

Overall winner

The heaviest class champion leads the way in this year's awards, due to its unmatched power, safety and comfort

Land Rover

Discovery 4 3.0 TDV6 XS

LIST PRICE	£41,740
TARGET PRICE	£39,496
KERBWEIGHT	2583kg
85% MATCH	2196kg
MAX TOWING WEIGHT	3500kg
TOWBALL LIMIT	150kg

*Model pictured is HSE

IT'S NOT SUPPOSED to be easy choosing the best from 40-odd cars. This year, however, the discussion was a short one.

The Land Rover Discovery 4 is an exceptional car. The old model was one of our favourite towcars, but the new Discovery improves upon it in just about every area.

It's hard to say whether the 3.0-litre engine or the superb ride and handling deserve top billing. The new engine has more power

and torque than the old 2.7, and it's more economical, too. Hitch up a two-tonne tourer to the old model, and the engine pulls with determination rather than vigour. Attach the same caravan to the Discovery 4 and it gains speed just as quickly as its German rivals such as the Audi Q7.

It's more composed if you want to change direction in a hurry, too. There's less roll than before and more direct steering. The hint of

vagueness has gone, which gives the driver more confidence to press on.

The lane-change test highlighted the Discovery's limitations in previous years. In 2010, though, the Land Rover was a match for any of its rivals. Even at high speeds the caravan never unsettled the back of the car.

What's really clever is that Land Rover has made these

improvements without ruining the Discovery's ride. Take life at a steady place and the cabin of the Discovery remains one of the most comfortable places on four wheels. Bumps that are felt with a jolt and heard with a thump in stiffly sprung SUVs seem to disappear beneath the Land Rover's tyres.

Along with the lane-change test, the hill start is where many cars came unstuck. Not the Discovery. The electronic brake held the outfit still first time, every time. We know there are those who can't see anything wrong with a conventional handbrake, but the best electronic brakes do make stopping and starting on a steep slope so simple and stress-free. The combination of four-wheel drive and that barrel-chested engine pulled it to the top of the 1-in-6 test hill with ease. In fact, the Discovery made this test seem



There's plenty of passenger space in the second row of seats



All those cameras will be useful off-road or when hitching up



TOWCAR AWARDS

Practical Caravan
WHATCAR?

2010

Overall Winner
Land Rover Discovery
4 3.0 TDV6 XS



Even on the lane-change test, the Discovery breezed through

so easy that some of the judges tried the Land Rover on a 1-in-4 slope. The result was the same.

Most cars picked up far lower scores for practicality than for

towing, a sign that manufacturers really need to think harder about towcar drivers' needs. Land Rover leads the way, though. With its full-size spare, self-levelling

suspension, Trailer Stability Programme, huge boot and many more practical features, the Discovery ticks more boxes than just about any other car.

You'll be just as happy with the Discovery when you are not towing. The same improvements that make it a quicker, more composed towcar are still apparent in normal driving. It's just as pleasant to travel in as before, but now it's considerably more fun.

Our biggest reservation with the Land Rover is its price. Costing more than £40,000, we know that this won't be the towcar for everyone. However, resale values of 45% soften the blow, and there are plenty of other award-winners which are easier on your bank balance.

It's the best car in this year's tests by some margin, and a more than worthy overall champion.

Class winners

Up to 1424kg

Volkswagen Golf 2.0 TDI 140 Match 5dr

LIST PRICE : £19,960

For its performance, stability and comfort, the Golf is our favourite small towcar.

1425-1574kg

Vauxhall Astra 2.0 CDTi (160PS) SRI 5dr

LIST PRICE : £21,485

Great to look at, to drive and to tow with. The engine pulls an 85% match with ease.

1575-1724kg

Skoda Superb Estate 2.0 TDI 170 SE

LIST PRICE : £22,320

Tremendous space for passengers and luggage, and a stable towcar, too.

1725-1899kg

Mazda CX-7 2.2 D Sport Tech

LIST PRICE : £26,995

Tows extremely well and makes many 4x4s look overpriced and under-equipped.



TOWCAR AWARDS 2010

UP TO 1424kg

1425-1574kg

1575-1724kg

1725-1899kg

1900kg & ABOVE