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# MG-ZS EV

**David Stewart**

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While providing an honest commentary on his journey to purchasing his first EV, EVA Scotland member David Stewart gives us a first-hand review of the MG-ZS EV,

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As I sit to write this review, I am very conscious that I may be the worst person to do this!

It would be a bit of an exaggeration to say that buying an EV was a whim, but since we installed Solar PV cells about eight years ago, I always thought if I get an electric car, I could produce my own electricity to power it.

I test drove a few electric cars about 3 years ago, but the purchase price, complicated battery lease schemes or insufficient range still seemed significant obstacles for me to make the bold step to EV ownership.

But late summer of last year, I decided that I really should take the plunge!

My last 4 cars have been SEAT Alteas and an Ateka, all of which I loved, so I was actively looking for an SUV type car, thus eliminating some of the smaller or larger saloon-type models of EV.

So, within my price bracket, the Kia E-Niro or the Hyundai Cona seemed to be my best bet.

I eagerly visited the Inverness dealerships only to be told, quite smugly by one salesperson, that I would have to join a waiting list of about fifteen months. But, as chance would have it, I was travelling down from Aberdeen to Edinburgh the following weekend and took a detour into Mackie Motors in Brechin.

No smugness here! Mackie Motors didn't have a demonstrator at that point, but I signed up for a test drive as soon as one came in, and I was furnished with every detail I could ever have wanted to know. Three weeks later, I returned for my test drive and ordered one there and then.

OK, the mileage range wasn't quite as good as the others I had looked at, but I did a bit of analysis about the journeys I actually made in the last six months. On any single journey I had actually only travelled a distance greater than the 164 miles advertised for the MG, about four times. I was sure that with some journey planning, these journeys could be accommodated.

My order placed and deposit paid, I now just waited for my January delivery date. Sadly, January came and went, as did most of February, so I called Mackie Motors who, whilst they could not have been nicer about it, could only

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advise me that practically they thought it would be mid-April delivery, due to some hold up.

I went on to the internet and it seemed that there was a white, MG ZS EV Exclusive in stock at Vic Young's MG dealership in South Shields. I called and within three days the car was reserved for me to collect. Mackie Motors demonstrated a great attitude when I called them. They were disappointed but they fully understood my position when I said that I had sourced a car available for uplift now, and that I would be buying it elsewhere.

I decided to wait a few days more and get the 20 reg plate, but again, I was absolutely delighted with the customer service support I got from their team. I suspect that MG have spent some time in training the agencies, and it seems to have been time and effort well spent.

My wife and I picked up the car in South Shields on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, and everything was organised for me. The salesman, Peter, had even organised for me to drive a demonstrator for my refresher, instead of the actual car I had purchased, so that I would leave for home with my car still holding a full charge. The 300-mile journey home, due to my incompetence and lack of practical knowledge of driving an EV, is a story in itself and may be my next episode!!



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## Pros

In making the purchase of a practically unknown Chinese built car, I did set myself up for some disappointment regarding ride or build quality. However, I am very pleased to say that both are very acceptable. The doors close with a clunk, the seats are very comfortable, the driving position suits me, as I like the more upright seating position that I get from an SUV. The boot space seems great, but with Lockdown, I haven't really had a chance to test that.

There's loads of things I might not have expected to get in, what I suppose is a mid-range vehicle, such as electrically adjusted driver's seat, heated front seats, lane control adjustment, adaptive cruise control and sat-nav via a central display. I selected the Exclusive model, so I also have a fully opening sunroof which allows a lot of light into the passenger compartment

From the many video reviews uploaded on the internet, I see many reviewers strongly dislike the various warning bongs from the car, particularly at start up. You can switch these off, but I don't think they are any more annoying than similar bongs I had in my previous SEATs.

## Cons

There are a few things I do think are disappointing not to have been included in the UK models. Firstly, in the model released in Asia, there's an App to remotely check the battery charge level, switch on the heating prior to starting off etc. This would be very useful, and I believe this may be introduced in subsequent models.

Also, considering the affect that climate has on the range expectations of an EV's battery, it seems a massive oversight for there not to be an outside temperature gauge.

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But the most annoying trait of the car, which would surely take someone in the design team about 20 minutes to rectify, is the fact that regardless how you set the car's driving settings to suit, as soon as you switch off they all revert back to standard setting.

I don't drive very fast at the best of time (although the 0-60 acceleration may change that. It is amazing!), so I normally set the driving mode at Eco and the KERS at 1(low). But every time I start up, even if I've just nipped into a shop for a pint of milk or indeed a rapid charge, I have to remember to reset back to my preferences.

If you do not notice that the car has reset, you may have driven quite a few miles with a higher consumption rate that you may have wished.

However, this may also be due to my inexperience of driving an EV, particularly a wholly BEV.

There is a lot of information provided on the trip computer displays regarding voltage use etc, but I'm not great at all that. That's one of my reasons for joining EVA Scotland, to meet people who can share their knowledge and advise how to get the most out of the car.

But with the Lockdown, my car of two months still only has 700 miles on the clock, and I presently don't have a great depth of driving experience in it to enable me to tell you more accurately of how I rate it.

All I can say is that it has fulfilled my desire to own an EV in a very acceptable manner. I think it's a reasonably good-looking SUV styled car. Indeed, when I see Quashqais, Mazda CXs, Atecas and the like drive towards me, I do see quite a high degree of similarity in body shape and style.

It's a really comfortable car to be in. I love the variety of driving styles and I like the availability of space every bit as much as I did in any of my previous SUVs.

I had hoped that the first thing I would do in it was to drive the North Coast 500 route. I have two reasons for doing this.

The first is that, living in Inverness, I've driven the constituent parts of that route many times, but never as a single "event" route.

The second is to enable me to answer that annoying question all ICE car drivers ask when you say you've committed to fully electric car "how are you going to manage to get anywhere with such a limited range?"

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I was hoping that saying that I had just completed the NC500 without much difficulty, might put their gas to a peep, if I may mischievously mix that metaphor!

So, once Lockdown is over, I'd love the opportunity to get back to you all with a more meaningful review, hopefully including NC500, but if any of you wish to contact me with any advice about driving techniques or explaining what any of the electrical engineering based stats and info that appear on my dashboard actually mean, I'd be pleased to know!