Airbus A220 Vs. Boeing 737 MAX: Which Jet Gives Passengers The Better Ride?





By Josh Lamb — Oct 17, 2026, 6:00 PM EDT

The **Airbus A220** and **Boeing 737 MAX** families boast differing strengths. Where variants of the 737 MAX can cover greater distances with more passengers onboard, smaller A220s offer airlines economical options better suited to lower-demand regional and
But there are crossovers between models w

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Specifically, the **Airbus A220-300** and **Boeing 737 MAX 7** are the most comparable models from within each family. While each overarching line of aircraft targets different segments of the single-aisle space, the largest of the A220s and smallest of the 737 MAXs are closely aligned in the operations they target. As such, passengers could well find themselves with the choice of an A220 or 737 MAX for the same journey.

Airbus A220 Generally Better For Comfort



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Realistically, the A220-300 trumps the 737 MAX 7 in comfort across the board, as is the case across the wider A220 and 737 MAX families. Lower capacities and a more passenger-friendly configuration mean travelers tend to get more space and are less likely to be stuck in a middle seat than on a 737 MAX.

But that is not all. Larger windows on A220 models play a part, and the family is considered among the quietest in production in the commercial aviation industry today. That said, newer 737 MAX interiors make the disparity less clear-cut. Better lighting and larger overhead cabin bins developed in line with "*research and customer feedback to ensure a seamless crew and passenger experience*" have been featured since Boeing introduced its latest range of 737s, for instance.

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Aircraft/Specification	Airbus A220-300	Boeing 737 MAX 7
Max capacity	160 seats	172 seats
Typical capacity (two-class)	125-150 seats	135-160 seats
Range	3,400 nautical miles (6,300 km)	3,800 nautical miles (7,040 km)
Max take-off weight	156,300 lb (70.9 tonnes)	177,000 lb (80.3 tonnes)
Overall length	127 feet (38.7 meters)	116 feet, 8 inches (35.6 meters)
Max fuselage diameter	11 feet, 6 inches (3.5 meters)	12 feet, 4 inches (3.8 meters)
Wingspan	115 feet, 1 inch (35.1 meters)	117 feet, 10 inches (35.9 meters)
Height	38 feet, 8 inches (11.5 meters)	40 feet, 4 inches (12.3 meters)
Engine	Pratt & Whitne PW1500G	

Realistically, how one measures their flight experience varies from passenger to passenger. While securing a window seat may make or break the journey for one person, another may prioritize additional overhead storage space that frees up legroom. But quantifiable metrics can support the A220's position as a more comfortable option than the 737 MAX.

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Seat Width And Configuration Differ Between 737 MAX & A220

Credit: Wikimedia Commons



In particular, seat width is typically greater aboard A220 aircraft than on 737 MAXs for the majority of customers. This is because the former was designed from scratch by **Bombardier** around a 2-3 seating configuration, before **Airbus** bought a majority stake in the program in 2018 and renamed the family the A220. In contrast, rival narrowbodies like the 737 MAX — which collectively represent the latest in a string of updates on the original 737 design — house a 3-3 layout.

The A220's fuselage is actually narrower than the 737 MAX's, at a maximum of 11 feet, 6 inches (3.5 meters) in
inches (3.8 meters). However, the absence
operators more room to play with per seat

800s — which share the same basic dimensions as 737 MAXs — have 17.3-inch-wide (43.9-centimeter-wide) Delta Main seats in comparison.

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But the 2-3 configuration of the A220 also offers another glaring upside for passengers. In Delta's case, its A220-100s fit 109 passengers. As a result, only 19, or 17.4%, of those onboard will be subject to a middle seat at a time. That compares to 48, or 30%, of the maximum 160 travelers flying on one of the airline's 737s at once. While that may not directly translate to comfort in terms of the physical seat, it does leave a greater proportion not having to share an armrest on each side and with direct access to the aisle to stand up and move around the cabin, or sitting next to a window.

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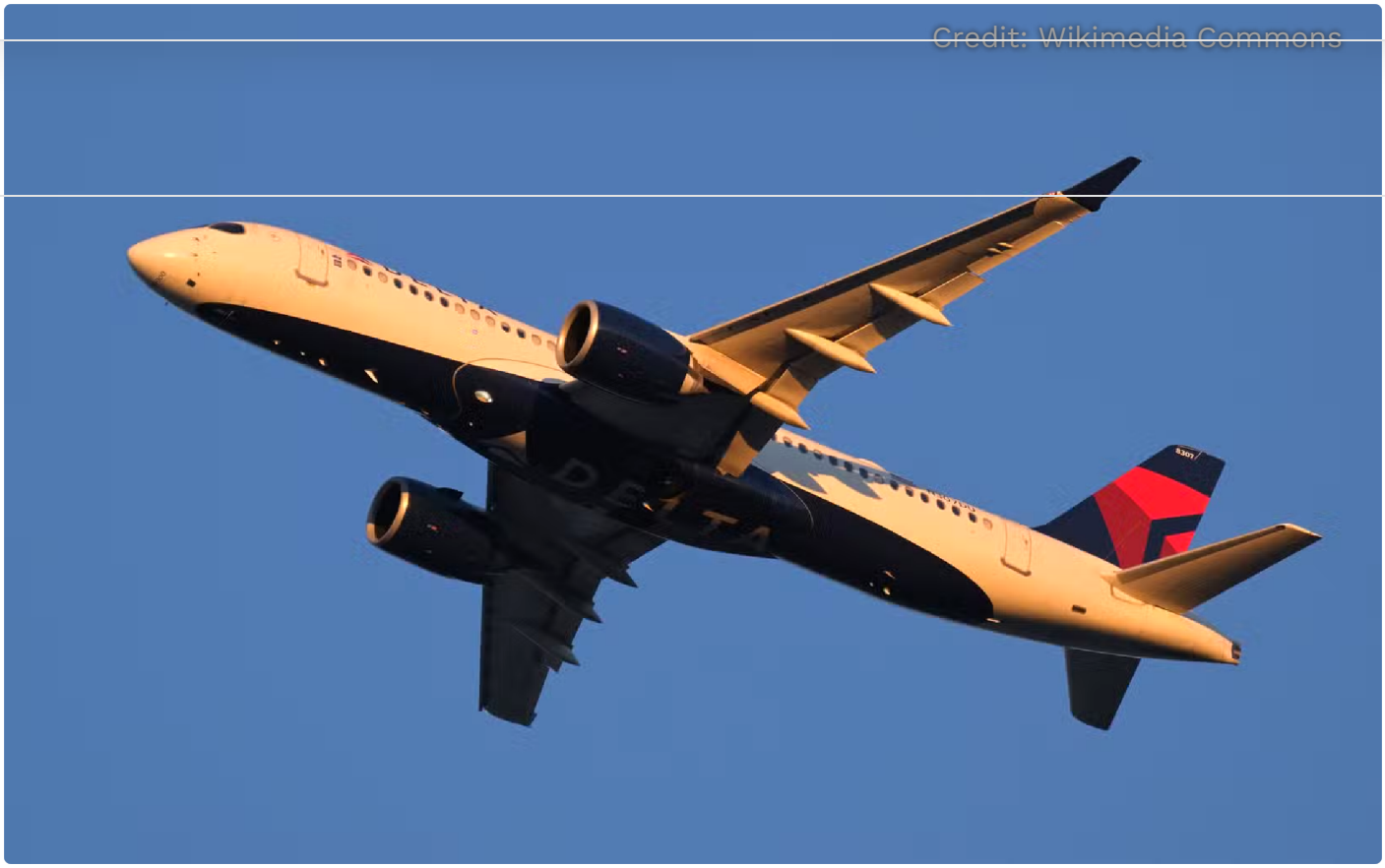
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Airbus A220 Also Quieter With Larger Windows

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than the 737 MAX's — which measure ten by 14 inches (25.4 by 35.6 centimeters) — they even trump the likes of the **Boeing 777**'s on size.

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This feeds through to several benefits for those in the cabin."*Positioned at [eye level], passengers do not need to bend the neck to see through the window,*" as Airbus writes. "*There are one to two windows per row, which allows a large amount of natural light inside the cabin, which enhances the impression of space.*" Add in low noise levels, and the A220's comfort strengths stack up even further.

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According to Airbus documents, the A220 family's noise footprint is up to 50% smaller than previous-generation aircraft. Versus International Civil Aviation Organization standards brought in
effective perceived noise decibels. That is s
difference to hear, according to aviation cor

E2 and, needless to say, less noise in-flight aids measurable benefits for passengers — both physiological and psychological.

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Boeing 737 MAX Still A Step Up Against Predecessors



That said, the 737 MAX range isn't necessarily filled with loud, uncomfortable aircraft. Rather, the smaller A220 just trumps the most modern and improved line of jets in the long-running 737 family. The 737 MAX traces its roots to the original 737 design, which debuted in the mid-1960s.

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In the context of its predecessors, the 737 MAX is therefore far more efficient, quieter, and offers passengers greater comfort through a fresh cabin design. Per the US plane maker, higher-bypass ratio LEAP-1B engines with their chevron nacelle design contribute to a 50% reduction in noise footprint between the **Boeing 737 MAX 8** and the 737-800, for example. In terms of fuel burn, the 737 MAX series is said to have improved by 20%. Customizable lighting, bigger windows, and the aforementioned updated overhead storage bins are then among other measures designed to improve cabins against older models.

The caveat is that Boeing was largely bound by the limitations of its original design when creating the 737 MAX. Namely, that includes the fundamental dimensions of earlier models. For Airbus, the A220 alternatively represents a clean-sheet design, where larger windows and seating layouts were among a range of features that could be very deliberately incorporated from the program's inception.

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However, in creating an aircraft from scratch, Bombardier set out to fill a relatively niche gap between the regional and mainstream narrowbody markets. Boeing's 737 MAX series has instead been developed with a far wider variety of purposes in mind, be it low
for the 737 MAX 7 or trunk routes where **Bo**

MAX 9 variants, with the 737 MAX 7 awaiting its first delivery (as of the time of writing in mid-October) after receiving certification just this year and the **Boeing 737 MAX 10** yet to be approved. All told, **Boeing** data shows 2,440 models of the 737 MAX have been delivered to date. Figures from Airbus place A220 family deliveries at 550, with 544 of these said to be in service as of today.

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Airbus A220 and Boeing 737 MAX deliveries, from respective manufacturer data:

Model	Deliveries
Airbus A220	550*
Boeing 737 MAX 8	1,841
Boeing 737 MAX 8-200	251
Boeing 737 MAX 9	

So, while there is no doubt about crossover between the smallest and largest of the two families, A220 flight availability is lower than that of flights served by 737 MAX variants. Naturally, though, the specific airline plays a part.

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Airline Key In Airbus A220 Flight Availability



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Several airlines solely utilize versions of the 737 to streamline operations. Notably, **Ryanair** and **Southwest Airlines** are among the biggest names to rely heavily on the Boeing narrowbodies, with the 737 MAX series aimed at replacing older models with these over time. Similarly, a few carriers use the A220 only for lower-capacity, but still varied, routes.

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US-based low-cost carrier **Breeze Airways** earlier this year joined Latvia's **airBaltic** as the only other airline to operate an all-A220 fleet. You can pick an airline to fly on either an A220 or 737, but it's easier said than done. As for which aircraft type ultimately offers the best ride, the airline arguably plays just as big a role.

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