

New cars: What the critics say

Car and Driver

Those ever-tinkering Bavarians in BMW's M division have created a 555-hp monster that flashes to 60 mph in 4.3 seconds. That makes it the fastest SUV we've ever tested, even beating a Porsche Cayenne Turbo by 0.1 second. So we'll overlook the Aztec-like "skyscraper butt," the choppy ride, and a rear seat that can accommodate only two passengers.

Autoweek

Why does this car even exist? BMW's regular X6 "makes little sense," since its coupe-like styling interferes with its cargo-hauling purpose. Cranking up its horsepower,

raising its center of gravity, and stuffing it with performance-enhancing electronics may make the M version "a heckuva lot of fun." But that isn't a compelling reason to buy one.

Automobile

Why did BMW make it? It got tired of watching loyal customers buying Porsche Cayenne Turbos. The X6 M's 4.4-liter twin turbo V8 is probably "the least laggy" in the world. The automatic transmission also has no peer, and no other vehicle in this weight and height category can match the X6 M's handling. Still, the car weighs "as much as a small fishing village."



BMW X6 M
Price: \$89,725

The best ... trail shoes



Riva Leather eVent

This waterproof, breathable shoe, with its "fat Vibram rubber lugs," is built to handle every kind of terrain, from "slippery riverbanks" to "loose gravel."
Price: \$130
Contact: Teva.com
Source: National Geographic Adventure



North Face Dafda Boa

Looking like it came off the "set of *Minority Report*," this sleek shoe has "a great, uniform fit throughout," making it ideal for clambering up boulders.
Price: \$115
Contact: Thenorthface.com
Source: Men's Journal



Shellrock

The motion stabilizer in this shoe's heel keeps your foot on a steady path even when exploring the roughest trails.
Price: \$110
Contact: Keenfootwear.com
Source: Travel + Leisure



New Balance 920

New Balance has used its "trail-running expertise" to create a quick-drying shoe that fits and looks like a running shoe but works like a hiking boot.
Price: \$90
Contact: Newbalance.com
Source: Men's Journal



V-Lite Thunder HPI

At 13.2 ounces, this shoe is unbelievably light. The "thick, weighty upper" of a typical shoe has been replaced by a "plastic exoskeleton" that bolsters the foot.
Price: \$90
Contact: www.Hi-tec.com
Source: National Geographic Adventure

Tip of the week ... How to make small spaces seem big

- **Stick to a single color.** While color can warm a room, using different hues on adjacent walls can "break up a small space." Pick a light shade and create a "uniform color palette" that's easy on the eye.
- **Go big.** Many people believe "small spaces call for small furniture." But cramming rooms with "lots of little things" only makes them feel "cluttered." Incorporate some "carefully chosen oversized pieces" to open up a space and boldly define the room.
- **Keep it simple.** "Fussy curtains" and "frilly bedspreads" can often seem overwhelming. Fancy furnishings and trimmings "take up more visual space than tailored ones." Instead, try to keep things "simple, sleek, and symmetrical."
- **Lighten up.** "Sofas and chairs with long, slim legs and tables with pedestals can free up space." Translucent plastic or glass furniture can help make small areas "light and airy."

Source: The Boston Globe

And for those who have everything ...



Anyone who's ever felt her "high heels slip into the grass" at an outdoor party knows that sexy footwear has its drawbacks. Enter the **SoleMates High Heeler**, a small, discreet clip-on device that increases the surface area of stiletto spikes. The teeny piece of plastic allows you to stay atop "all kinds of soft surfaces" and avoid "ego-bruising alterations" with grates and rough terrain.

Price: \$10
Contact: Thesolemates.com
Source: O magazine

The Internet ... sites for selling homemade crafts

- **Etsy.com** has a "thriving community of sellers" who trade in crafts, craft supplies, and vintage goods. Crafters can create and customize their own online stores and swap "helpful selling and marketing tips" on forums and group pages. Registration for sellers is free, but the site charges 20 cents per item and a commission of 3.5 percent for each item sold.
- **CraftMall.com** charges flat monthly rates based on the number of items offered per seller, making it a good deal "if you have a lot of items to sell." Subscribers can even "create discount programs and buying incentives" for customers.
- **LillysPlace.net** offers tools to create and maintain online craft stores, including newsletter templates, detailed traffic data, and a method for creating coupons. Users pay a \$30 setup fee, then can choose between a \$10 monthly or an \$80 annual fee, regardless of the number of items sold.

Source: Woman's Day