

### User Friendliness of Safety Features Has Large Impact on Quality and Reliability Ratings of New Vehicles, J.D. Power Finds

Daihatsu is Highest Ranked Brand Overall for Second Consecutive Year

**TOKYO: 21 Aug. 2019** – Making new safety features more user-friendly effects overall initial quality, as consumers indicate they are more interested than ever in purchasing vehicles with such features, according to the J.D. Power 2019 Japan Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS), released today.

“As additional safety features and new technologies are increasingly offered on new vehicles, consumers’ expectations and interest in them increases,” said **Atsushi Kawahashi, Senior Director of the Automotive Division at J.D. Power**. “Owner ratings on vehicle quality and reliability increases when new vehicles are equipped with such features and technologies. However, when owners have a problem with usability, ratings considerably decrease and may affect repurchase intentions of the brand. Improving user friendliness will not only increase owners’ satisfaction but will also reinforce their trust in such safety features and new technologies, ultimately improving their perceptions of their new vehicle.”

Following are some of the key findings of the 2019 study:

Overall initial quality in 2019 is on par with 2018, while some brands have fewer problems than in the past.

- **Initial quality in 2019 remains flat compared with 2018:** New-vehicle quality in 2019 averages 66 PP100 (problems per 100 vehicles), one problem fewer than 67 PP100 in 2018. A lower PP100 indicates higher initial vehicle quality performance. There are no significant changes year over year in PP100 for individual problem areas measured in the study.
- **Design-related problems have decreased in the Midsize segment:** The number of problems in this segment has decreased to 75 PP100 in 2019 from 79 PP100 in 2018. Design related-problems, including “difficult to use” or “difficult to understand how to use,” have decreased year over year.
- **Fewer than half of brands have improved in 2019:** Among the 15 brands included in both the 2018 and 2019 studies, six brands have improved in initial quality, while eight brands have worsened.
- **Two Daihatsu models have fewer problems than in the past:** In 2019, Daihatsu Cast and Daihatsu Mira Tocot have 32 PP100 each, the fewest number of problems reported since the Japan IQS was launched in 2014 in current design.

More new vehicles are equipped with safety features and new technologies in response to consumer needs, but vehicle ratings decrease when owners experience a problem.

- **Four safety features are widespread in new vehicles:** More and more vehicles are being equipped with the following four safety features: collision avoidance/alert system; lane departure warning system (lane keep assist system); park assist/backup warning system; and blind-spot monitoring/warning system.
- **Collision avoidance/alert system is the most frequently installed feature on new vehicles:** Among the four above listed safety features, the most frequently installed is the collision avoidance/alert system at 77.5%. There is a notable increase in incidence of lane departure

warning system installation, to 69.9% in 2019 from 48.5% in 2017 (up 21.4 percentage points), followed by park assist/backup warning system at 65.0% (up 14.5 percentage points) and blind-spot monitoring/warning system, 47.9% (up 13.6 percentage points).

- **Consumer desire for safety features increases:** The percentage of consumers who indicate they want a new vehicle to be equipped with the latest safety features, despite an attendant increase in vehicle price, has risen to 69.3% in 2019 from 65.0% in 2017.
- **Ratings for safety features and new technologies decrease when owners experience a problem:** In terms of quality and reliability, owners' rate new vehicles higher when any of the aforementioned safety features are installed than new vehicles without such features. However, when owners experience a problem with the usability of these features, their ratings are lower than for new vehicles without these safety features. The ratings for new vehicles with a collision avoidance/alert system averages 7.75 points (on a 10-point scale), compared with 7.17 points for new vehicles without such a system. However, among owners who have experienced a problem with the operability of their system, ratings decline to 6.54 points, and repurchase intention drops to 75.4%, compared with the industry average of 81.0%.

### Highest-Ranked Brands

**Daihatsu** (58 PP100) ranks highest overall in initial vehicle quality. **Lexus** (60 PP100) ranks highest in the luxury segment.

### Segment-Leading Models<sup>1</sup>

- Mini-Car segment: **Daihatsu Cast** and **Daihatsu Mira Tocoto** rank highest in a tie
- Compact Car segment: **Toyota AQUA**
- Midsize Car segment: **Nissan Leaf**
- Minivan segment: **Honda STEP WGN**

The 2019 Japan Initial Quality Study is based on responses from 21,728 purchasers of new vehicles in the first two to nine months of ownership. The online survey was fielded from May through June 2019. The study, now in its ninth year, measures new-vehicle quality in the first two to nine months of ownership. Vehicle quality is evaluated by owners across 233 problem areas in eight categories: vehicle exterior; driving experience; features/ controls/ displays; audio/ communication/ entertainment/ navigation (ACEN); seats; heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC); vehicle interior; and engine/ transmission. All problems are summarized as the number of reported problems per 100 vehicles (PP100), with lower scores reflecting a higher quality performance.

**J.D. Power** is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services and data and analytics. These capabilities enable J.D. Power to help its clients drive customer satisfaction, growth and profitability. Established in 1968, J.D. Power has offices serving North America, South America, Asia Pacific and Europe.

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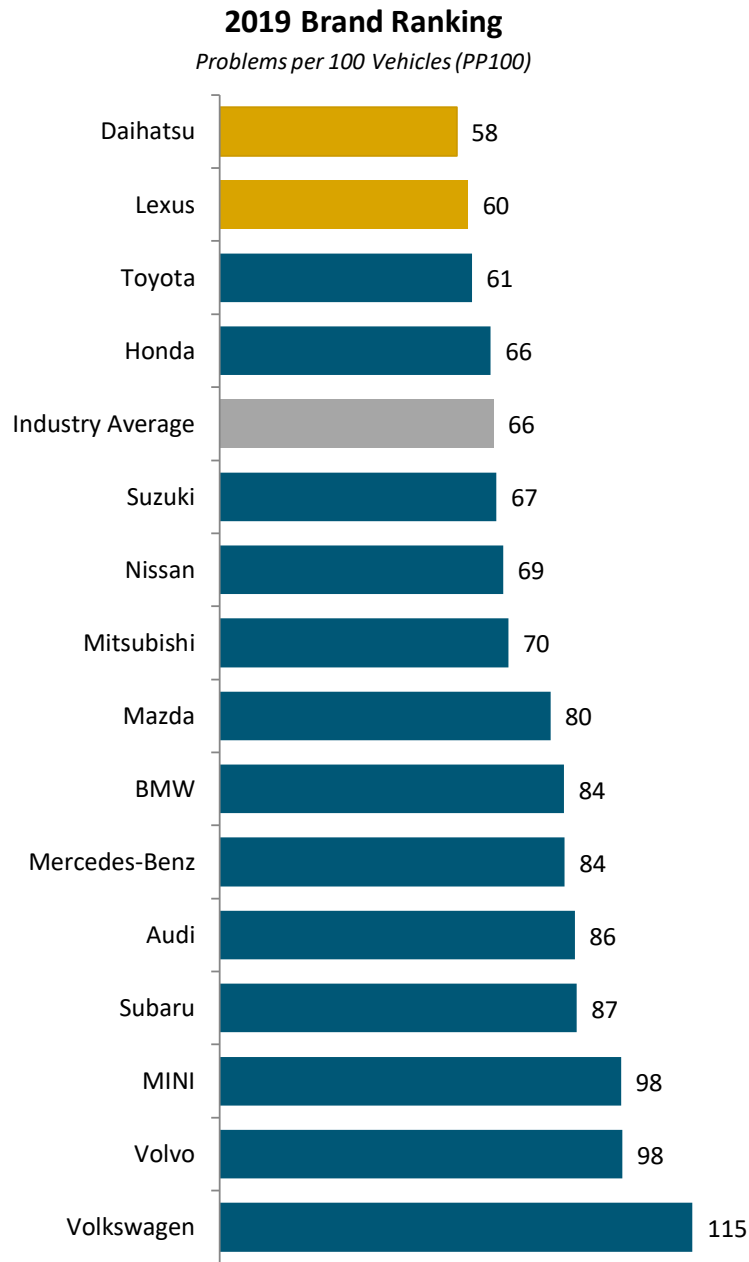
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

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<sup>1</sup> For large segment, no official rankings are published due to an insufficient number of models.

# J.D. Power 2019 Japan Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)



*NOTE: Included in the study, but not ranked due to small sample size is Fiat*

*Source: J.D. Power 2019 Japan Initial Quality Study<sup>SM</sup> (IQS)*

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## Top Three Models per Segment

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### Mini-Car

**Highest Ranked in a Tie: Daihatsu Cast**  
**Highest Ranked in a Tie: Daihatsu Mira Tocot**

Honda N-WGN  
Suzuki Spacia

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### Compact Car

**Highest Ranked: Toyota AQUA**

Toyota Passo  
Daihatsu Thor

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### Midsize Car

**Highest Ranked: Nissan Leaf**

Honda Vezel  
Toyota Corolla

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### Minivan

**Highest Ranked: Honda STEP WGN**

Toyota Esquire  
Honda Freed

*NOTE: For large segment, no official rankings are published due to an insufficient number of models.*

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