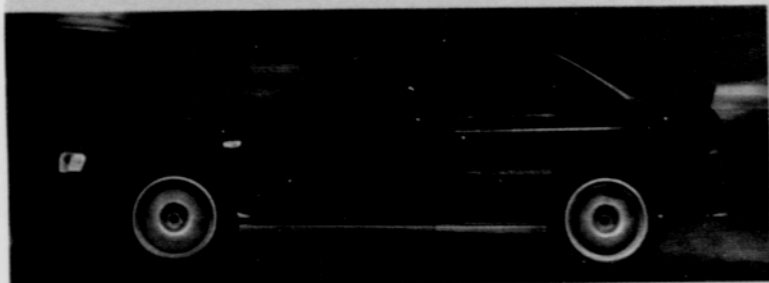




Hyundai Accent GL



Isuzu Rodeo LS



Subaru Impreza 25RS



Suzuki Esteem Wagon



Hyundai Tiburon

# 1998 AUTO REVIEW

## HYUNDAI

The big news in the 1998 line-up for Korea's largest automaker is the Accent, an entry-level small car which competes against the likes of the Toyota Tercel and Geo Metro. Accent gets a new front and rear bumper fascia, taillamps, body-side moldings and restyled wheel covers. Also, the sporty GT model has been renamed the GSi with some added amenities now included as standard equipment. Earlier this year, Hyundai rolled out the sporty Tiburon, a coupe version of its Elantra.

## ISUZU

An improved compact Rodeo debuts in the new model year with a fresh look. Expect a better ride, improved road handling, quieter interior and more powerful engine. This Japanese niche player in the light truck segment will also revive the Amigo sport-utility sometime next year as a 1998 model. The Amigo, part of the automotive landscape from 1989 through 1994, was a Jeep-like two-door sport-utility with a soft-top. The Amigo and the Rodeo will share Isuzu's Lafayette, Ind. production facility, but the Amigo won't begin production until the Rodeo has ramped up satisfactorily.

## KIA

A longer and wider Sephia hits the streets in the new model year, with a Kia-built 1.8-liter engine instead of a Mazda unit. Unlike the 1997 line-up which offered three trim levels, only the RS and the LS versions will be available in 1998. For California, the optional 1.6-liter engine will no longer be offered. Other changes: The Sportage baby sport-utility gets a new, more rounded face and tail as well as a new two-door, soft top model available in the first quarter of '98.

## SUBARU

Finally, a sport-utility vehicle, or something similar to one, is added to the fleet. The all-new Forester wagon shares the same chassis as the Impreza Outback Sport. Subaru has added a new version of the Impreza coupe, the 2.5RS, which packs a 2.5-liter engine instead of the 2.2-liter. Its suspension, brakes, shift linkage, and interior have been tweaked. The sporty Legacy 2.5GT, already available in sedan and wagon form, is now offered in a Limited sedan model.

## SUZUKI

New to the Suzuki fleet is the Esteem Wagon, which was introduced in August as a 1998 model. It shares the Esteem sedans 95-horsepower, SOHC 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine and 97.6-inch wheelbase, but its overall length has been stretched 5.9 inches. There is also plenty of cargo space behind the front passenger seats, up to 61 cubic feet with the rear seats folded.

