



Important legal update

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A Jeep pickup?

It could be back to the future for this retro-styled hauler.

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TEST DRIVE

Scion Hatches New Model

2016 Scion iM

DAN LYONS | text
Special to the Times Union

iM is a new-for-2016 model. The compact, five-door hatchback becomes the fourth member in the Scion lineup, joining the FR-S, tC and iA. It's offered in one, well-equipped trim level, with an MSRP of \$18,460.

A handful of options can be added; the most common of which is the Continuously Variable Transmission (\$ 740). With a sprinkling of small extras (floor mats, wheel locks, rear bumper protector), my test car had an as-delivered price of \$19,594.

While new to us, the iM is already known in other markets, where it's sold under the Toyota banner. The

2016 Scion iM

MSRP: \$18,460 - \$19,594

iM rolls on a front-wheel-drive, Corolla platform. The drivetrain is similarly shared with Corolla, pairing a 1.8L, four-cylinder engine with a six-speed standard transmission.

The upside to the iM's engine is a fuel frugal nature. EPA estimates for the stick shift model are 27 mpg city/36 highway. Automatic-equipped models go one better on both measures. My week behind the wheel was an equal mix of city/highway driving, and the resulting 31.3 mpg is basically right on the EPA combined estimate of 31.

The downside of this motor is that it's short on power. Rated at 137 horsepower and 126 lb. ft. of torque,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

STOW 'N' SHOW. The 2016 Scion iM becomes the fourth in the Scion lineup. With 20.8 cubic feet of stowage space aft of the rear seats (below, left), the hatchback iM offers more cargo capacity than many of its rivals in the segment.



it takes nearly nine seconds to reach 60 mph from a standstill. That puts the Scion near the bottom of its competitive class. In routine driving, it's not an issue. But in any high demand situation (lane merges, RightNow pull-outs, etc.), the driver has to keep in mind the engine's limitations. The manual transmission is helpful, in that leaving the car in lower gears longer helps wring out what power there is to be had, when it's needed.

Though it shares a chassis with the Corolla, the iM has a different rear suspension. The Toyota's torsion

beam setup is replaced by a control arm suspension in the Scion. It's an upgraded arrangement, and the option sheet beckons with TRD options like stiffer springs and sway bars. So equipped (and adding some stickier tires), the car's handling potential would figure to be noticeably raised. But since there are no corresponding engine tweaks offered, there's a ceiling on the potential fun factor.

More to the point, it would be asking the car to be something it was never designed to be. The iM's wheel-

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The iM's wheelhouse is being a frugal, commuter car — not a sport hatch.

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