

2005 Toyota Scion tC

by Gary Dickinson

INTRODUCTION

The tC Sports Coupe is Scion's newest model entry introduced in June 2004. The tC is preceded by Scion's other two production models, the xA and xB which were introduced in 2003. Scion is Toyota's youth strategy. Clearly, the strategy is to target sales to the younger market. Their statistics state that the Gen Y, defined as those born between 1980 and 1994, will account for approximately 25% of the light vehicle market by 2010 and 40% by 2020.

The aim is to provide vehicles appealing to this younger market with a upscale look and feel, but in budget reach without sacrificing functionality or performance. The tC is a mono-spec vehicle, with frontal and seat mounted side, front and rear side curtain airbags. As a result, a customer must only make choices of transmission, color and accessories. Panorama front and rear moon roof, disk brakes, 17- inch alloy wheels and a graphite-color finish come standard. A dealer installed supercharger system is available to boost the output from 160 to 200 HP.

OVERVIEW

I think back many-many-many years ago, in the late 60s, when I was a young driver in my late teens. I was in the market for a new vehicle and wanted to buy a sporty car on a meager budget. Well at the time to go for a sports performance car, like a Pontiac GTO or Mustang GT cost more than I could afford and the insurance alone would cause my bank account to dwindle. So I settled for a VW Beetle with its low sticker price, fair reliability, and reasonable insurance cost.

As the old VW commercial states, looking at the Apollo Lunar Lander on the Moon, "It does not look like much, but it gets you there." At the time the options were very limited. Today young and older drivers have many more choices. I found the tC fits well into the low cost good value market but does not sacrifice such things young drivers want like performance and looks.

TESTED VEHICLE

Vehicle: 2005 Scion tC.

Class: 2-door lift back sports coupe.

Engine: The 2.4 liter four cylinder DOHC 16 Valve VVT-I EFI engine yields 160 HP at 5,700 RPM and 163 lb-ft torque at 4,000 RPM.

Transmission: 5-speed manual.

Suspension: Front-independent McPherson strut, Rear-independent double wishbone.

Brakes: 4-wheel disk ABS with electronic brake distribution.

Base MSRP: \$15,950.

Tested Vehicle MSRP with options: \$18,481 (which includes a destination charge of \$515).



INTERIOR

☺ **Room:** Roomy cabin with plenty of shoulder room, leg room and 1st row headroom.

☺ **1st Row Seats:** Provides good back support but thigh support is limited.

☹ **2nd Row Seats:** Headroom is very limited.

☺ **Ventilation:** Climate control operated seamlessly with well designed and easily accessible controls.

☺ **Storage:** Well designed and ample storage areas in console and door pockets.

☹ **Fit and Finish:** No interior fit or finish problems found.



TEST DRIVE

☺ **Acceleration:** Zero-60 MPH tested at 7.6 seconds, 55-65 MPH passing performance tested at 2.3 seconds.

☹ **Steering:** Noticeable torque steering during rapid acceleration.

☺ **Handling:** Minimal body roll on high speed maneuvers.

☺ **Ride:** Smooth with good road isolation.

☺ **Braking:** Sure and very responsive.

☺ **Transmission:** Tight ratio with accurate control.

☺ **Interior Noise:** Road noise is well muffled.

☺ **Test drive**

mileage: 30.4 MPG (highway driving); EPA estimates 29H/22C.



EXTERIOR

☺ **Engine Service Points:** All fluid service points are located for easy access.

☺ **Body:** No exterior fit or finish problems found. Quality craftsmanship and materials were evident.

VEHICLE CAPACITIES

Seating: 5

Cargo Volume: 12.8 cu. ft.

Passenger Volume:

84.7 cu. ft.

Base Curb Weight:

2,905 lbs.

Fuel Tank: 14.5 gallons.

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