportage also sports a sizable standard fully digital instrument panel. The CR-V's 7- and 9-inch touchscreens are less impressive, and so is its instrument panel, which consists of a small digital screen and an analog speedometer.

Both hybrids offer many advanced driver aids that can help make driving easier and safer. Honda provides more of them as standard equipment, however. For example, every hybrid CR-V has standard adaptive cruise control. On the Kia Sportage Hybrid, it's standard on the top trim level only.

Cargo room is even in each SUV: Both provide more than 39 cubic feet of space behind the second row, which is among the biggest capacities in the small SUV class. Passenger space is also abundant, and getting in and out is easy.

Winner: tie



This photo provided by Honda shows the top-selling Honda CR-V. It was redesigned for 2023 and features a hybrid powertrain in the higher trim levels. Credit: Courtesy of American Honda Motor Co. via AP

COMFORT AND DRIVING

The CR-V Hybrid's ride quality is impressive. But it's not as smooth and accommodating as the Sportage Hybrid's. The Kia also benefits from a quieter interior. Edmunds' editors have noted that the CR-V's hybrid powertrain can sometimes get loud when accelerating. Up front, you'll find the seats comfortable and supportive in each SUV.

The CR-V does have a few advantages. It's more composed around turns, for example, and its continuously variable transmission leads to

smoother acceleration than the Sportage's six-speed automatic. But overall the Sportage's superior ride helps it eke out a win here.

Winner: Kia Sportage Hybrid

PRICING AND VALUE

The Sportage Hybrid's base LX trim starts at \$28,815 including destination. That's significantly less than the hybrid version of the CR-V that starts at \$34,245. The CR-V's higher price gets you heated seats and some helpful advanced driver aids, but isn't worth the price increase for those alone. Furthermore, the Sportage's midlevel EX trim is still more affordable than the cheapest CR-V Hybrid and packs more features. As for top-spec trims, once again, the Sportage delivers a better deal than the CR-V and provides features the Honda lacks, including ventilated front seats and a surround-view camera system.

If you plan on keeping your hybrid SUV for many years, you should definitely consider warranties. Kia offers a four-year/60,000-mile limited warranty, which tops Honda's three-year/36,000-mile limited warranty.

Winner: Kia Sportage Hybrid

EDMUNDS SAYS,

The Honda CR-V has been one of Edmunds' favorite small SUVs for a long time, but its latest hybrid model has been upstaged by the Kia Sportage Hybrid's efficiency, price, comfort and feature-packed trim levels.

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