



What is the best car for a new parent?

Hello Paul, I am a new mother, so I am often traveling with a lot of baby gear and luggage. What car would best accommodate my lifestyle? Carol

Hello Carol, selecting a car in Uganda when you are a new parent with a baby seat and lots of luggage is a balancing act between comfort, safety, versatility and practicality. Before you even consider which brand badge to buy, it is important to think about ease of access for the person carrying the baby and the baby seat.

Safety features that secure the baby seat and child minder are critical, and ample space for nursery cargo is also key. There are other practical considerations too, such as ground clearance, parts availability, reliability and overall ownership cost or budget.

To meet these needs, the ideal car

2.0 - 2.5

Choosing cars with 2.0 to 2.5-litre petrol engines gives you a good balance of power and fuel economy for flexible travel in the city and on the highway.

choice tends to be a mid-size SUV (for example, Toyota RAV4, Toyota Vanguard, Mazda CX-5, Nissan X-Trail, Hyundai Santa Fe or Kia Sportage) or a minivan (such as the Toyota Noah or Voxy), rather than a saloon car or a small hatchback such as the Toyota Vitz or VW Golf.

When considering seating space, it is useful to look at the layout for comfortable accommodation of the baby seat. The rear seats should have

easy-to-reach ISOFIX features for safe harnessing or latching of the baby seat. They should also be high enough to protect the back while providing ample headroom and legroom for any adult carrying the baby when entering or exiting the vehicle.

Wide-opening doors are important to allow easy passage of both the baby seat and the person carrying the baby. Cars with sliding door options, such as the Toyota Noah or Voxy, are especially convenient.

The boot or cargo space should be ample, with a shape that can easily accommodate child accessories such as a pram, stroller, wash basin and bag. This is why small hatchbacks such as the Toyota Vitz or stylish SUVs with sloping roof profiles are not suitable for these needs.

Ground clearance is another crucial consideration in Uganda, as you may need to drive over suburban roads under construction or upcountry roads with uneven humps and potholes. It is also important to choose car brands that are easy to maintain, with good availability of spare parts.

The brands mentioned above have both manufacturer representatives and independent specialists who can supply parts and carry out repairs where necessary.

Choosing cars with 2.0 to 2.5-litre petrol engines gives you a good balance of power and fuel economy for flexible travel in the city and on the highway.

Petrol engines are generally easier and cheaper to maintain over the long term.

On the other hand, diesel engines offer better torque for carrying heavy loads and improved fuel economy per litre, making them more suitable for commercial use.

While modern diesel engines can be efficient and cost-effective to run, they tend to become more expensive to maintain as they age (beyond 100,000km) and may be less reliable when managed on a typical household budget.

For domestic use, such as carrying your baby around, a car with a reasonably sized petrol engine is the more reliable choice.