

Peugeot 205 1.8D Turbo



THIS LATEST ADDITION TO THE POPULAR 205 range sets its sight on making diesel motoring appealing to keen motorists. It has distinct 205GTi overtones to its sporty appearance both inside and out; a tachometer and hip-hugging sports seats are shared with the XS and GT petrol models. Outside, this Turbo-diesel has a front air dam with integral driving lamps, while a set of steel wheels with no hub caps completes the image of a car that's more turbo than diesel.

However, it's quite expensive – and if you add the cost of our test car's optional power steering, sunroof and electric front windows, it's *very* expensive, costing £2500 more than the cheapest GL version with five doors and a diesel engine.

Of course, the 205GLD doesn't have the turbo boost to its performance, but as our consumption tests revealed, neither does it possess this turbo-diesel's disappointing, increased thirst. Our comparison table also shows larger, roomier rivals as well, because they are more price-competitive than you might first think.

The cheaper (and less convenient) Nova looks a much more successful contender in the bid to get decent acceleration, yet retain the all-important mpg figures that are still the *raison d'être* for going diesel, in most people's minds.

This 205 certainly delivers when it comes to performance – it looks distinctly lively, even in comparison with petrol rivals. The engine's turbo boost gives an impressive surge of acceleration between 2000 and 4500rpm, but it's important to learn to drive it through the gears to keep the power flowing over this narrow rev range.

It will rev, in fact, to a governed 4800rpm, but our tables show the best change-up speeds for overtaking. It does display an intolerance in low-speed motoring, however, that means coarse, vibrant running below 1500rpm – that represents 30mph in fourth gear, 40mph in top.

Likewise, the ride on H-rated tyres feels rather stiff-limbed and ill at ease in gentler motoring. Yet when you stretch its legs and head for the open road,

the car comes into its own and proves both refined and entertaining. It grips the road impressively and feels well screwed down in the suspension department.

It has a slick gearshift and a smooth clutch, but there's some 'shunt' as the throttle is opened and closed. Diesel rattle afflicts the warm-up phase, but after that, it's particularly quiet at dual-carriageway speeds and is enjoyable to drive briskly.

There's one further proviso, however – Peugeot has tuned the optional power-assisted steering to offer little help in open-road motoring. The Automatic 205 we tried last summer had much lighter response; we think Peugeot has backed off the assistance too much, so that, unless you have a strong pair of arms, the car's responsiveness and agility are actually undermined. Paying nearly £400 and then having to work this hard at the helm seems to be a dubious advantage even to the fit and well, even if it may be motivated by the desire to give some 'feel of the road' at the helm.

The turbo badly dents the 205's fuel economy –

both our carefully researched test results and the 'official' ones in the catalogue confirm that the lower-powered GLD and GRD are much less thirsty; even the 309, with the same state of tune, is at a small advantage. Some turbo-diesels, like the Montego and Golf, prove just as economical as their non-turboed counterparts, whereas this one and the Ford Sierra both reveal a serious mpg deficiency. An intercooler is probably the answer, but in the 205's case it would be difficult to find room for it!

VERDICT

It seems a good idea to install a usefully powerful diesel in a small hatchback and go for the concept that you don't have to be profligate to have fun in a fairly-hot hatchback. Unfortunately, theory doesn't translate into practice – this 205 is costly to buy, not particularly frugal on fuel and displays too many idiosyncracies on the road to convince us that it's worth it.

HOW IT COMPARES	Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Max speed (mph)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel overall (mpg)	Brakes best stop (%g/lb)	Maximum legroom – front (in)	Typical leg/kneeroom – rear (in)	Steering turns/circle (ft)	Overall length (in)
Peugeot 205 1.8D Turbo	1769/78	104	13.3	25.1/17.3	48	85/37	41	36 ¹ / ₂ /27	3.0/33 (p)	146
VW Golf 1.6 Turbo-diesel	1588/80	102	12.7	26.0/19.0	54	95/55	42	38/28	3.7/33 ³ / ₄	157
Vauxhall Nova 1.5TD	1488/67	100	13.8	28.5/19.2	58 ¹ / ₂	95/55	40 ¹ / ₂	37 ¹ / ₂ /25 ³ / ₄	3.7/31	143 ³ / ₄
Fiat Tipo 1.9 Turbo-diesel	1929/92	109	11.9	36.9/16.2	45 ¹ / ₂	87/50	42 ¹ / ₄	40/29	3.0/35 ¹ / ₄ (p)	156
Peugeot 205GRD	1769/60	92	18.8	33.6/23.7	55 ¹ / ₂	82/37	41	36 ¹ / ₂ /27	3.7/33	146

(p) = power assisted

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

ENGINE

Type and size front-mounted, transverse 4 in line; water-cooled. 80mm bore x 88mm stroke = 1769cc. Iron block and alloy head; 5 main bearings

Compression ratio 22.0:1

Valve gear belt-driven overhead camshaft actuating two valves per cylinder via bucket tappets with shim adjusters

Fuel system indirect injection diesel, with distributor-type mechanical injection pump and turbocharger – no intercooler. 50-litre (11-gallon) tank with low-level warning lamp. Fuel required: diesel

Ignition system compression ignition but with electrical pre-heating for cold starting

Maximum power (DIN-net) 78bhp at 4300rpm

Maximum torque (DIN-net) 116 lb ft at 2100rpm

TRANSMISSION

Clutch diaphragm spring, dry plate; cable-operated.

Pedal load/travel: 27 lb/5¹/₂in

Gearbox 5 speed (all synchromesh) and reverse.

Ratios: first 3.45, second 1.85, third 1.28, fourth 0.97, top 0.76 and reverse 3.33:1

Final drive 3.47:1, to front wheels

Mph per 1000rpm 24.4 in top, 19.1 in 4th

Rpm at 70mph 2870 in top gear

CHASSIS

Suspension front: independent by MacPherson

dampers/struts with coil springs and an anti-roll bar.

Rear: independent by trailing arms with transverse torsion bars and an anti-roll bar. Dampers: telescopic all round

Steering unassisted rack and pinion standard (power assistance optional extra) with 3.7 turns between full locks (3 turns with PAS). Turning circles average 33¹/₄ft between kerbs, with 63ft (46¹/₂ft with PAS) for one turn of the wheel

Wheels 5in steel with 165/70R 13H tyres (Michelin MXV on test car)

Brakes 9³/₄in plain discs front, 7in drums rear with engine-driven servo pump

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration

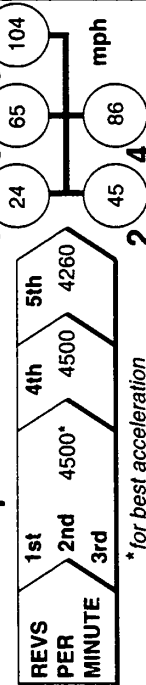
time in seconds

STANDING START	0-30mph	3.9	0-60mph	12.2	1/4 mile	18.9
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THROUGH THE GEARS	30	40	50	60	70
	2.0	4.9	8.3	13.3	17.3
	7.5	13.7	19.0	25.1	
	4.5	8.3	12.4		

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES	16.4/9.9	11.8/8.1	13.7/8.3	11.7/9.3	

Maximum speeds



FUEL CONSUMPTION

Fuel grade for tests: Diesel

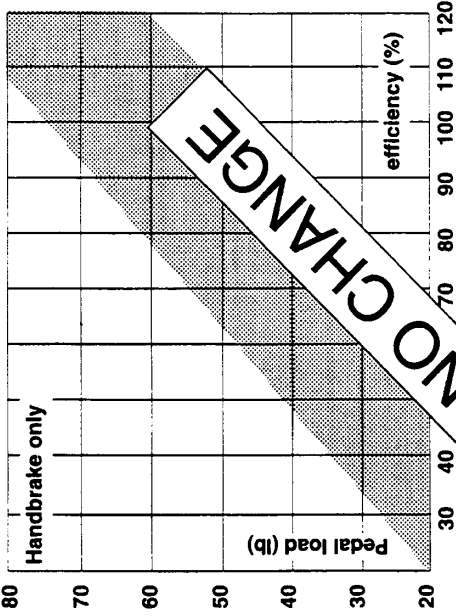
Normal range	mpg
Hard driving, heavy traffic	34
Short journeys in the suburbs	44
Motorway - 70mph cruising	43
Brisk driving, mixed roads	50
Gentle driving - rural roads	59
Typical mpg overall	48
Realistic tank range*	44 litres/465 miles

* based on gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience

SAFETY

Brakes

How pedal loads affect braking



Braking efficiency shows a percentage of gravity (ie 100% = 1.0g). Ideally the braking curve should fall within the shaded zone of this graph. If it's above, the brakes are too heavy; if it's below, they are too light. When the curve becomes broken, the wheels are skidding.

Fade test

How hard use or water affects braking. (Ideal brakes show no change.)

Pedal load needed for 75% stop (lb)

At start of test

After constant

After severe

After watersplash

Number of stops to recover

Safety check list

Steering true 'feel' of the road?

Brakes powerful?

Brake resistant?

front - effective?

convenient?

rears - effective?

convenient?

Head restraints front - effective?

rear - effective?

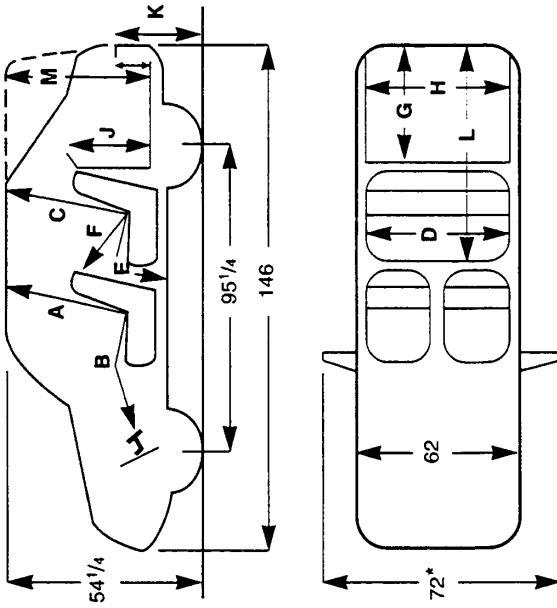
Interior thoroughly padded?

Fuel shielded filler?

protected tank?

MEASUREMENTS

Dimensions (inches)



* 67 1/2 with mirrors part-folded

Kerb weight in lb (full of fuel)

2060

Inside (inches)

A Front headroom

36 1/2/38†

B Front legroom (min - max)

34-41 1/4

C Rear headroom

34

D Back seat width (between armrests)

47 1/2

E Typical rear legroom

37

F Typical rear kneeroom

28 1/2

M Load height (to tailgate hinge)

31 3/4

* 'Typical' represents the mean measurement behind the driver's seat set at 39in legroom and the passenger's seat set at 41in with/without sunroof