

It's just a little thing, but . . .

2020 Subaru Outback Onyx Edition Wagon



One of the pleasant “little things” in the Subaru Outback is the switch for the e-brake, which is near the shift lever on the console. E-brake means emergency brake or electronic brake. To set it, we no longer step down hard on a pedal hidden in the leftmost bowels of the footwell; instead, we press a button. But too many carmakers hide this button in the lower left corner of the dash—they think we expect it to be where the pedal used to be. In fact, it should be just where Subaru put it because that’s where we reach to shut down the car. I recently drove a similar wagon from a European maker that still, annoyingly, has the e-brake switch in the “wrong” place, which got me comparing the two vehicles. Size, comfort, heating & cooling, infotainment, AWD, dynamics, ergonomics, deluxe features (power tailgate and moonroof, outside camera, etc.), even active safety systems . . . other than some horsepower and a few gilded touches, functionally it’s hard to tell them apart, especially in this deluxe Onyx edition. Until we look at the price, that is: At about \$36,000, the Subie costs half as much! —*Silvio Calabi*

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