

Autotrader Names 10 Best Cars for Recent College Graduates in 2020

ATLANTA, May 12, 2020 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- The class of 2020 is facing unprecedented times during this global pandemic. While bittersweet, graduating is a tremendous achievement and worth commending students' hard work as they move on to the next phase in their lives. With many seniors preparing for the real world, they might find themselves in need of their own car. Keeping practicality and affordability in mind, the editors at Autotrader have identified the [10 Best Cars for Recent College Graduates in 2020](#).

"If you just graduated from college there is still plenty to celebrate. Unfortunately, grads will be entering one of the toughest job markets in recent memory. Our advice is not to overdo it when it comes to getting a new car," said Brian Moody, executive editor for Autotrader. "To help, this year's list includes several good used car models that should be easy to find for \$10,000 or less. No matter which car you choose, your local dealer will certainly be offering 'social distancing' services like virtual walkarounds, remote or online paperwork and, in some cases, test drives at home."

The experts at Autotrader have a few suggestions for both new and used vehicles for recent college graduates. These rides offer stylish looks, high-tech features, excellent fuel economy, or some combination of all of the above. One thing they all have in common is affordable pricing.

10 Best Cars for Recent College Graduates in 2020¹

2011-2015 Chevrolet Volt

The first-generation Chevrolet Volt was a groundbreaking plug-in hybrid. The Volt has an all-electric range of up to 38 miles which is still pretty impressive today meaning that if you have a place to plug in every day, you can do a lot of your driving around town without burning any gas at all. These can be found for less than \$10,000 making them a strong value in used PHEVs.

2012-2017 FIAT 500

A used FIAT 500 can be a great little city car for college grads with an eye for style. This FIAT is a breeze to drive and park on urban roads thanks to its small footprint. The base engine doesn't have much punch to it, but the available turbocharged engine gives it some more guts while still being good on gas. You can get a lot of style for your money with prices under \$10,000 for used 500 models.

2015-2017 Ford Mustang

Few cars have a better "smiles-per-gallon" factor than the Ford Mustang and early examples of the current version of the iconic pony car can be found for less than \$20,000. The V8-powered GT models are a riot, but the more affordable EcoBoost Mustang models strike a fantastic balance of performance and efficiency by making 300 horsepower and achieving over 30 mpg on the highway.

2016-2018 Honda Civic

The Honda Civic is a car that always comes up in conversations about practical, affordable compact cars for good reasons. It's a segment leader for its safety, reliability, efficiency, and a surprising level of refinement for the price. Used current-generation Civic models can be found pretty easily for less than \$20,000 and it's one of the best values in compact cars today. College grads simply can't go wrong going with a used Honda Civic to drive

them into the next stage of life.

2018-2019 Hyundai Kona

The Hyundai Kona is a cute subcompact crossover with head-turning style and an equally attractive price tag. The Kona just came out in 2018, but they're already easy to find under the \$20,000 mark. Tech-savvy college grads will appreciate the excellent UVO infotainment system which comes standard with Android Auto, Apple CarPlay, and a USB port.

2012-2017 Jeep Wrangler

The Jeep Wrangler has a well-deserved reputation as an off-road icon. Surveys have shown that it's one of the top dream cars in America and it's more within reach than you might think. The current JL generation of the Wrangler is still a little pricey on the used market, but there are many used JK Wrangler models out there for under \$20,000. The Wrangler finally got standard four-wheel drive starting in 2012 which makes that a good model year to start your search.

2021 Kia Seltos

The Kia Seltos is an all-new subcompact crossover that manages to be both cute and rugged. It has an affordable starting MSRP of \$21,990 and even the higher-end trims with the optional turbocharged engine keep the price under the \$30,000 mark. The Seltos has a bigger interior than you might expect for such a small SUV and a level of interior quality that might surprise you at this price point.

2020 Nissan Sentra

The Nissan Sentra is all-new for 2020 and it's a massive improvement over its aging predecessor. It gets a sharp new design inside and out that looks muscular on the outside and upscale on the inside. The Sentra offers a strong value with an affordable starting MSRP of \$19,090 and generous standard technology that includes the Nissan Safety Shield 360 suite of driver assistance tech like automatic emergency braking, blind-spot monitoring, and more.

2010-2015 Toyota Prius

A used Toyota Prius is one of the best financial decisions a college grad can make. If you have student loan debt you want to aggressively pay off, a used, third-generation Prius can help you do that. These can easily be bought for less than \$10,000 and you won't be making a lot of trips to the gas station because this car has a combined fuel economy rating of 50 mpg. The Prius is surprisingly roomy for a compact hatchback and it has the stellar safety and reliability ratings you'd expect from Toyota.

2020 Toyota Yaris Hatchback

The subcompact Toyota Yaris gets a hatchback variant for 2020 and it's an affordable, practical car that would be a great choice as a new car for a college grad. It starts at just \$17,750 and it only has two trim levels making it an easy car to shop for. Upgrading to the XLE trim for an extra \$1,000 gets you LED automatic headlights, rain-sensing wipers, automatic climate control, leatherette-trimmed seats, and a leather-wrapped steering wheel with audio, cruise, and phone controls.

To learn more about the 10 Best Cars for Recent College Graduates in 2020, including photos, vehicle information and available inventory, visit www.autotrader.com/best-cars-recent-college-graduates-281474980013135.

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¹ Models unranked listed by model year and alphabetized by manufacturer

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