



# AAA CENTER FOR DRIVING SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY



## 2017 CHEVROLET EQUINOX LT



### INFOTAINMENT SYSTEM\* DEMAND RATING

Moderate Demand



The Chevrolet Equinox LT MyLink® infotainment system has a moderate demand level, scoring among the least distracting of the vehicles evaluated. Participants in the on-road study used the system with little effort once they received adequate training.

### Standard and Optional Features in the 2017 Chevrolet Equinox

○ Optional

● Standard

	L	LS	LT	Premier
Android Auto				
Apple CarPlay				
Mobile App Support			○	○
Text Messaging			●	●
Navigation			○	○
Touch Screen	●	●	●	●
Gesture Control				
Heads-Up Display				
Voice Commands	●	●	●	●
Console Control				

### ABOUT THE STUDY

Researchers evaluated 30 new 2017 vehicles' infotainment systems\* to measure overall demand\*\* placed on a driver when using voice command, touch screen and other interactive technologies to make a call, send a text message, tune the radio or program navigation, all while driving down the road.

### STRENGTHS

- Tasks involving calling and dialing can be completed in a short amount of time.
- Audio entertainment functions had overall moderate demand on drivers.

### WEAKNESSES

- Touch screen placed outside of comfortable reach could result in additional visual (eyes-off-road) and cognitive (mental) distraction when in use.
- The cluttered touch screens' small buttons combination can make it difficult to accurately and quickly make selections within the infotainment menu.

\* Infotainment System: Vehicle system that combines entertainment and information content

\*\*Overall demand measured: visual (eyes-off road), cognitive (mental) and time-on-task

# VEHICLE OVERVIEW: CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS



VOICE COMMANDS



STEERING WHEEL COMMANDS



INSTRUMENT CLUSTER



CENTER STACK

# INFOTAINMENT SYSTEM

The MyLink® Infotainment System offers the following features:

## CALLING AND DIALING



The Equinox's MyLink system allows drivers to access phone functions using voice commands and the center stack. Drivers can connect to a previously paired phone at any time—car in motion or not. However, a new phone can only be paired using either voice commands or the touch screen while the vehicle is not in motion. Once a phone is paired, drivers can access calling and dialing features through voice commands, the touch screen and center stack buttons, and with some limited functioning, steering wheel buttons.

The on-road study found the Equinox's calling and dialing capabilities were easy to use for drivers. Drivers were able to successfully place calls using the voice system with moderate visual (eyes-off-road) and cognitive (mental) demands in a short amount of time. However, use of the touch screen to place calls led to high visual (eyes-off-road) and cognitive (mental) demand. Researchers<sup>^</sup> also found the touch screen is placed too far from the driver to reach comfortably, leading to unnecessary manual distraction.

## TEXT MESSAGING



While text messages can be sent via the touch screen, the voice command system is capable of reading aloud messages stored in the user's inbox. Drivers can reply to a message in their inbox using the touch screen with 15 predefined phrases. However, while the vehicle is in motion, only 12 of the 15 phrases are accessible.

On-road data found text messaging functions generated overall high demand on drivers. While the touch screen's text messaging menu has a simple structure that is easy to navigate, messages are presented in a compact inbox interface. When drivers choose to listen to a message, the system first reads out additional information, such as the sender's phone number (not contact name, as is typical), as well as date and time received, which leads to lengthy interaction times.

## AUDIO ENTERTAINMENT



The audio entertainment system includes: AM, FM and XM radio; USB; Bluetooth; auxiliary radio; and integrated music applications from a paired phone. If installed on the phone, third-party music applications such as Pandora and Stitcher are also accessible. Drivers can access audio using steering wheel buttons, voice commands and the center stack. The touch screen audio menu presents each audio source as a separate icon. Drivers can change the source within any audio menu by pressing the labeled 'Source' button and then selecting a new source from the bar that then appears along the bottom of the screen.

The on-road study revealed the Equinox's audio entertainment system had overall moderate demand. However, touch screen interactions were more demanding than using voice commands. The center stack physical buttons are large and give drivers easy access to audio, but using the touch screen to adjust audio generated very high cognitive and visual demand.

When drivers used the voice system to adjust audio, they were able to do so quickly and keep their eyes on the forward roadway. Despite having to use rigid commands, researchers<sup>^</sup> found the system recognized commands easily.

<sup>^</sup> Researchers with expertise about how humans interact with technology evaluated the usability of the infotainment system in stationary vehicles.

## VEHICLE CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS

### VOICE COMMANDS



Pressing the Voice Recognition button on the steering wheel lets drivers use voice commands to access phone and audio functions with limited text messaging functions.

### INSTRUMENT CLUSTER



The instrument cluster positioned behind the steering wheel has a 3.5-inch LCD display, surrounded by familiar analog gauges and dials. The LCD display is accessible via four buttons in the center stack—an uncommon feature among other vehicles on the market.

### STEERING WHEEL CONTROLS



The steering wheel contains seven buttons and two switches that provide access to phone functions, audio entertainment, the voice command system and cruise control.

### CENTER STACK



A 7 inch touch screen in the center stack gives access to phone calling and dialing, audio entertainment, text messaging, vehicle settings and a variety of system applications. It presents each function as a separate application, laid out over multiple pages that drivers can navigate. The panel below the touch screen contains 32 physical buttons and four dials that give access to radio presets, touch screen functions, and the Equinox's climate control. It also includes four buttons that control the instrument cluster display.

## VEHICLE SALES SUMMARY

The 2017 Chevrolet Equinox is the 15th best-selling vehicle in the United States, with 242,195 vehicles sold during 2016<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Automotive News at [autonews.com](http://autonews.com); Wall Street Journal at [wsj.com](http://wsj.com) - data updated to 2/25/2017.