



RENAULT

PRESS RELEASE

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Euro NCAP Crash Tests - Phase 12 results

Euro NCAP confirms Renault's expertise with best ever score for Espace IV

The independent organization Euro NCAP has awarded a maximum five-star rating to Espace IV, which now has the same rating as Laguna II (2001), Mégane II (2002) and Vel Satis (2002). Espace IV obtained the highest score ever in Euro NCAP testing, with 35.11 points out of a maximum 37. This result confirms Espace IV as the safest MPV on the market.

Laguna II has regained the place it held until May 2003 as the "safest vehicle in its category", totalling 34.11/37 points thanks to recognition of its seatbelt reminder alarm, which has actually been a driver's seat feature since July 2001.

Twingo, which has just celebrated its 10th year of production, obtained a 3-star rating, with 23.13 points.

Proof of Renault's expertise and its excellent across-the-range performance in safety, a Renault vehicle has once again been awarded the maximum 5-star rating in the Euro NCAP tests. During the multi-make test phases held each year, new Renault models have attained successively higher thresholds:

- 2001: Laguna II became the first vehicle to obtain the maximum 5-star rating in the Euro NCAP crash tests.
- 2002: Mégane II became the first C segment vehicle to obtain the Euro NCAP 5 stars.
- 2003: Espace IV obtained the 5-star rating, breaking the 35-point barrier for the first time in Euro NCAP history.

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Espace IV: safest car in its category and the best score ever obtained in a crash test

The Phase 12 tests saw Euro NCAP award Espace IV the maximum rating of 5 stars. The car gave an excellent performance and demonstrated particularly good resistance on impact. Espace IV scored 15.11/16 on frontal impact, 18/18 on side impact and gained an extra 2 points thanks to the seatbelt reminder alarm. As a result, Espace IV has achieved the best-ever Euro NCAP score of 35.11/37, the first ever score of more than 35 points in the history of the organization. Espace IV is now confirmed as not merely the safest vehicle in the MPV category, but also the safest vehicle in any segment. Even without the benefit of the 2 points for the seatbelt reminder, Espace IV and Laguna II both achieved the best ever crash test scores.

The excellent safety level of Espace IV has at its heart an ultra-high strength steel structure and the third-generation System for Restraint and Protection (SRP), fitted as standard on all models since Laguna II in January 2001. Comprising airbags with inflation levels that adapt to impact severity, double pretensioners in the front seats to prevent occupants "submarining" under the safety belts and improved lower limb protection, the current Renault occupant protection system has already been proven efficient through research into accidents. Studies of real-world accidents involving new Renault models show a total absence of "submarining", a phenomenon responsible for serious abdominal injuries.

Laguna II: the safest car on its market segment

Ranked as one of the safest cars on the automobile market, just behind Espace IV, Laguna II earned the second best score. After testing the efficiency of the seat belt reminder alarm that has been fitted on the car since July 2001, Euro NCAP awarded Laguna II an extra point, giving it a total score of 34.11/37 points, and restoring the title of "safest car in the D market segment", which it had lost to the Toyota Avensis in May 2003. The seatbelt reminder alarm is now fitted on all new Renault models. This is a key system for enabling drivers to take responsibility – in France, almost 1,200 lives a year could be saved if all car passengers wore safety belts.

Twingo: excellent safety features for the level in the range

Euro NCAP tests were also used to evaluate the level of safety of Twingo, which is celebrating its 10th year on the market. The vehicle obtained a score of 23.13 points and a 3-star rating. Since its launch in 1993, Twingo has benefited from new Renault safety innovations over the years: frontal airbags in 1995, load limiters on front and rear seats in 1997, controlled-vent airbags in 1998 (second-generation System for Restraint and Protection). Twingo rear seat passengers benefit from a level of safety unusual at this level in the range: 600 kg load limiters with pretensioners and the Isofix 3-point child safety seat fixing system for both forward-facing and rear-facing child seats. Twingo's front passenger seat is also fitted with an Isofix 3 point system and an airbag that can be manually disabled.

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Renault has won more Euro NCAP stars than any other manufacturer, and continues to prove its expertise in safety, making its range the safest on the market.

- Espace IV	5 stars	"safest car in its category"	(2003)
- Vel Satis	5 stars	"safest car in its category"	(2002)
- Laguna II	5 stars	"safest car in its category"	(2003)
- Mégane II	5 stars	"safest car in its category"	(2002)
- Clio	4 stars		(2000)
- Twingo	3 stars		(2003)

Almost fifty years of history: safety at Renault

For nearly 50 years, Renault has made safety a strategic priority. Every year the group earmarks a budget of around E100 million for safety and has almost 600 highly expert specialists working in the discipline. Drawing on the accident research database compiled by the Laboratory for Accident Research, Biomechanics and Study of Human Behaviour (LAB) based on the study of real-world accidents, Renault has continuously developed innovative, high-performance systems to help prevent accidents, correct vehicle handling and protect occupants in the event of an impact.

Renault's principle of "safety for all" involves guaranteeing all occupants, both front and rear, the same degree of safety in both small and large cars. Renault now boasts a range with the highest level of **passive safety** currently on the market, as proven by recent crash test results from the independent European organization Euro NCAP. Renault is the only manufacturer to have a five-star rating awarded to four of its vehicles – Espace IV, Vel Satis, Laguna II and Mégane II.

Renault has also been working on improving **active safety** and has developed aids to help drivers cope with critical situations, in addition to work on the basic functions of roadholding and braking. Active safety systems include ABS, Emergency Brake Assist, which helps the driver boost braking power to its fullest extent in an emergency situation, and ESP, which allows the driver to retain control of the car in the event of loss of grip, in an emergency manoeuvre, avoiding an obstacle, swerving or over- or under-steering.

Renault also offers systems to help make drivers more responsible. These include the seatbelt reminder, with a sound alarm in addition to a dashboard warning light, and an ESP warning light which comes on when the system comes into operation in a bend to alert drivers that their speed is inappropriate. Similarly, the programmable speed limiter, introduced on Laguna II in 2001, has now been carried over to almost the entire Renault range either as standard or as an option. The driver programs in a speed he does not wish to exceed. If he tries to do so, the accelerator pedal becomes inoperative. If required, forcing the pedal down beyond a point of resistance at the end of its travel will override the speed limit programmed; once the manoeuvre is complete, the limiter function becomes operational again.

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Awareness and education

Beyond automobile safety as such, Renault is also committed to road safety. Because the human cost is so high (more than 40,000 deaths per year on the road in Europe) and knowing that human error is responsible for approximately 80% of accidents, Renault has launched major programmes targeting school children and young people to make them more aware of the dangers of the road. The aim is to promote responsible behaviour from the earliest age and create potentially responsible drivers.

The “**10 de Conduite**” initiative in France, a campaign run alongside the French police, targets young people aged between 15 and 18, an age group that represents 13% of the European population, but 25% of those killed on the road. The programme introduces high school students to the principles of safe driving.

The international “**Safety for All**” programme involves twelve countries. It targets children aged 7 to 11, who are still young enough to modify their behaviour. Since the launch in 2000 of the “Kids on the Road” teaching kit, sent free of charge to teachers in primary schools, 200,000 classes and almost 5 million pupils have been made more aware of road safety. The Safety for All programme includes a website (www.safety-for-all.com) intended for children, parents and teachers and an international competition.

For your information, pictures of the Euro Ncap crash-test will be available and downloadable in high definition on our web site www.media.renault.com from June 26th, 11:00 am.

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