Latest Peugeot 2008 – Road Test

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The new Peugeot 2008 GT Line PT 130 manual compact SUV

By Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency)

With over a million Peugeot 2008 models made since launch in 2013, it was already a success before the new second generation was announced at the end of 2019.

But in just a few months a lot has changed as the world copes with the coronavirus pandemic and Peugeot is like all makers struggling to get its newcomer into showrooms and drivers' hands.

It has benefitted from the 208 hatchback stablemate picking up the Car of the Year title, but for bigger families the Peugeot 2008 is a better choice with its substantially more luggage room and higher riding stance.

Evolved from the first generation, the new 2008 is more refined, better equipped and greener and has a new platform being used by the PSA/Vauxhall brands.

The new 2008 series runs to over a dozen versions based on some familiar three 1.2 litre petrol engines and two 1.5 diesels, with manual or automatic gearboxes and four trims, Active, Allure, GT Line and GT with prices between £20,150 and £31,575. There are also electric models coming with over 200 miles range between charging (from £34,275) as the new platform is very adaptable.

Our test car is anticipated to be one of the most popular with its higher level trim and most powerful engine matched with the six-speed manual gearbox. With a family SUV styled car such as the 2008 it’s not wise to go for the smallest engines as they are fine one-up but with passengers or a load aboard it has to work harder and therefore uses more fuel and emits more pollution so the 130 hp 1.2 litre is a better choice.

With the Peugeot 2008 this is no hardship despite its modest triple-cylinder configuration because it’s well developed to give reasonable performance and economy potential, but it does let the driver and passengers know hard the unit is working as you wind it up. It freely revs and this means it has to be eased through the six-speed box to maintain momentum.

The clutch travel is fairly long but it’s progressive and the gearchange action is direct and light so it’s easy to drive in urban areas or over busy main roads.

The steering is well weighted and I liked the comparatively small and flat bottomed steering wheel design which actually helps impart greater responses and feedback, with a good turning circle and lack of vibration. Underfoot, the brakes needed light effort to bring about rapid deceleration and the electric parking brake securely held it on slopes.

Secondary switches on stalks, spokes and fascia needed familiarisation as they were not all in direct sight line but were generally soft-feel to touch and the central infotainment screen on the fascia clearly displayed data. Some controls are operated through that touchscreen and this was distracting at times. However in front of the driver the main dials and gauges are very clear, clever use of colour helped in this and the display slightly altered as you selected eco, normal or sport modes on the console button to maximise the powertrain’s possibilities.

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Heating and ventilation worked through the console display and the physical responses were quick, wide ranging and had good output, with some small vents along the fascia – and powered windows all round.

Oddments room is fair though not exceptional for a family car with small compartments throughout but thankfully the load space is level with knees, flat and regularly shaped. It takes a good few shopping bags or a couple of big suitcases without having to forward tilt the offset split rear seats and when they are dropped the total capacity more than triples.

Access to the boot space is very good, so it is into the back or front seats and once inside the well shaped backrests and cushions help locate occupants, with the front pair giving reasonably good reach and rake movement as well. Steering column movements are modest but most should find a suitable driving position.

Visibility is good all round with slim roof pillars, low waistline, deep windows, good wipers, effective washers, plus bright wide and long range headlights which had an auto-dip function on our test model.

That small engine did produce a notable rise in noise when it was pressed but it was comparatively quiet at motorway speed and the only constant noise was a background rumble from the tyres and suspension with hardly any wind noise.

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VERDICT

The overall impression of the new Peugeot 2008 was a refined and sophisticated family car sized crossover/SUV with the connectivity you'd expect and comfort which lifts it above most rivals.

For: Good access to comfortable interior, smooth drivetrain, attractively styled outside and inside, economical, reasonable performance.

Against: Increased tax costs under the new more accurate WLTP system applicable from April 2020, average sized interior, busy engine note under load, road and suspension noise intrusion, distracting displays on console, ungenerous warranty.

Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Peugeot 2008 GT Line, petrol 130 hp, manual, 2WD.

Price: £26,180 (£27,600 as tested).

Mechanical: 130 hp, three cylinder, 1.2 litre turbo-petrol, six speed manual, 2WD.

Performance: 122 mph, 0 – 62 mph 8.9 seconds.

Fuel consumption: New WLTP Combined Cycle applicable from April, 43.7 to 50.6 mpg (45.5 mpg as tested).

Emissions and taxation: New WLTP CO2 figure 132 g/km, new VED road tax £215 First Year rate then £150 Standard rate, BiK company car tax 29%.

Insurance Group: 19.

Warranty: Three years/ 60,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,300 mm (14.11 ft), W 1,770 mm (5.81 ft), H 1,550 mm (5.09 ft), boot/load space 434 – 1,467 litres (15.33 – 51.81 cu.ft), five doors/five seats.