

Saab 9-3

RATING	SCORE	Front: 8	Side: 16	Pole: 2
 ADULT OCCUPANT ★★☆☆☆	26			
 PEDESTRIAN ★☆☆☆☆	4	Pre 2002 rating		



Adult occupant protection



Frontal impact driver



Frontal impact passenger



Side impact driver

- GOOD
- ADEQUATE
- MARGINAL
- WEAK
- POOR

Child restraints

18 month old Child	Klippan, rearward facing
3 year old Child	Klippan, rearward facing

Safety equipment

Front seatbelt pretensioners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Front seatbelt load limiters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Driver frontal airbag	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Front passenger frontal airbag	<input type="checkbox"/>
Side body airbags	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Side head airbags	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Driver knee airbag	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pedestrian protection

No image car front available

Car details

Hand of drive	LHD
Tested model	Saab 9-3 2.0-litre
Body type	5 door hatchback
Year of publication	2000
Kerb weight	1400
VIN from which rating applies	No running changes

Comments

The 9-3 performed better than the model it replaced, the 900, that was previously tested by Euro NCAP. But the 9-3's frontal-impact performance was disappointing. The driver's and passenger suffered high chest loads and the passenger cell started to fail along the roof and upper door load paths. The knee-impact areas were very stiff because the knee bolster has been designed to cope with unbelted occupants. The good news, though, is that the child restraints were the best-performing that Euro NCAP has seen. They lost no points in the tests. Similarly, the side impact-performance could not be faulted.

Front impact

The restraint systems put too much load on to the occupants' chests, producing a high risk of severe injury. The displacement of the steering wheel made matters worse for the driver. There is a two-stage knee bolster. The first is designed to safeguard belted drivers; the second should prevent forward movement of an unbelted driver. However, in tests using belted dummies, this proved unforgiving. This bolster is fitted for compliance with US law but in the EU belts are required to be worn.

Side impact

The seat-mounted head and thorax airbag worked very well and there was no loss of points whatsoever. The pole test showed that the head protection device provided a cushion between the head and pole, so making a severe accident survivable.

Child occupant

The child restraints were Saab branded and rear-facing. These used the adult belts for fixing but there were also tethers that attached the rear of the seats to the front seat runners. The protection afforded was excellent and the children's heads were not exposed during the impact. A criticism was that a label on the child restraint warning of the dangers of installing the restraint on the front passenger seat when an airbag is fitted was starting to peel off.

Pedestrian

Unfortunately, pedestrian protection on this car was all but non-existent: only two child head protection sites scored points.