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[caption id="attachment_35636" align="aligncenter" width="500" caption="2012 Jazz vs Swift - Click above for picture gallery"]



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Maruti Suzuki launched the all new Swift recently and Honda has followed with the launch of the Jazz facelift. The battle of the Japanese rivals has just commenced as Honda has undercut the price of the top end Swift ZXi by Rs. 3000/-. Now the Jazz can only rival the Swift petrol as there is no diesel Jazz yet. The Swift LXi and VXi are priced much cheaper than the base Jazz so we will just compare the Jazz S to the Swift ZXi to help buyers decide which car they should opt for.

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Styling - When it comes to design and styling, the Honda Jazz is the winner. Both the cars have the same width (1690 mm) but the Jazz is slightly longer (by 50 mm) at 3900mm and taller (by 5 mm) at 1535 mm. All the variants of the Jazz come with 15-inch wheels, while only the top end ZXi variant of the Swift gets 15-inch wheels. We can't really pass a judgement on looks as it is completely subjective. But the design of the new Swift is an evolution of the old model, which has certainly not gone down well with many people. Thus, the Swift easily loses out on the *Who is the looker* parameter and we prefer the Jazz when it comes to looks, as it looks relatively fresh and big (thanks to the small hood and generous glass area).

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Interiors - The dashboard of both the cars looks premium but the Jazz features beige interiors, something which we Indians love. The Swift's interiors have been vastly improved, taking heavy cues from its elder sibling, the Kizashi. However it's the Jazz which beats the Swift outright when it comes to practicality and space. The Jazz not only has more space and cubby holes but also boasts of flexible seating (magic seats). The rear seat can be folded in multiple ways in the Jazz, whereas in the Swift, you can only fold it completely down (no split folding here). The legroom at the rear is much higher in the Jazz and the passenger seldom feels he is sitting in a hatchback. In the new Swift, rear seat space has been improved but the small glass area makes the rear passengers claustrophobic. The boot space of the Swift is just 206 liters, whereas the Jazz offers a 384 liter boot, making the Jazz the perfect hatchback for weekend gateways.

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Features - When two cars cost almost the same, one expects the features to be similar. Both the Swift ZXi and Jazz S boast of dual airbags along with ABS and EBD. Both cars have received 5-star rating by EuroNCAP and are equally safe. The Jazz and Swift also have steering mounted audio controls, audio system with USB/AUX compatibility, rear wiper and defogger. However the Swift boasts of more features than the Jazz (the Jazz S is the base variant while the Swift ZXi is the top variant, so isn't that obvious). The Jazz S lacks front fog lamps, alloy wheels and driver seat height adjuster which the Swift ZXi comes with as standard. However the feature difference is not vast and one cannot decide on either car based on the feature list alone.

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Ride, Handling & Braking - The Swift ZXi is 65 kgs lighter than the Jazz S. The ground clearance of the Swift is more at 170 mm compared to the Jazz's 160 mm. However none of the cars scrape speedbreakers. The ride of the Swift has been vastly improved and is a match for the Jazz. However the Jazz can't match the razor sharp handling of the new Swift. Mind you, the Jazz isn't a bad handler, the Swift is just so good. High speed stability and braking of the Swift is slightly better than the Jazz. But overall it is difficult to choose these cars based on their ride, braking and high speed stability. If you are looking at handling, then the Swift definitely emerges out ahead of the Jazz. But slap on some good rubber on the Jazz and it will handle much better, but still not as sharp as the Swift.

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Performance - The Swift is powered by a 1.2-liter K-Series motor, which gets VVT and produces 87 PS of power and 114 Nm of torque. The Jazz on the other hand uses a 1.2-liter motor too but gets Honda's famed i-VTEC technology, producing 90 PS of power and 110 Nm of torque. The power and torque are almost similar but both engines are very different. If one says that the K12 motor is revv happy, then he needs to witness Honda's VTEC. The Jazz loves to be revved and urgency is apparent above 5000 RPM. The Swift on the other has good low end grunt along with decent mid and top range. The Jazz is very tall geared while the Swift is relatively short geared. The Swift is faster of the two hitting a ton in 12.8 seconds, while the Jazz takes 13.5 seconds. Both cars will do 170 kmph with ease. Both cars have a light clutch and smooth gearbox.

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Swift vs Jazz Pricing

Jazz S - Rs. 5.50 lakhs, Swift ZXi - Rs. 5.53 lakhs (ex-showroom, New Delhi)

Jazz S - Rs. 6.01 lakhs, Swift ZXi - Rs. 6.04 lakhs (on-road, New Delhi)

Jazz S - Rs. 5.75 lakhs, Swift ZXi - Rs. 5.78 lakhs (ex-showroom, Mumbai)

Jazz S - Rs. 6.41 lakhs, Swift ZXi - Rs. 6.45 lakhs (on-road, Mumbai)

Jazz Select - Rs. 6.70 lakhs, Jazz X - Rs. 7.06 lakhs (on-road, Mumbai)

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Fuel Efficiency - The Swift petrol delivers an ARAI certified mileage of 18.6 kmpl, while the Jazz delivers an ARAI certified mileage of 16.7 kmpl. The Swift is marginally more fuel efficient but these figures will differ in the real world. However the Swift will still consume less fuel than the Jazz, albeit marginally.

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Conclusion - Deciding between both the cars is very easy. If one wants style, space, brand image, quality then it is the Jazz which is the car for them. On the other hand, there is not much (not even the price) going for the new Swift petrol which easily gets beaten by the new Jazz. There is no reason one would opt for the Swift ZXi when the Jazz S comes for almost the same price. The Jazz offers so much more and is a premium hatchback in the true sense. Not only is the Jazz more spacious of the two but is more practical too and can actually replace a sedan for many buyers. No wonder is it then, that out of the 50000 bookings Maruti Suzuki has received for the new Swift, only 10000 are those for the petrol model. Now with Honda undercutting the Swift, expect a lot of

cancelled bookings of the petrol Swift. When was the last time you heard a Honda being available cheaper than a Maruti. Well almost never. But now when it is, there is absolutely no reason to opt for a Swift ZXi over the Jazz S. Now only if Honda launch a diesel Jazz!



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