

The perfect mix: Hyundai Elantra combines popular features from many vehicles

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The [Elantra Touring](#) has all the makings of a hit for [Hyundai](#).

With the best parts of a sedan, wagon and hatchback combined into a great-riding, roomy and attractive vehicle, I've found the next car I want to buy.

Remember those books when you were a kid, in which you could mix and match body parts, (head, torso and feet) to make funny concoctions like a police officer with horse legs and a cowboy hat on? That's what the Touring Elantra is like.

Up front, it looks like a sporty, small hatchback. Inside, in the rear seats, it looks and feels like a midsize sedan, and the cavernous rear cargo area is like what you'd find in a wagon. It's the best of three worlds.

The 2009 Elantra Touring is powered by a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine that produces 138 horsepower and 137 pound-feet of torque. These 138 horses work hard to give the Elantra Touring a get-up-and-go takeoff.

A five-speed manual transmission is standard; a four-speed automatic is optional.

Gas mileage is great in the Touring. I got a whopping 25 miles per gallon during the week I drove the Touring — on the highway and in city traffic.

As good as the drive is in the Touring, the real selling point is inside the cabin. As a hatchback, the Elantra Touring provides a surprising amount of space. According to Hyundai, it can hold a maximum of 65 cubic feet of space, which is twice that of a [Mazda 3](#) and a few more cubic inches than many compact SUVs.

Some standard features include air conditioning, tilt/telescoping steering wheel, power windows and door locks, heated mirrors, remote keyless entry, eight-way adjustable driver's seat with lumbar support, a 172-watt AM/FM/XM audio system with six speakers and fog lights. USB/[iPod](#) auxiliary inputs are also standard.

The Elantra Touring comes fully stocked with antilock disc brakes with brake assist, traction and stability control, front-seat side airbags, side-curtain airbags and front seat active head restraints.

In government crash tests, the Elantra Touring received a perfect five stars for its performance in a frontal collision and four stars in a side collision.

The price tag for the Elantra Touring is a reasonable \$18,500, less than most of its competitors.