

# Más caballos

With more horses joined by expanded drive modes, Crosstrek Sport is a nicely juiced-up new version of a sweet-spot model in the Subaru lineup. by Joe Sage

We drove everything from a 495-hp supercar to a 570-lbft 4x4 pickup in this issue—but had a ball in this 182-hp \$26,495 Subaru Crosstrek.

This is one of our favorites in the Subaru lineup, with its simultaneously utilitarian and sporty approach to life. Things that try to be everything to everybody can easily miss them all—but this succeeds at all. If you need a larger cargo volume, they offer several models delivering that (Outback, Forester, Ascent). If you want something sportier, they offer that, too (BRZ, WRX, STI). But whereas those are pretty much specialized in one direction or the other, Crosstrek is the one that hits on both.

Crosstrek has a simple formula that works dramatically well. It's basically an Impreza hatchback on a raised chassis—its 8.7-inch ground clearance rivals or beats many a big SUV. Despite its origins, it comes across as a coupe-like Outback.

Originally the XV Crosstrek, reflecting models in other parts of the world, XV was dropped from the name for its second generation in the US.

In a way, it's a formula many a rally enthusiast daydreams about—take a favorite sedan or wagon, jack it up with bigger wheels and tires, and pop it atop a 4x4 drivetrain. But this has fully developed

factory engineering. And it works like a champ.

It's a favorite among Subaru fans, too, who have wished for just one thing: a little more power. Their wish has now come true.

The gen-two Crosstrek (new in 2018) sexed up its styling in subtle yet collectively effective ways, with a downsloping beltline leading into front wheel arches and hood creases that create a more aggressive stance. Lower Base and Premium trims have a 152-hp 2.0L boxer engine (up 4 hp from gen one). Limited is newly joined by this Sport model in the upper half of the lineup, both bearing a new 182-hp 2.5-liter. If a 30-hp increase doesn't sound like a lot at first, think of this: it's 20 percent more than the base 2.0L (or 23 percent higher than all gen-one trims). For perspective, that's like bumping a 400-hp muscle car up to 480—a very noticeable boost that clarifies the model's mission and proves itself out on the road. Sport also receives a new front fascia, which works with sheet metal just above it to create eye-catching geometry. The interior adds yellow stitching, yellow embossed Crosstrek seatback logos, brightly colored anodized-look trim, and leather in key areas.

The power and build proved themselves around

town, powering up freeway ramps with a healthy growl, or sinking its teeth into tight turns and deep rain troughs. We also took it for a good run along both the smoother and rougher stretches of Castle Hot Springs Road past Lake Pleasant, where it drove steady and true through washboard and dirt-to-concrete bridge seams, like a rally champ.

While there is a six-speed manual available on lower-level trims, the 2.5L Limited and Sport are CVT-only (as of now). CVT models include SI-Drive, with Intelligent or Sport modes, and (except Base trim) an 8-speed manual mode and paddle shifters. After days with the Crosstrek in widely varying conditions, we realized we had thought about the transmission a grand total of not at all. This is very good. We could have analyzed it all the time, but instead were just enjoying the drive, feeling its power, maneuverability and general performance, with no shift deficiencies that might have drawn our attention to the system. That kind of invisible competence is a solid endorsement of performance, as with the best restaurant waitstaff.

All Crosstreks have standard X-Mode and Hill Descent Control. Uniquely in the lineup, Sport has dual-function X-Mode with Hill Descent Control and adds Snow/Dirt and Deep Snow/Mud settings. It's not intended to be a Rubicon-caliber rock-crawler, but between its substantial ground clearance and its modes for challenging conditions, there is little else that it can't handle. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>BUILD</b> .....	unitized body, ring-shaped reinforcement frame safety structure
<b>ENGINE</b> .....	DOHC 2.5L 4-cyl boxer w dir inj, 16v, dual active valve control system
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	182 hp / 176 lb-ft
<b>COMPRESSION RATIO</b> .....	12.0:1
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	Subaru Symmetrical AWD
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	Lineartronic® CVT w 8-spd manual shift mode, intelligent & sport modes, dual-mode X-Mode w snow/dirt and deep snow modes, steering wheel controls
<b>SUSPENSION</b> .....	4-wheel indep, raised w Stablex dampers: <b>F:</b> MacPherson-type struts, lower L-arms, coils, stblzr bar, hydraulic engine mounts; <b>R:</b> dbl wishbone, coils, stblzr bar
<b>STEERING</b> .....	rack & pinion, elec pwr assist
<b>BRAKES</b> .....	<b>F:</b> 11.6 vented; <b>R:</b> 10.8 solid discs
<b>WHEELS</b> .....	17x7 alum alloy
<b>TIRES</b> .....	225/60R17 98H all-season
<b>LENGTH / WHEELBASE</b> .....	175.8 / 104.9 in
<b>TURNING CIRCLE</b> .....	35.4 ft
<b>GROUND CLEARANCE</b> .....	8.7 in
<b>APPR / DEPART / BRKOVER</b> .....	18 / 28.6 / 19.7°
<b>HEADROOM (F/R)</b> .....	(w/moonrf) 37.6 / 37.8 in
<b>LEGROOM (F/R)</b> .....	43.1 / 36.5 in
<b>CARGO CAPACITY</b> .....	20.8 / 55.3 cu.ft
<b>WEIGHT</b> .....	3265 lb
<b>TOW CAPACITY</b> .....	1500 lb
<b>FUEL CAPACITY</b> .....	16.6 gal
<b>MPG</b> .....	27/34/29 (city/hwy/comb)

<b>BASE PRICE</b> .....	<b>\$26,495</b>
<b>OPTION PKG Z2:</b> power tilt/slide moonroof, blind spot detect & rear cross traffic alert, keyless entry/start, Starlink 8.0" Multimedia Plus (NFC, high-res LCD touchscreen, voice activation, Apple/Android, apps, SiriusXM, HD, AM-FM-CD, dual USB, aux, hands-free, text).....	1600
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE</b> .....	1050
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>\$29,145</b>

## 2021 SUBARU CROSSTREK LINEUP

<b>Base</b> .....2.0L 152 hp ...6-spd man .....	<b>\$22,245</b>
.....CVT.....	<b>23,595</b>
<b>Premium</b> .....2.0L 152 hp ...6-spd man .....	<b>\$23,295</b>
.....CVT.....	<b>24,645</b>
<b>Sport</b> .....2.5L 182 hp ...CVT .....	<b>\$26,495</b>
<b>Limited</b> .....2.5L 182 hp ...CVT .....	<b>\$27,995</b>



The 2021 Subaru Crosstrek Sport offers two new colors: Plasma Yellow Pearl and our sample's Horizon Blue Pearl.

