



**Crewe and Nantwich**  
Advanced Motorists

**IAM**  
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY

## CZECH IT OUT!

The Skoda Octavia Estate MPI SE delivers on all levels, and at £10,995 is a bargain and a half!



**For:** Very generously equipped, well built and one of the biggest estates in its class – all at a bargain price.

**Against:** There is a two inch step in the load bay floor which might irritate when loading or unloading heavy items. The engine is gutsy but some may prefer more pulling power, especially when fully loaded or towing.

**Performance:** The 1.6 Multi-point injection engine had plenty of punch from low revs and there was a pleasant rasp in the lower ratios. At cruising speeds the engine was quiet and refined. Reaching motorway cruising speeds was easy and fairly swift considering the car's size. In terms of the range, the 1.6 sits in the middle, and some people may prefer more power if the car is going to be bought with towing in mind. ★★★★★

**Ride & Handling:** Coming from a family who drive vehicles with sports suspensions and low profile tyres, it was nice to drive a car whose ride was considerably more supple and cossetting, especially on bumpy country lanes. The handling was also good both at high and low speed, and, despite the car's size, manoeuvring was easy thanks to good visibility and light steering. ★★★★★

**Refinement:** The Octavia Estate proved a civilised cruiser on all types of roads, and the 1.6 MPI engine was smooth and quiet, only sounding gruff at high revs. There was some slight wind noise audible around the front windows. The manual 5-speed gearbox was light and accurate, ensuring slick changes. ★★★★★

**Buying & Owning:** At £10,995 on-the-road, the Skoda Octavia MPI represents tremendous value. Fuel economy was good (returning above 40mpg on test), and it holds its value much better than other rivals – you won't need deep pockets to own one of these! ★★★★★

**Quality & Reliability:** Like all Skoda's, the Octavia's fit and finish shames the majority of more expensive cars: all the materials have a premium feel. All the engines and mechanical parts are sourced from the VW Group so should prove trouble-free, and the Octavia Estate performed very well in the 2010 JD Power survey. ★★★★★

**Safety & Security:** Front and side airbags, electronic brake-force distribution and ISOFIX child-seat mounts in the back seats are standard across the range. Curtain airbags and stability control are available as optional extras. An alarm system with interior monitoring and backup horn offers peace of mind. ★★★★★

**Behind the wheel:** Any driver can get comfortable behind the wheel thanks to a multitude of steering adjustments and alterations to the driver's seat. The superb-looking dashboard is logically laid out, and visibility is excellent. Plenty of stowage space in the cabin too. ★★★★★



Space and practicality: The Octavia is probably one of the biggest compact estates on the market (4569mm x 1769mm). Rear accommodation is plentiful, as can be seen from the photo. I am over 6ft tall and had plenty of headroom and legroom – essential for comfortable long journeys. The boot offers a huge 580 litres of space, swallowing my golf clubs with ease, and can extend further to 1620 litres with the rear seats folded down. Unfortunately, the floor of this particular model is bisected by a two-inch-high step.



Equipment: Equipment in the SE-spec 1.6 MPI was plentiful: indeed, there were many more toys as standard than can be found as options for much more expensive marques. Air conditioning, front and rear electric windows, alloy wheels and a CD auto-changer are all standard equipment. I particularly liked the touch-screen 'Bolero' radio console, which more than compensated for the lack of steering wheel mounted controls. ★★★★★

About the dealer: Robert Eardley and Son have built up a reputation in South Cheshire and North Staffordshire for their personal service to customers over 23 years. For the last 15 years, they have been proud to represent Skoda for the sale of both new and used cars together with full service facilities and the supply of Skoda approved parts and accessories. To book a test drive, or to request further information, please visit their website at <http://www.robteardley.skoda.co.uk>, or contact them by phone on 01270 584669

Many thanks to Robert Eardley & Sons for the loan of the car, and for their assistance with compiling this road report. I'd also like to thank my father for proffering his opinions and for his assistance with the photographs.

For more information on Crewe and Nantwich Advanced Motorists, please visit our website at [www.creweyantwicham.org.uk](http://www.creweyantwicham.org.uk), or contact us on 0845 009 5399. For more information on the Institute of Advanced Motorists, please visit [www.iam.org.uk](http://www.iam.org.uk).

