

The Toyota Corolla Hybrid: very silent and oh so smooth



By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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The outer appearance of the Toyota Corolla is what grabbed my attention when it rolled into my driveway, ever so smoothly and silently. The shape of the sedan is so sleek and wind tunnel design is very evident. The design is daring. Launched in 2020, the 12th-generation Corolla sedan adopted the striking new look, offering an all-new platform and new engines. This has really transformed the 'humble' Corolla from stylish commuter to standout hybrid sedan. Toyota has thus brought its pioneering hybrid technology to mainstream models. Press the Start button, but don't expect to hear an engine being cranked to life. Instead, look at the instrumentation panel and the Corolla is ready to move, silently. On test, the average fuel consumption on both urban and long drives is a pleasing 4.2l per 100kms.



Source: [Motorpress](#)

Exterior design changes

I am still in awe of the new shape. The Corolla sedan maintains its eye-catching design, while subtle tweaks have been implemented to now differentiate the sedan and hatch variants. New horizontal slats in the front bumper replace the current mesh design, with revised lower moulding further differentiating the two models.



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Revised headlamp clusters feature Bi-LED lighting elements with new larger, J-shaped DRL elements. For the first time, the DRL and turn-signal functions are performed by the same lighting diodes - adding a touch of visual flair.

New powertrain

While the 2021 model employed the familiar 4th-generation 1.8 hybrid engine (also used in the Corolla Cross), the latest iteration is powered by a fifth-generation 1.8l petrol-electric hybrid powertrain offering enhanced performance, refinement and efficiency.

A new lithium-ion battery with enhanced cooling capacity sits at the core of the upgrade. The 'fifth-gen' hybrid engine offers a 14% increase in Total System Output - up from 90 to 103kW (+13kW). The engine is paired with Toyota's self-shifting CVT transmission, helping maximise system efficiency as well as catering to prevailing market trends.

Exterior colours

The Platinum White Pearl just does it for me as it suits the Corolla perfectly. It glows in the sunshine. Other colours available are Satin Silver, Celestite Grey and Platinum White Pearl joined by Cinnabar Red, Attitude Black, Moonlight Ocean Metallic and Glacier White

Interior enhancements

A revised digital instrument cluster on the Xs grade features an enlarged 7-inch Multi-Information Display (MID). Xr variants retain the existing digital instrument cluster. A new, black and red interior trim option offers buyers additional personalisation alongside traditional black. All grades now feature leather trim.

Wheel and tyres

Hybrid models ride on 16-inch alloy wheels shod with 205-55-R16 rubber, while the 2.0 Xr (petrol) sports stylish turbine-shaped 18-inch alloy wheels paired with 225-40-R18 tyres. Models equipped with 16-inch versions feature a full-size spare wheel while 18-inch alloys use a space saver spare.

Intelligent infotainment

Xs models feature a new 8-inch touchscreen infotainment system with capacitive switchgear for ease of use. Xr models boast a new generation system with Voice Recognition, wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and built-in navigation functionality. Occupants can also select from different display modes and designs.

Safety and security

Another key change is the inclusion of Toyota Safety Sense 3.0 on all Corolla models. TSS 3.0 represents the latest advancement of Toyota's active safety system - which incorporates semi-autonomous driving aids. Camera sensor resolution is increased, while using a wider-angle lens. The radar sensors have also been enhanced helping to increase the detection range and recognition.

As before the system consists of Pre-Collision Warning, Adaptive Cruise Control, Lane Trace Assist, Auto High Beam (AHB). In addition, Blind Spot Monitor with Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) and Safe Exit Assist (SEA) also forms part of the Xr grade package.

Model line-up and pricing

The existing two-grade strategy (Xs and Xr) has been retained, creating a model matrix of three variants with two engine options.

- Corolla 1.8 Xs Hybrid - R502, 600
- Corolla 1.8 Xr Hybrid - R521, 800
- Corolla 2.0 Xr CVT - R517,100

Peace of mind deal

All Corolla models are sold with a six-services/90,000km service plan (intervals set at 15,000km). Petrol models carry a three-year/100,000km warranty, while hybrid models hold an eight-year/195,000km warranty plan. Service and warranty plan extensions can also be purchased from any Toyota dealer (220 outlets).

All Toyota models come equipped with Toyota Connect, including a complimentary 15Gb in-car Wi-Fi allocation, vehicle telematics and enhanced user features via the MyToyota app.

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