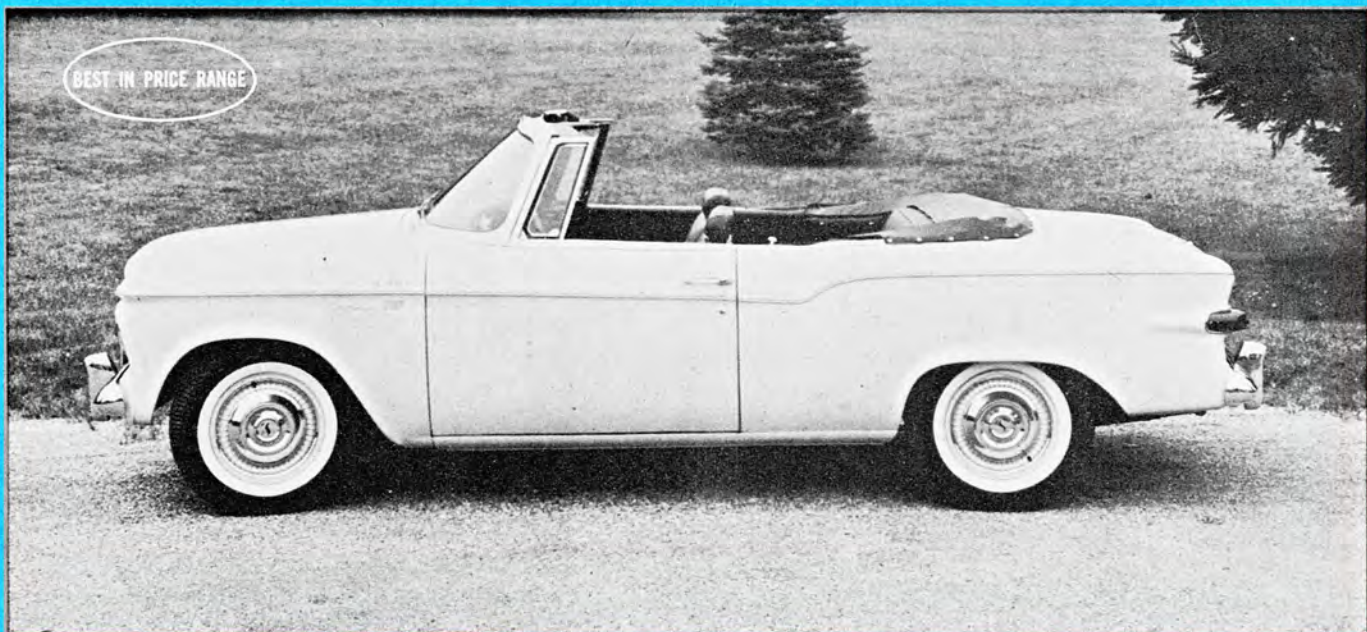


# What Car Should You Buy?

## The Compacts



**STUDEBAKER LARK** now offers a convertible and a 4-door wagon, giving it a uniquely complete line. Style remains the same as last year, cutting depreciation, and mechanical "bugs" have been eliminated. Our tests showed Lark to be a top-notch over-the-road car with admirable performance. It's our selection for best compact car.



Here are specific choices in every price range. These cars are best by test

**C**ARS are fun to drive—but testing and evaluating them is demanding and difficult work. It takes engineering knowledge as well as driving skill. Weighing the advantages and drawbacks of any one car is a big job—and comparing all of those manufactured in the United States is a giant-sized headache.

This year, in particular, the task has been made unusually difficult by the introduction of the compacts and other all-new designs. The potential purchaser with a brand-new 1960 model in mind is fortunate in the sense that he has a wide variety from which to choose—but the size of this array is in itself confusing.

It's obvious that when you invest in a new car, you don't want to depend on guesses, luck or hearsay evidence. In the majority of cases, even the knowledge that

a particular make was good last year, or has a good reputation generally, won't help you—the changes in this year's models have been too sweeping.

We believe, here at CARS, that we've assembled the greatest line-up of test drivers to be found anywhere. We have such top-notch men as Joe H. Wherry, Alex Walordy, Jerry Titus, Jeffries Oldmann, Duncan Maxwell and others handling regular test assignments for us; and we'll add to the list as we find others who meet all of the necessary qualifications.

These are men who know their cars—and on these pages you'll find their choices for 1960. The entire staff of CARS stands behind them. It was not easy to choose the best, but we believe we've done so. At any rate, we stand behind these choices.

**T**HE COMPACTS have taken the country by storm. Certainly, there's wisdom in these sensibly-sized packages for many drivers. The question of which one to buy, however, is doubly hard to answer because each is attractive in a different way.

The Falcon, for instance, would rate highest in economy and ease of maintenance. The Valiant has the edge as peppiest performer, and the Corvaire should have considerable appeal to those who live in colder climates. The Rambler is a very sound design, though it is beginning to show its age slightly. For most drivers, we believe, the Lark is the best bet.



**CORVAIRE'S** unique design will please those who want something different, and its air-cooled engine solves cold-weather problems. Oversteer tendency and lack of luggage space downgrade it a bit.



**RAMBLER AMERICAN** retains its essentially 1955 design, and is not as roomy as it might be. Otherwise, it's a good all-around choice. Several models are offered, and the cheapest American is the lowest-priced U.S. car.

## The Compacts

**FALCON**, Ford's compact entry, offers unexcelled economy and appealingly clean styling. Its 6-cylinder engine is typically Ford, and should make upkeep simple. A good choice if a budget is the decisive factor.



## The Low-Priced Six



**PLYMOUTH** appears only face-lifted on the surface, but has switched to unitized construction, a major improvement. Engine options run from an economical six to a big 310-hp ram-tube V8. Tops in its field, it would be good in any.

**FORD** looks completely new, but mechanical changes are not extensive. Ride and handling have been improved considerably. Summed up, comfort and looks are the selling points here.





**VALIANT** is most expensive to purchase of the compacts, but offers the hottest performance, good handling, and the comfort and roominess of many larger cars. Its DC alternator is a nice item.



**CHEVROLET's** styling has been modified; we like it better. Engine and drive-line options are profuse, and should include something to please most buyers.

**H**ERE'S a significant multiplication—the low-priced three of former years have been doubled! For most buyers, however, Chevrolet, Ford and Plymouth still represent the major field of choice. Except for styling the Dodge Dart is identical to Plymouth in all important ways—and will cost you more. The others in the field all have their partisans—but Plymouth's new unit construction has eliminated many of this always excellent car's faults to give it a definite edge.



**DODGE DART** is a Plymouth under the skin, but many will feel it gives them more prestige. List price is only \$20 more, but you may find bigger discounts on comparable Plymouths.

**CHECKER** introduces the Superba, low-powered but fabulously roomy. We'll have a full test next issue.



**RAMBLER** now offers a 3-seat station wagon. Other changes are minor but generally highly worthwhile.





BEST IN PRICE RANGE

**PONTIAC** continues its wide-track suspension, with numerous refinements to make it an even better road car than it was last year. This is a beautifully-built machine, with all sorts of luxurious touches you'd expect to cost more.

**DODGE** too has gone to unit body-frame construction, and uses it to achieve greater strength and solidity. Ram induction gives lots of punch, and the overall size has actually been decreased.



## The Medium-Priced Field

**BUICK** styling is more conservative than before; underneath, a single muffler replaces four. Engine options are plentiful, but the biggest news is that you can use regular gas in one of them.





**DE SOTO** is another terrific performer. The top-model Adventurer comes close to matching the big 300F in some ways, without being as gaudy.

**MERCURY**, stylewise, is perhaps 1960's most improved car. Frame and suspension have been beefed up, but performance does not match some others.



**AMBASSADOR** by Rambler should not be overlooked. Here too the basic design is unchanged, but the refinements for comfort and convenience are many.



**T**HE GROUP of cars which must be included in the "medium-priced" field is a large one and covers a lot of territory. The actual prices begin at slightly more than \$2600 and run on up to well over \$4000—the most expensive Chrysler model, in fact, will take you into the \$5000 bracket. Nevertheless, for rating purposes the similarities between all of these cars are bigger than the differences.

Generally speaking, sales in this field have dropped a good deal since the beginning of the 1960 model year. This may mean that you can get a bargain on one of these makes if you shop around for discounts. If not, chances are you'll find that these cars don't offer you enough *more* than the lower-priced ones.

If most of your driving is of the high-speed turnpike variety, however, one of these big jobs may be a good investment for you. In that case, our experts feel you'd do best with a Pontiac. Although the lowest-priced Pontiac is also the lowest-priced car in the field, it offers many luxurious touches, not to mention practically unbeatable performance.

The others all have their good points, of course—but check prices and trade-in values carefully before you buy!



**CHRYSLER** prices cover a spread of almost \$2000, so you can choose between a little luxury or a lot. Quietness and roominess are the plus values.

**OLDSMOBILE** also offers a regular-gas engine, but there's plenty of plush for those who want it. There are 17 bodies in the three lines.



**T**HE CARS grouped on this page are all individuals in their own right; no two are alike, or even similar. The Comet, for instance, is bigger than the compacts, but smaller than anything else except Rambler. It will take some time to tell exactly where it should fit in. The Corvette is still the only true sports car made by an American manufacturer; while the Hawk is a sports-type car that can double as a family vehicle. The Thunderbird has prestige and luxury. Our personal favorite here is the Chrysler 300F, but this is admittedly a subjective judgment.



**CHRYSLER 300F** is a spectacular road locomotive with acceleration to spare. Unfortunately, the biggest changes have made the interior fancier but less functional.

## Specials



**STUDEBAKER HAWK**, a real dual-purpose car, has a bigger engine, heavy-duty transmission, better brakes.

**COMET**, Ford's newest, is bigger than Falcon outside, but offers very little more in capacity and power.



**CORVETTE** is little changed, but has myriad engine options, all planned for high-performance addicts.

**THUNDERBIRD** has sunroof and folding hardtop models at higher prices, otherwise is hardly changed at all.





LINCOLN and Continental share a new roof line and Hotchkiss rear suspension for better ride and handling. They cost plenty, but are worth it.

BEST IN PRICE RANGE

## Luxury Cars

ALTHOUGH we know the top-priced cars in each manufacturer's line are out of reach of most of our readers, we tested all of them. Undeniably, they are all fine automobiles. The Lincoln and Lincoln Continental impressed us most. It would be hard to find better cars than these anywhere.



IMPERIAL'S designers concentrated on increased comfort. Strangely, car does not share the unitized construction of other Chryslers.



CADILLAC retains its traditional elegance, with subtle changes to make it even more tasteful. Prices climb to more than \$13,500 at top.



VOLVO wisely continues to offer the older PV544 as well as the new 122S. The former is lighter and has slightly better performance, but many people will prefer the 4-door model's more modern look and greater roominess. Prices (in New York) are \$2342, \$2807 respectively.



## The Imports

SO MANY CARS are now being imported into and sold in the United States that it has been impossible for us to test and rate them all. Obviously, there are excellent foreign automobiles in all price ranges available—the Jaguar and Rover reported on in this issue are examples. There are dozens of other good buys, and we will do our best to publish a complete survey in an early issue.

There is one car, however, that all members of our staff consider spectacularly good in every department. That is the Swedish Volvo. Either model rates as a truly outstanding buy.



# BEST OVERALL BUY



**T**HE LARK also rates first overall among all American cars.

There are many reasons for this choice, but the primary one is that the Lark will do anything and go anywhere the larger cars will, at a lower cost.

Also important is the fact that no other American car offers as wide and sensibly-planned a range of models. Lark truly has a model for every taste and purpose.

The Lark is styled for both today and tomorrow, and engineered for hard, economical use. For 1960, its designers concentrated on eliminating the bugs from the already-good 1959, so Lark will be as trouble-free as any car made. On any basis, this is a tough car to beat. ♦♦



