

## 2010 HONDA ACCORD CROSSTOUR



Honda calls its new Accord Crosstour a crossover utility vehicle, whereas for many it's a four-door hatchback Accord. It is slightly longer (6.4 cm) and considerably higher (19.4 cm) than the sedan, but virtually identical (0.3 cm shorter) in the wheelbase. Width is the same for both vehicles. The Crosstour is offered in one version only, EX-L V6, with a choice of two- or four-wheel drive.

### Interior and trunk

Access to both the front and back is easy, but the wide doorsills collect dirt. On the way out, it's easy for the driver to bang his right knee on the dashboard. The comfortable front seats hold the occupant snugly in place. The driving position is very good thanks to the tilt and telescoping steering wheel and height-adjustable seat. However, the power controls do not allow you to change the angle of the back of the cushion, which reduces the range of adjustment. Headroom and legroom are good.

In the back, the bench seat is comfortable for two. The centre tunnel takes up most of the foot room, making the middle section very uninviting, especially on long drives. Legroom is generous but headroom is tight for tall people. The seatback is split 60/40, and it is slightly higher than the cargo floor when it is folded.

The cargo area is quite spacious, even with the seat up: 104 cm behind the rear seat, and 198 cm behind the front seats when they're pushed back as far as they'll go. The suspension towers reduce the width of the cargo area to 77.5 cm. Height measures 68 cm under the hatch hinges but tapers off progressively over a distance of 60 cm to just 46 cm near the load sill. The hatch opens high, but not enough to clear the head of a tall person. Under the floor is a removable storage box with a reversible cover, carpeted on one side and plastic-lined on the other.

### Convenience and safety features

The cabin is very well finished in quality materials. Thanks to a new Active Sound Control system, the Crosstour is quieter than its siblings. While soundproofing is adequate, road noise is still apparent. There is an abundance of good storage spaces. The beverage holders have a poor grip on soda cans and other small containers.

The ergonomic design of the controls is less than optimal. First, there are way too many control buttons on the central stack. Second, the buttons for the efficient heating system are scattered on each side of the stack. Third, the steering wheel hides certain buttons placed to the left of the stack. Everything is illuminated at night. The click of the turn signals is barely audible.

*Photo: Honda*

As the front roof pillars are much higher than the windshield, they collect snow that can prevent the wipers from reaching their full sweep, forcing the wiper motor. The washer nozzles are under the edge of the hood and can easily be blocked by snow.

Safety features include a sophisticated body structure, six airbags (two front, two dual-chamber side, two head curtain), five head restraints (both active in front), all-wheel disc brakes with ABS, and stability control. The rear head restraints do not adjust high enough for tall people. The two-chamber side impact airbags function as follows: a large chamber protects the chest, whereas a second, smaller chamber inserted inside the first better protects the pelvis and lower back. Outward visibility is good on all sides except on a three-quarter-rear angle, because of the large C-pillars, and to the rear, where the problem is the junction between the oblique and vertical sections of the hatch. Distances are hard to evaluate when backing up without the rearview camera, available only with the navigation system--a \$2,000 option offered only on the all-wheel-drive version. The headlights lack intensity and range in the low-beam position.

In U.S. government tests, the Accord sedan obtained five stars out of five for front-occupant protection in frontal impact and side collisions. It received only three stars for rear-occupant protection in a side crash. Rollover resistance earned it five stars. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety awarded the Accord a Good rating, its highest, for driver protection in a frontal offset impact, and for all-occupant protection in the side and rear crash tests. It obtained a Marginal rating, the second highest, for roof strength.

### **Engine and transmission**

The 3.5-litre V6 develops 271 horsepower and 254 pound-feet of torque, which allows the Crosstour to move along smartly. Acceleration and pickup are satisfactory, but no more. While this V6 does a great job in the sedan and coupe, it has to work harder in the Crosstour, which with all-wheel drive weighs 200 kg more than the EX-L V6 sedan. The fact that maximum torque is produced at 5,000 rpm also explains the modest performance. Fortunately, the engine climbs smoothly through the gears. On the other hand, it becomes quite vocal when the tach needle hits 3,000 rpm. At cruising speeds, the engine management system can deactivate up to three cylinders, for improved fuel efficiency.

The five-speed automatic transmission generally shifts smoothly. At times, especially during the warm-up period, you can feel it downshift when coming to a full stop. Gears are well spaced. The vehicle can be driven off in second. An interesting feature of this transmission is G Shift Control: if the vehicle is cornering, the transmission won't shift to a higher gear until the vehicle has exited the corner. It should be noted that the vast majority of competing vehicles are equipped with a six-speed automatic.

The all-wheel-drive system directs torque to the rear wheels when it detects front-wheel slippage. Simple and efficient, the system is relatively fast and requires no intervention on the part of the driver.

### **On the road**

The Crosstour's four-wheel independent suspension is firmer than that of the other versions. While it delivers a very smooth ride on most paved surfaces, some minor pavement breaks can set off a rather stiff reaction. This Accord has a tenacious grip in

corners. Overall, the suspension feels solid. Its 15.2 cm ground clearance (14.6 cm for the V6 sedan) is too low for rugged terrain. Competing vehicles like the Toyota Venza and Subaru Outback have at least 5 cm more ground clearance.

The power steering is well tuned, stable, precise and relatively fast. It sends back little in the way of road feel. The turning circle is small. The brakes are powerful, with good fade resistance.

## Inspection

An inspection at a CAA-Quebec technical inspection centre showed that the Accord is well put together and that its sturdy structure is well protected against corrosion. Debris can get through the large openings above and below the front bumper and damage the air conditioner condenser. Grime can enter the engine compartment fairly easily. There is no hook under the vehicle to secure a canoe, for example, to the roof. The overhead camshafts are belt driven.

## Conclusion

The new Crosstour fills a gap in the Accord line-up. It's the multipurpose vehicle of the group and hopefully, for Honda's sake, consumers won't see it as too big for a car, or too small for a station wagon or crossover. People for whom the size is right will certainly appreciate its comfort, room and handling. It would be nice, however, if more affordable versions were available.

**PROS:** room, comfort, fit and finish, smooth ride, handling, versatility

**CONS:** three-quarter-rear visibility, A-pillars higher than windshield, washer nozzles under edge of hood, placement of controls, wide doorsills collect grime, big openings under front bumper

## 2010 HONDA ACCORD CROSSTOUR

**Engine:** 24-valve, 3.5-litre V6

**Horsepower:** 271 hp at 6,200 rpm

**Torque:** 254 lb-ft at 5,000 rpm

**Transmission:** 5-speed automatic

**Suspension:** fully independent

**Brakes:** disc/disc

**Wheelbase:** 279.7 cm

**Length:** 499.9 cm

**Width:** 189.8 cm

**Height:** 167 cm

**Weight:** 1,755 to 1,845 kg

**Tires:** P225/60R18

**Maximum towing capacity:** 680 kg

**Airbags:** dual front, plus two side and two curtain airbags

### Fuel consumption with AWD

Natural Resources Canada rating:

City: 12.3 L/100 km (23 mpg)

Test result: 11.5 L/100 km (25 mpg)

Highway: 8 L/100 km (35 mpg)

Test temperature: 3°C to 12°C

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions:** 4,784 kg/20,000 km

**Fuel tank capacity:** 70 litres

**Fuel requirement:** regular grade gasoline

**Acceleration:**

0–100 km/h: 8.2 seconds

60–100 km/h: 6.1 seconds

**Competition:** Chevrolet Equinox, Dodge Journey, Ford Edge, GMC Terrain, Subaru Outback, Toyota Venza, Volkswagen Passat Wagon

**Warranty:**

- Full basic coverage: 3 years/60,000 km
- Powertrain: 5 years/100,000 km
- Surface corrosion: 3 years/unlimited km
- Perforation damage: 5 years/unlimited km
- Emissions control system: 3 years/60,000 km (full coverage); 8 years/130,000 km (catalytic converter, electronic control module, onboard diagnostic system).

**Factory replacement parts:**

- Rear bumper: \$584
- Front brake disc: \$125
- Brake pads: \$75
- Muffler: \$215
- Front fender: \$291

**Price according to trim level:**

- EX-L: \$34,900
- EX-L AWD: \$36,900
- EX-L AWD Navi: \$38,900

**Main options:** none.

**Price as tested:** \$36,900

**Freight and preparation:** \$1,550

**Dealers:** Quebec: 61          Canada: 204

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