

ZAGAT

2012/13 U.S. Car Rental Survey

#1 in Each Category

Top Rated for Vehicles:

Hertz

Top Rated for Reliability:

Hertz

Top Rated for Service:

Hertz

Top Rated Overall:

Hertz

Most Popular:

Hertz

Best Value:

National Car Rental

Best for Business Travel:

Hertz

Best for Leisure Travel:

Hertz

Best Counter Staff:

Hertz

Best (Self-Service) Kiosk Experience:

Hertz

Best Loyalty Program:

Hertz

Best Green Options:

Hertz

Best for Airport Rentals:

Hertz

Best for Neighborhood Rentals:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Best Deals and Promotions:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Best Car Pick-Up Experience:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Best Car Return Experience:

Hertz

Best Shuttle Service:

Hertz

Best Website:

Hertz

Vehicles, Reliability, Service rated on a 30-point scale:

0 - 9	poor to fair	Cost:
10 - 15	fair to good	I Inexpensive
16 - 19	good to very good	M Moderate
20 - 25	very good to excellent	E Expensive
26 - 30	extraordinary to perfection	

VEHICLES
RELIABILITY
SERVICE
COST

Advantage

▽ 18 | 20 | 16 | I

“Typically one of the least expensive” if “not necessarily the best” is the consensus on this economy brand; views on its vehicles vary (“clean and new” vs. “average”), ditto service, but “great deals” remain its “main advantage.”

Alamo Rent A Car

21 | 21 | 19 | M

An online check-in system that lets you “pick the car you want”, “outstanding weekly and weekend specials” with discounts for members of its Insiders program and “locations everywhere” cause customers to remember this Alamo; service can be “slow” and some cars show a bit of “wear”, but on the whole, it’s a “reliable” bet.

Avis

23 | 24 | 21 | E

“They do try harder” say fans of this easily recognized red-and-white megachain, citing “helpful attendants”, “new, clean” cars and membership programs that send you to “the front of the class” for a “quick in and out”; while rates may be “expensive”, most agree it’s “consistent” and gives you “what you pay for.”

Budget

20 | 21 | 18 | M

“When you’re really on a budget”, this “no-frills” Avis sibling comes through with a “nice car selection”, “not-bad prices” and “omnipresent locations”; faultfinders cite occasional “long” waits and say that despite the name, it’s “not always” the cheapest, but it’s “worth checking.”

Dollar Rent A Car

18 | 21 | 19 | M

“If you just need a car and are not trying to impress”, this “decent” choice – one of the “cheapest of the national brands” – offers “clean” (some say “bare-bones”) vehicles that “will get you there and back”; service is “friendly enough”, and becoming a Dollar Express member “gets you better treatment.”

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

21 | 23 | 22 | M

“Accommodating” service via an “energetic” staff, “many off-airport locations” and free local pickup (“great when your ride is in the shop”) distinguish this “easy-to-deal-with” outfit offering “quality cars” at “decent prices”; still, some customers cite a “cumbersome” rental process that’s a drawback “when you’re in a hurry.”

Hertz

25 | 25 | 23 | E

The “Cadillac of car-rental companies” – rated No. 1 for Vehicles, Reliability, Service, Popularity and Overall in our Car Rental survey – this industry “gold standard” delivers “high satisfaction” and “low hassle” thanks to “top-notch”, “low-mileage” “clean cars”, a “professional”, “helpful” staff, “convenient locations” and “easy returns”; if “a little more expensive”, most feel it’s “well worth it”, especially if you’re a Gold club member.

National Car Rental

23 | 24 | 22 | M

Rated the No. 1 Bang for the Buck and No. 2 Overall in our Car Rental survey, this “reliable” renter provides “better-than-anticipated” vehicles at “value” prices, but what you really “gotta love” is its Emerald Club loyalty program, which lets you “pick from a lineup of cars” at many locations; “good service” further adds to a mostly “painless”, “satisfying” experience.

Rent-A-Wreck

▽ 10 | 13 | 15 | I

For those who “don’t have an ego problem” and just want “cheap wheels” for “getting from A to B”, this discount renter of used cars fits the bill; the cars are “not wrecks”, just “older” than some with “fewer bells and whistles”, but while fans call it “reliable”, critics claim “you do get what you pay for.”

Thrifty

20 | 20 | 18 | M

“When they say ‘thrifty’ they mean it” say adherents of this “solid, middle-of-the-road” outfit; fans cite “well-maintained” cars and “great customer loyalty programs”, and though some report “slow” service from an “overworked, but nice” staff, if you’re looking for “economical” wheels, this should “meet your needs.”