



## News Release

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### **TOP CAR PICKS FOR TEENS, WITH SAFETY IN MIND**

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va., (June 14, 2012) – For teen drivers, buying a car is likely influenced by speed, style, color and brand. For parents, it's a focus on safety and reliability while not breaking the bank. Unfortunately, like settling on a curfew, finding a happy medium is not so easy. [AAA](#) understands finding the right car for your teen can be a big decision and hopes to simplify the process with their list of top vehicles for teens.

Safety, style and reliability make this list of cars top picks by AAA Auto Buying experts:

**Volkswagen Golf/Rabbit TDI:** Despite having compact exterior dimensions, these hatchbacks are roomy and flexible. Handling is predictable and stability control has been an option since 2003. The TDI (Turbo Diesel) is the diesel option, with lower horsepower and much better fuel economy ratings than the gasoline powered versions. Teens should avoid the speedier GTI (Grand Tourer Injection) edition; it can be too powerful for less experienced drivers. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Volkswagen Golf 4 door hatchback is \$20,096, 2.3 percent less than the MSRP.

**Ford Focus:** In addition to being pleasant to drive and a solid performer with good handling, the latest Focus models also give parents the MyKey feature, which will limit speed, radio volume and prevent teens from turning off safety systems. The Ford Focus provides good fuel economy advertising up-to-40 hwy mpg on the SE with SFE package. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Ford Focus 5 door hatchback SE is \$17,395, 8.9 percent less than the MSRP.

**Honda Civic:** A perennial and parental favorite, the Honda Civic offers solid handling, a stout structure, easy maneuvering and good fuel economy. When shopping around, do note model types, as the Si model may be too powerful for younger drivers. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Honda Civic 4 door LX is \$18,695, 4.6 percent less than the MSRP.

**Hyundai Sonata (2011+):** This newest Sonata is offered only with a four-cylinder engine. Handling is secure and the ride is comfortable. Beware of the turbo-charged version. It is unnecessarily powerful for teenage drivers. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Hyundai Sonata 4 door sedan 2.4L SE is \$23,253, 3.0 percent less than the MSRP.

**Ford Fusion:** The Ford Fusion features secure handling and a comfortable ride. Increasing safety, upper trim levels in recent years can be equipped with an optional cross traffic alert feature, which makes backing out of a parking space with limited visibility safer. Choosing the four-cylinder motor or gasoline-electric hybrid are better choices for teen drivers. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Ford Fusion SE is \$21,292, 10.4 percent less than the MSRP.

**Kia Sportage:** The Sportage, one of Kia's midsize crossover utility vehicles, handles well and received 4 stars and a "no tip" evaluation in the NHTSA New Car Assessment Program. The Sportage

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is economical, dependable and comes with a wide range of safety features. The TrueCar national market average\* of the 2012 Kia Sportage 2-wheel drive SX is \$26,563, 4.1 percent less than the MSRP.

“Teen drivers see their first vehicle as a step toward independence. For parents and teens, seeing eye to eye on the best vehicle can be tough” says Georjeane Blumling, Vice President of Public Relations for AAA Tidewater Virginia. “Safety behind the wheel should be a priority. Finding a reliable vehicle that has top safety features and fits into the budget will make you and your teen’s vehicle ownership more enjoyable.”

AAA’s top picks are selected by its AAA Auto Buying experts who test drive and evaluate hundreds of vehicles each year.

\*Market Average is estimated based on the national average of recent vehicle transactions, including destination and delivery charges after incentives that are subject to change, but does not include tax, title, licensing, documentation or processing fees, other state and governmental charges and/or fees, or any other charges or fees allowed by law. Percent discount is rounded to the nearest tenth.

AAA offers a wide variety of resources to guide parents through the process of their teens learning how to drive through its teen driver safety website—[TeenDriving.AAA.com](http://TeenDriving.AAA.com). This interactive site provides parents and teens with specific information based on where they live and where they are in the learning process— a downloadable brochure on a parent’s guide to choosing a vehicle “So Your Teen Wants a Car” can also be found [here](#).

*As part of North America’s largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit [AAA.com](http://AAA.com) and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATWnews](https://twitter.com/AAATWnews).*

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