

# Toyota Yaris GR review: A rally car for the road

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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The Yaris, as you know it, has been 'souped-up' and the overall result is a car (or hatch) that got more than its racing stripes, hence GR which technically means Gazoo Racing. This hatch has to be driven fast, and that's exactly what we did recently at two raceways, to give drivers an all-around feel of the hatch, as we threw the revamped Yaris around fast corners and pedal to the metal on the straights, surpassing speeds in excess of 200kmph. The Yaris GR just stuck on the track, giving credence to the GR badge. It was exhilarating and thrilling, to say the least.



## Pure performance

The new GR Yaris is a pure performance car, born from Toyota's title-winning experience in the World Rally Championship (WRC). Forged from success in the heat of competition, it brings motorsport technology and design directly to the world of the road car, true to Toyota Gazoo Racing's ethos of making ever-better cars that are intrinsically rewarding and fun to drive.

Every aspect of the car has a performance focus: an all-new platform and engine, new suspension, lightweight construction, aerodynamic styling and a new GR-Four permanent all-wheel-drive system.

With high power and low weight, it has all the credentials for competition success, and for delivering exhilarating performance as a super-hot hatch for the road.

## Exterior

The GR Yaris has a unique design with a three-door body and a lowered roof, creating an almost coupe look. Frameless doors add to that look while improving aerodynamic performance and reducing weight which is paramount for racing.

At the front, the grille design and spoiler express the car's GR status featuring the signature GR 'functional matrix' design. The grille has been lowered with a wide honeycomb mesh inset. This is flanked by large vertical inlets with circular LED fog lights positioned at the far edges of the bumper.



At the rear, the tapering of the roof and rear pillars and the addition of the deep, high-mounted spoiler, enhance the downforce and aerodynamic performance. The wide track and flaring of the rear wings emphasise the car's wide and low racing look.

## Interior

The interior reflects a driver-oriented design. Easy-to-read analogue instrumentation which features a 4.2-inch colour multi-information display sits in the centre.

The gear shift lever has a high position on the centre console, helping the driver make quick shifts. The GR-Four selector control is placed just forward of the gear shift, for easy changes between Normal, Sport and Track modes. A 'racy' GR-branded, three-spoke steering wheel with red stitching, circular hub and conveniently-placed steering switches maximise driving pleasure.



The interior is finished in black with Smoke Silver trim details around the door handles, centre console, steering wheel and side air vents. The GR Yaris features either premium textured fabric upholstery or a synthetic leather/Alcantara combination - depending on model grade - paired with Alcantara door inserts.

## The powerhouse

Under the hood is an all-new 1.6-litre turbo engine. A three-cylinder turbocharged unit that benefits from motorsport technologies to maximise performance. The engine displaces 1,618cc and produces a maximum output of 198kW at 6500rpm and 360Nm of torque.

Compact and lightweight, the Dohc 12-valve engine features a single-scroll ball-bearing turbo and large Intercooler to maximise performance. Emphasis was placed on the response of the engine package while delivering excellent cooling performance.

Fuel consumption is listed as 7.6 l/100km, which is commendable for a racing hatch. The engine is mated to a six-speed manual transmission, engineered to accommodate high torque levels.

## Specification levels

All models boast keyless entry with push start, LED-headlamps with Daytime Running Lights (DRL) and auto function, LED fog lamps, heated and power-retractable exterior mirrors, plus rain-sensing wipers.

On the inside, an auto-dimming rear-view mirror, dual-zone climate control, Multi-Information Display (MID), 12-volt power outlet and a tilt-and-telescopic adjustable steering column deliver on convenience. A six-speaker touchscreen audio system is standard on all models and features Apple CarPlay/Android Auto functionality for smartphones as well as Bluetooth and USB inputs.

## Safety

A full suite of active and passive safety features includes ABS, EBD, Brake Assist (BA), VSC and Hill Assist Control (HAC). A four-wheel tyre pressure monitor system acts as both a safety and performance feature.

## Model line-up and pricing

- Toyota GR Yaris - R 606,600
- Toyota GR Yaris Rally - R715, 600

## Peace of mind

All GR Yaris models are sold with a nine-services/90,000km service plan (intervals set at 10,000km) and a three-year/100,000km warranty. Customers can also purchase a variety of service and/or warranty add-ons at their local dealership.

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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