

# A SPACE ODYSSEY

“ A MPV IS MORE OF A FUNCTIONAL AND PRACTICAL DRIVE AND IT NEVER CROSSED MY MIND THAT IT COULD BE SOMETHING FUN TO DRIVE. THAT IS, UNTIL I MET THE HONDA ODYSSEY. ”





Honda Odyssey

▼ Honda Odyssey 2.4 (A)

AT A GLANCE ▼

**Engine:**  
2,354cc 4-cyl 16v i-VTEC

**Performance:**  
180bhp/ 5,500rpm,  
218Nm/ 4,500 rpm,  
0-100 10.0 secs

**Topspeed:**  
N/A

**Transmission:**  
5-Speed Automatic

**Price with COE:**  
\$105,388

**Test Drive/Enquiries:**  
Kah Motors  
Tel: 6841 3333

IN A NUTSHELL ▼

**Plus:**  
Styling, Spacious, Refined and Economical

**Minus:**  
Suspension is a little too stiff

**Verdict:**  
The Honda Odyssey does make a good choice of everyday transportation especially when need to lug another 6 passengers all at once, it feels like a car when driving and not like a van.



used to think MPVs are bulky, clumsy cars that better serve the purpose of moving house or ferrying a huge family around. The Honda Odyssey is one such example. It would be the kind of car that one would love to be in for road trips; when driving up to Malaysia for instance. Cabin space for passengers is generous, storage space for all that luggage is sufficient and road presence is slightly intimidating. But other than that, when else would you need an MPV?

Just some background; a Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPV) is actually a minivan and commonly known as people-carrier, people-mover or multi-utility vehicle (MUV). It is actually a type of automobile similar in shape to a van, but designed for personal rather than commercial

use. Taller than a sedan, hatchback or a station wagon, a MPV is optimised for maximum interior room. Not to be confused with Sport-Utility Vehicles (SUVs), a MPV usually does not come in four-wheel-drive.

Hence, a MPV is more of a functional and practical drive and it never crossed my mind that it could be something fun to drive. That is, until I met the Honda Odyssey that tried to convince me otherwise.

The seven-seater (eight actually, because of its clever seating system) Odyssey is into its fourth generation and back to beat the likes of its rivals – the Mitsubishi Grandis, Nissan Presage and Toyota Previa. Getting a fresh look is a bonus, because buyers of MPVs typically buy it for its practicality and not so much

for its looks or emotional attachment. The Odyssey has a new bumper and grille, curvier headlights, new tail-lights and a subtle roof spoiler that comes standard.

The 2.4-litre engine – same as the one in the new Accord – comes with a five-speed automatic transmission that gives a maximum power of 180bhp at 5,500rpm and maximum torque of 218Nm at 4,500rpm. Low- to mid-range pull has improved slightly, with more push in the higher range. It also takes just 10 seconds to reach 100km/h from rest, a time that beats its competitors.

Body roll of the Odyssey is decent and does not leave you leaning too much over, but the compromise to achieve that is having a suspension that might be a little stiff for a



vehicle that is catered more for comfort rather than performance. Steering is firm and solid, but road noise is quite eminent.

The interior of the Odyssey is expected to be spacious, and it is, except in the second and third row of seats. Leg and headroom gets tighter towards the back of the car, so one should know how to arrange their passengers accordingly.

Access to the rear seats is much better now. The second row of seats slides further forward, enabling those in the third row to get in more easily. As for getting out, a foot lever has been installed to release the second row.

Boot storage space is expected to be generous too, and it is. Should one need more storage, the third row of seats can be folded away into the floor via the touch of a button and the backrests of the second row can be folded down should you need to store bulkier items. Up in front, there are the typical controls like climate



control, gearshift and traction control. No cushy things like paddle shifts or audio controls on the steering wheel though.

The Honda Odyssey does make a good choice of everyday transportation, except for the little parking problems you might encounter in today's world of impatient drivers and shrinking car park spaces. Most importantly, it feels like a car when driving and not like a van.

Once at the wheel, one would be able to tell that the car is tuned for economy and refinement instead of performance, which should be the case. I would recommend this buy to family men or women who could benefit largely from the big car. But if you're looking for the kind of car that gets your blood pumping and keeps wanting you to drive, then I suggest you probably should be looking elsewhere. ●

