

New Toyota Urban Cruiser launches. Here's all you need to know

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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So what does this mean? Well, for starters it's bigger on style, bigger on practicality, bigger on convenience and bigger on space. Increased dimensions mean more cabin space. All models now come with auto aircon and reverse camera and VSC is now standard across the range. But that's for starters. Let me tell you more.



Image supplied

We set out from urban Cape Town on a dull and wet day but the ride in the Urban Cruiser compensated for the near adverse weather conditions. Driving the automatic version through heavy traffic was a breeze. But once we headed out to Stellenbosch, it was a pleasure to be behind the wheel. My driving partner and I then swopped over to the manual version and I have to say that it felt better to change gears when you were ready.

Market share

Since its introduction in 2021, Toyota's Urban Cruiser has consistently ranked first in the highly competitive B-SUV segment, achieving a market share of 19%. In so doing it has proven that it's the right product at the right price. Within the 'high' B segment, which is where the Urban Cruiser competes, there has been a continuous shift from hatchbacks towards crossovers due to the increasing need for space at an affordable price as well as the preferred loftier driving position offered by an SUV.

Striking design

Straight off the bat, it's very obvious that the new Urban Cruiser has undergone a radical change. Familiar design cues such as the clamshell bonnet, slim light treatment and gaping lower grille show it's related to other members of the Toyota SUV family. Slightly wider and taller than the outgoing model, it additionally benefits from improved ground clearance of 210mm.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj



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The bi-halogen projector headlamps lower in the face so that they're now inset within the bumper. They're also neatly framed with a chrome bezel. The slim-line LED DRLs now become the focal points, splitting into two with a chrome strip in between and merging into the piano black grille. A massive lower grille aperture with honeycomb design combined with a silver ornamental skid plate takes a majority stake in the upfront real estate, significantly upping the aggression factor.

Bulging squared-off wheel arches and silver roof rails (XR) give it an air of ruggedness; this is complemented by colour-matched mirrors and door handles as well as chunky mouldings on the rocker panels and wheel arches. High-gloss, black lattice-design 17" alloys adorn XR models while the XS gets 17" steel wheels with turbine-inspired wheel covers.

The rear is refreshingly clean and simple. The ultra-slim C-shaped LED taillights are inset within a piano black panel which in turn is overlaid by a pale silver trim garnish. Another design highlight is the way Toyota has uniquely put together both the indicators and reverse lamps in separate vertical clusters. To give it a brawny look, there's a roof spoiler and the lower lip of the rear bumper gets a decorative silver skid plate.

Cabin redone

The cabin is pleasing to the eye. Lifting the predominantly black cabin are subtle touches of silver – from the satin-plated

trim inserts and chrome door handles to the metallic-tipped ventilation controls. High-quality black striated cloth upholstery is featured throughout the interior. Taking centre stage in the completely re-designed dashboard is the easy-to-read 7-inch infotainment screen which is, of course, Android Auto and Wireless Apple CarPlay enabled. The instrument nacelle has a decidedly premium feel to it and houses a pair of grey-bezelled analogue clocks reminiscent of a sports watch – there's a new colour TFT display as well.

The storage box between the front seat doubles as an armrest with a slidable lid. The 60/40 split rear seatback houses a centre-mounted armrest/fold-down table. New and exclusive to the XR model is cruise control.

Under the bonnet

Adapted for the new Urban Cruiser is the familiar 1.5l naturally-aspirated four-cylinder engine delivering 77kW and 138Nm of torque. Providing animated performance with a top speed clocking in at 170 and 175 km/h for the manual and auto respectively, its star quality really comes to the fore when you have to fill up – fuel consumption is pegged at a penny-pinching 6,1l/100km in the combined cycle. Buyers can choose between a five-speed manual transmission or a four-speed automatic (XR) - all driving the front wheels.

Pricing

- Urban Cruiser 1.5 XS MT - R 329, 400
- Urban Cruiser 1.5 XR MT - R 347, 400
- Urban Cruiser 1.5 XR AT - R 369, 900

All Urban Cruiser models are now sold with a longer service plan of four years/60,000km service plan. A three-year/100,000km warranty is also provided. Service intervals are pegged at 12 months/15,000km.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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