

Success stories behind the Škoda Octavia and Karoq

- › The original Octavia debuted in 1959, establishing the model name
- › Since its modern relaunch in 1996, the Octavia has reached over 7.5 million customers across 60 markets
- › The Octavia remains one of Europe's top ten best-selling cars, winning numerous international awards
- › The Karoq has enjoyed significant success since its market launch in 2017, with over 800,000 units delivered worldwide

Mladá Boleslav, 23 June 2025 – The Škoda Octavia's success story began 66 years ago with the launch of the original model. Since its modern relaunch in 1996, more than 7.5 million Octavia models have been sold across 60 markets, making it Škoda Auto's bestselling series. Its enduring appeal has also earned it widespread acclaim from international automotive media. The Škoda Karoq, introduced in 2017, quickly established itself as another key model for the Czech carmaker. The compact SUV became Škoda's best-selling SUV in 2020 and its second most popular model overall, after the Octavia, with more than 800,000 vehicles delivered worldwide.

The original Octavia: ahead of its time

The first Octavia rolled off the line in spring 1959 as Škoda's eighth post-war model – and its name, derived from the Latin word 'octava', reflects that. It featured a sturdier frame and a range of design and safety updates, including asymmetric headlights and a deformable steering wheel.

Power came from a 1.1-litre four-cylinder engine producing 29.4 kW (40 hp), with the Octavia Super offering a bit more punch thanks to a 1.2-litre engine with 33 kW (45 hp). A Combi estate version was introduced in 1960, featuring a split tailgate – an unusual feature for its time. The Octavia stayed in production until 1964, while the Combi estate version continued until 1971. In total, 284,000 units were built, nearly 55,000 of them Combi models.

Redefining practicality: the rise of the modern Octavia

The first generation of the modern Octavia made its debut in 1996 and quickly became synonymous with the Škoda brand. Its distinctive hatchback design was followed by the spacious Octavia Combi in 1998. The range expanded to include an all-wheel-drive version in 1999 and the first Octavia RS in 2000.

By 2010, nearly 1 million hatchbacks and almost half a million estates had been produced. The second generation built on that success with more than 2.5 million cars sold between 2004 and 2013, thanks to enhanced practicality and new technologies like direct-injection petrol engines and DSG automatic transmissions.

The third generation launched in 2012 and was updated in 2017. It was also chosen by over 2.5 million customers worldwide. The current fourth generation, introduced in 2019 and refreshed in 2024, continues to set benchmarks for space, practicality and value.

With over 7.5 million units sold, the Octavia is the heart of the Škoda brand as well as one of Europe's top ten best-selling cars, leading the compact class across the EU27, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. In Germany, Škoda's largest European market, the Octavia has long been the most popular imported model. It is also trusted by police fleets in Austria, Croatia, France, Italy, Kosovo, the UK, and even as far afield as Morocco. Four years ago, 100 Škoda vehicles were delivered to the Albanian police force; today, the entire Albanian justice system relies on the Octavia for mobility in its daily operations.

Škoda Auto continues to lead in the estate segment, largely thanks to the popularity of the Octavia Combi. In autumn 2025, Škoda Auto will preview a new concept car, offering a first glimpse into the brand's vision for the future of this estate model.

International praise and industry recognition for Škoda's bestsellers

Over the years, the Škoda Octavia and Karoq have both received recognition and awards from automotive journalists and readers worldwide.

The Octavia has repeatedly earned prestigious awards, reflecting its popularity among families, professionals and automotive journalists. Highlights include being named 'Best Family Car' by the Women's World Car of the Year awards in 2020 and 'Family Car of the Year' by the UK's Auto Express in 2021. German magazine Auto Bild recognised the Octavia as the best all-wheel-drive car under €40,000 in 2020 and has named it 'Best Company Car' in its category for five consecutive years. In 2023, the Octavia won 'Best Family Car for Practicality' at the UK's What Car? Awards, and in 2025 German magazine auto motor und sport chose the Octavia as the 'Best Compact Class Import' for the twelfth year running.

The Karoq was introduced in early 2017 and quickly gained recognition for its appealing design, practicality, and driving qualities. In its very first year, the Karoq earned the 'Golden Steering Wheel' award from Germany's Auto Bild as best small SUV, alongside the 'AUTONIS' award for best new compact SUV design from auto motor und sport. For three consecutive years (2017–2019), it took home the 'Auto Trophy' from Auto Zeitung, awarded as the best import SUV under €25,000. In 2018, readers of auto motor und sport

magazine voted it the best compact import SUV and off-road vehicle. The Karoq was also crowned 'Car of the Year' in both the Czech Republic and Greece, and won the title of 'SUV of the Year' in Bulgaria. In the UK, it won at the prestigious 'Fleet News Awards', and from 2019 to 2021 it was repeatedly named 'Company Car of the Year' in the compact SUV and crossover category by the German magazine firmenauto. In 2021, it received further recognition as 'Best Family SUV' from the UK's What Car? magazine.

Following these successes, in November 2021 the Karoq received a significant update, introducing refined styling, sustainable materials, advanced technologies, and efficient EVO engines. These enhancements reinforced the Karoq's strong position, making it Škoda's best-selling SUV in 2020 and the brand's second most popular model after the Octavia, with more than 800,000 vehicles delivered since its launch.

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Škoda Auto

- › has been successfully following the "Next Level – Škoda Strategy 2030" strategy in the new decade;
- › aims to become one of the top three best-selling brands in Europe by the end of the decade with attractive offers in entry-level segments and additional electric models;
- › effectively exploits the potential in important growth markets such as India, North Africa, Vietnam and the ASEAN region;
- › It currently offers customers 12 passenger car model ranges: Fabia, Scala, Octavia, Superb, Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Elroq, Enyaq, Slavia, Kylaq and Kushaq;
- › in 2024, it delivered more than 926,000 vehicles to customers worldwide;
- › has been part of the Volkswagen Group, one of the world's most successful car manufacturers, for more than 30 years;
- › is part of Brand Group CORE, an organisational merger of the Volkswagen Group's volume brands, with the aim of achieving joint growth and significantly increasing the overall efficiency of all five volume brands;
- › As a Volkswagen Group brand, it independently develops and produces components such as MEB battery systems, engines and transmissions for other Group brands;
- › operates three production plants in the Czech Republic; has production capacities in China, Slovakia and India, mostly through group partnerships, as well as in Vietnam and Ukraine in cooperation with a local partner;
- › It employs around 40,000 people worldwide and is active in almost 100 markets.