

Peugeot 806

Featuring 2.0SR 7-Seater



ARE MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLES, MPVs, people carriers – call them what you will – the latest development in family transportation or just a passing gimmick?

The main players are certainly in earnest – this Peugeot is a collaborative effort involving Fiat and Citroën with their own version of the 806 varying only slightly in price and equipment. All use two Peugeot engines – the 405/Xantia's turbo-diesel, or this two-litre petrol version offering 123bhp. At present, there's no bigger V6, like rivals offer.

This results in unexceptional acceleration and fuel economy, by estate car standards – aerodynamics and weight penalties count against the 806. This two litre also sounds busy around 60mph – it actually improves again by 70; it's an affable if leisurely higher-gear performer when going gently, waffling along below 30mph in fifth if necessary.

It's a similar story around the bends; suspension rock and roll engenders the feeling that the 806 prefers not to be rushed. This is amplified by steering

that still manages some sloppy free movement, despite relatively high gearing.

Braking is quite powerful, with a sensibly progressive servo that lessens the need for the £700 ABS option fitted on our test car; until you do serious downhill work, that is, when fade can double the pedal pressure. The handbrake is quite low-set on the right – even when it's not performing its disappearing trick – to enable the seat to swivel in the reverse direction.

Citroën devotees will take the unusual gear lever, sprouting from the fascia, in their stride – they've seen it all before. This cable shift becomes vague and ponderous into the fifth/reverse gear plane, with a cul-de-sac beyond the top slot. There's nowhere to rest your left foot either, beside the moderately weighted clutch.

Apart from this, the pedal layout is an improvement on the Espace's and all the major controls are well related; most tell-tales are hard to see, though. The moderately soft seat has effective lumbar adjustment and reasonably good legroom – you tend to use less in this more upright driving stance. Of

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PERFORMANCE

Acceleration time in seconds

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		2.4	5.1	8.9	13.4
IN 5TH GEAR		8.1	16.1	24.6	35.1
IN 4TH GEAR		5.3	10.7	16.8	23.4

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		16.2/11.0		16.5/11.5	
			16.1/10.7		19.0/12.7

Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
		6000*		6000*	4950	
						mph
						28 76 108
						52 103

*for best acceleration

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Worst/best mpg	23/35
Typical mpg overall	30
Realistic tank range*	76 litres/500 miles

*based on fuel gauge, warning lamp and filling station experience

SAFETY AND SECURITY FEATURES

Assessed on their effectiveness and convenience
(the more black blobs the better)

Seatbelts

front ●●●○○ rear ●●●○○

Head restraints

front ●●●●○ rear ●●●○○

Interior

safety padding ●●●○○

driver's airbag? ☒

other airbags? ☒

side impact protection ●●○○○

Fuel anti-spillage

☒ standard on test car

Door locking

central locking? ☒

remote control? ☒

auto window closure? ☒

deadlocks? ☒

Luggage

secure from interior/hidden from view ●○○○○

Alarm

engine immobilised? ☒

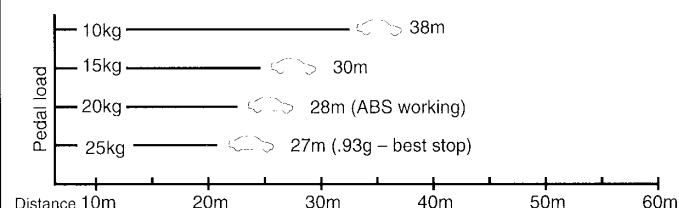
☐ factory fitted option ☒ not available

BRAKES

Pedal feel ●●○○○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●●○○ Handbrake ●●○○○

Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with ABS option)

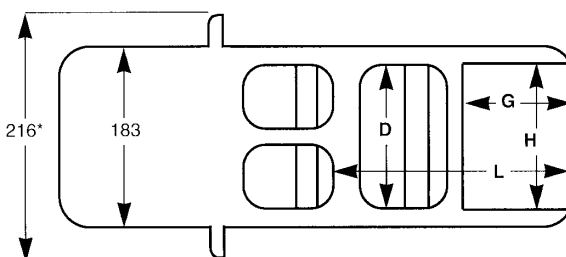
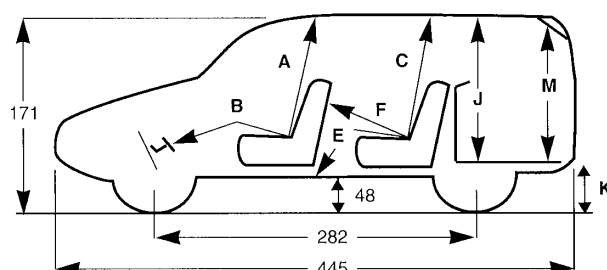
(A good-to-average best stop is about 28m at 20-30kg pedal load)



Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop:
8kg at start of test, 17kg at end of test. (Ideal brakes show no change)

DIMENSIONS

Centimetres



*196 with mirrors folded

Inside (cm) – figures in brackets are for third row of seats, set fully back

A Front headroom	94-96	G Load length † (third row out)	124/112
B Front legroom (min - max)	83-102	H Load floor width (at floor/waist level)	117/140
C Headroom	94 (89)	J Maximum load height	112
D Width between armrests	160 (137)	K Sill height (inner/outer)	0/56
E Typical legroom*†	88/97 (90/81)	L Load length (third row in use/tilted forwards)	200 (41/66)
F Typical kneeroom*†	66/78 (71/65)	M Load height (to tailgate hinge)	103

† middle seats set fully forward/fully back

*"Typical" represents the mean measurement behind the driver's seat set at 100cm legroom and the passenger's seat set at 105cm

course, this "sit-tall" position seems to convey an important psychological assurance to many drivers – being able to literally look down on others from a secure perch.

In fact, forward vision is something of a problem, though a sensible wiper sweep and interior beam adjusters for the splendid headlamps help. Rear vision for accurate reversing is good, especially if the middle headrest is removed and this seat is unoccupied. The rear wash/wipe arrangements are well thought out.

The portable nature of the 806's seats, with a flat floor throughout, opens up picnic and conference possibilities that surpass those of any traditional estate car.

Also, having seven proper seats puts this Peugeot at a distinct advantage over most estate cars or off-landers with occasional rear seats. However, the 806 still suffers from virtually non-existent luggage room at such times.

As a five-seater, cargo carrying is still compromised by the fact that the rear pair only tip forward out of the way when the middle row are set in their forward floor pegs, as well – significantly compromising leg-stretching space and thigh support. Having no fore and aft slides in the middle or rear seats only adds to the problem, of course. You tend to have to remove the rear seats entirely and leave one or both at home if luggage carrying is in prospect. Each weighs about 18kg incidentally and removal isn't too difficult.

The use of sliding rear doors is a feature of this new design – is it because it has quite a lot in common with PSA's new Boxer delivery van? Anyway, one of our doors stuck a bit, but the concept helps in tight spaces

and if the door isn't shut properly a facia tell-tale lets you know. It certainly helps interior width and with the uncluttered front floor area between the seats, improves the ease of coming and going – unless the 48cm step-up is a difficulty.

Warm air moves around easily, as well, with good flow to the rear plus clever fresh air vents built into the backs of the front door armrests. Front footwell flow is meagre by comparison, but ventilation in warmer weather is generous and the optional twin glass sun-roofs suit the recreational side of this car's character – we wouldn't want to be without them. There's a sunshade for both if required. At the back, the open tailgate is an excellent shelter from rain and there's good courtesy lighting, too, with independent locking and easy closure.

The interior's safety considerations include twin airbags and although the rear seats don't share the front's pretensioners or height adjusters, all are lap-and-diagonal with webbing "grabbers" – except the middle centre one with its simple lap strap. A pity, because this is the seat that gives an unimpeded view and foot space that rear passengers appreciate.

Security was enhanced on our test car by the optional alarm – normally you only get remotely controlled deadlocking on the handset or by key. The snag is that we found the handset rather fragile and if it's damaged or lost after arming, the alarm will sound as you unlock by the one-way-only key; you have to dive under the bonnet and turn another key. This 806 uses a key-pad digital immobiliser that hinges down from the facia. It offers good protection but is a bit of a chore at times. And again, don't forget your PIN number!



VERDICT

There are probably two types of customer considering an MPV like this 806. The first is used to the off-roader that never goes off-road, but gives the good vision and an apparent sense of security that seem lacking in ordinary cars. The 806's road manners will prove easily a match for this type, and what it lacks in "go-anywhere" appeal will be handsomely compensated for by its "carry-anything" abilities. Neither will it appear particularly slow, thirsty or uncouth mechanically.

The other potential owner is the estate car type who will be used to much higher standards in the

way the family holdall should drive, handle and perform. He or she will, of course, get a lot more room for full grown people or luggage – but not at the same time. MPVs cleverly achieve this extra interior space without taking up more kerb space – although the 806 is rather wider than you may be used to.

Compared with the Renault Espace, this 806 has more load length and a better driving position, but doesn't demonstrate any significant new tricks when it comes to re-arranging the furniture – there are still problems as well as perks when organising your picnic or conference.

Likes . . . and gripes

Big fuel tank with accurate low-level lamp . . .	but other tell-tales hard to see
Twin armrests for both front seats . . .	but a long stretch to close doors
Electric folding mirrors . . .	but necessary because 806 is wide
Good head restraints all round . . .	but rear seat short of thigh support
Remote handset shuts sunroof . . .	but lacks power and is fragile



FOR THE TECHNICAL

ENGINE

Type transverse four cylinder with iron block and alloy head; 5 main bearings

Size 86mm bore x 86mm stroke = 1998cc

Power 123bhp at 5750rpm

Torque 127 lb ft at 2750rpm

Valves belt-driven single overhead camshaft activating two valves per cylinder via bucket tappets

Fuel/ignition electronic multi-point fuel injection and integrated, programmed spark timing. 80-litre fuel tank with low-level warning lamp

TRANSMISSION

Type five-speed manual, front-wheel drive

Mph per 1000rpm 21.8 in 5th, 17.1 in 4th

CHASSIS

Suspension front: independent struts, lower wishbones, with coil springs and an anti-roll bar. Rear: torsion beam (dead) axle, trailing arms, with coil springs and a Panhard rod. Telescopic dampers all round

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion with 3 turns between locks. Turning circles average 11.8m between kerbs, with 17.5m circle for one turn of the wheel

Wheels 6J steel with 195/65R15T tyres

Brakes ventilated discs front, drums rear with vacuum servo.
Electronic ABS option on test car