



2010 Lexus HS 250h  
MSRP: \$34,200  
Estimated MPG: 35 city / 34 highway  
Class: Compact sedan

The [2010 Lexus HS 250h](#) is a unique entry into the hybrid market from the Japanese luxury car company which has already fronted several other larger gasoline / electric vehicles. The HS 250h is the very first compact luxury hybrid, with no competitors visible on the horizon. Lexus' decision to target this heretofore unexplored segment of the car-buying public is an interesting departure for the premium brand.



The HS 250h is powered by a 147 horsepower, 2.4 liter, 4-cylinder gasoline engine that also provides 138 lb-ft of torque. This unit cannot be found in any of the company's other hybrids, and it combines with not one, but two electric generators to provide a total system power of 187 horses. Variable-valve timing and an Atkinson combustion cycle help the somewhat portly (3,682 lbs) vehicle achieve fuel mileage of 35 miles per gallon in the city and 34 miles per gallon on the highway – or quite simply, 35 miles per gallon in combined driving. A continuously-variable automatic transmission, regenerative braking and a number of different operational modes help to make the Lexus a pleasure to drive. The vehicle's computer controls can be set to emphasis economy, performance or even force the vehicle to run for limited distances exclusively on electric power. This latter feature is particularly stealthy, as the HS 250h produces almost no sound with the gasoline engine shut down.

Although it doesn't offer the most sporty feel behind the wheel, (0 to 60 miles per hour takes place in 8.4 seconds), the 2010 Lexus HS 250h is certainly a comfortable cruiser, eating up the miles with ease. Driver and passengers benefit from a raft of features that are typically associated with Lexus' other vehicles: Lane departure warning, blind spot monitoring and a navigation system are all available. The vehicle even makes use of some more exotic materials in its construction, such as seat materials derived from plant matter that form almost a third of the vehicle's interior trim and trappings. The vehicle's trunk is also much larger than it would first suggest, able to deal with real-world cargo concerns that some other small hybrids would have trouble accommodating.