

Where have all the hatchbacks gone? – Why SA has moved towards compact SUVs

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Hatchbacks have long been the beating heart of the South African car market. Volkswagen, in particular, held a large chunk of the market with models such as the CitiGolf, Polo and Golf.



These vehicles were the gold standard, the benchmark by which all other hatchbacks were measured.

Their success wasn't lost on other luxury brands. BMW entered the fray with the feisty 1 Series, Audi launched the stylish A1 and A3, and Mercedes took a daring stab at the segment with the A-Class (arguably winning hearts, if not outright sales, with the legendary A45 AMG).

Let's be clear – these manufacturers haven't forgotten how to build incredible hatchbacks.

The new A45s AMG is an absolute weapon, the RS3 ticks all the right boxes for a pocket rocket, and the Golf R requires no introduction.

But here's the rub: these fire-breathing performance hatchbacks are rapidly approaching the R1m mark.

Just take a look at the price tags: the A45 S starts at a cool R1.2m, the RS3 lands at a hefty R1.3m, and the Golf R will set you back a minimum of R950k.

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