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# Latest BMW 5 Series – First Impressions

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48 YEARS AND STILL GOING STRONG - THE BMW 5 SERIES - NOW REFRESHED

By David Miles (Miles Better News Agency).

The longest serving model range in the BMW line-up is the 5 Series, launched seven generations ago in 1972. Since the last new models were launched in 2017 over 66,000 of them have been sold in the UK and 600,000 of them globally, now the latest updated 5 Series cars have just gone on sale and there are more versions to follow.

Competitors' models in the executive car sector include the Audi A6, Mercedes E-Class,



Jaguar XJ, Lexus ES/LS and Volvo S90/V90 and increasingly a host of SUVs.

In a nutshell the latest BMW 5 Series Saloons and Touring estate models are refreshed versions with the highlight changes being revised front and rear end styling, increased interior refinement, improved connectivity and engine efficiencies. In addition the Touring estate becomes available with a PHEV plug-in hybrid system from November, all four and six cylinder engines now use 48V mild-hybrid technology, (except the PHEV and M550i xDrive models) and the M550i xDrive Saloon is available for the first time. More improvements include the new infotainment system, now incorporating a 12.3-inch central information screen powered by the latest BMW Operating System 7.0 - including the Intelligent Personal Assistant feature, and there are new enhanced driver assistance systems as well.

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Prices of the mainstream Saloon models range from £38,590 to £70,350 and the Touring estates from £41,165, to £60,560 but the PHEV Touring price is yet to be announced. There are of course extra cost options that can and will be added but these packs are simplified. A sample selection I found in the information pack were the M Sport Pro Pack, basically M Sport Brakes, Adaptive Suspension and more and depending on the model, priced at £2,495 to £3,295. The Visibility Pack which is all about headlights at £1,000 to £2,000, the Technology Pack of head-up display, Wi-Fi, gesture control and upgraded sound system at £2,495, Technology Plus with more driving aids and the Drive Recorder images facility at £4,995 to £7,495, the Comfort Pack with heated steering wheel, Comfort Access, powered tailgate for the Touring at £2,495, Comfort Plus with active seat ventilation, seat heating front and rear and front massage seats at £4,995. Rear seat entertainment including TV function is priced at £2,995 plus there are several single items like the £995 towbar, sunroof at £1,095/£1,495 and heated steering wheel at £270 but there is more. Step into the BMW world of options and although simplified it doesn't make them any less expensive.

News just in of another model joining the range: the M5 Competition Saloon has just been





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announced with its 4.4 litre V8 TwinPower 625 hp, 700 Nm (516 lb.ft) turbo petrol engine is available to order, priced from £102,325. The chassis has been tuned for track-use and it has a carbon-fibre roof to reduce overall weight. This latest M model marks 36 years of M5 production.



### [M5 Competition...](#)

At launch the mainstream model power unit and drivetrain availability, subject to the body version, are the 520i, 184 hp, 520d 190 hp, 520d 190 hp xDrive, 530d 286 hp xDrive, 530e 292 hp PHEV, 530e 292 PHEV xDrive, 545e 394 hp PHEV xDrive, 540i 333 hp xDrive and



M550i 530 hp xDrive and the outrageous M5 Competition Saloon V8 turbo petrol 625 hp flagship.

There are three mainstream specification levels; SE, the most popular M Sport and M Sport Edition. In addition and for the first time is the M Performance M550i xDrive Saloon and of course the M5.

Standard features of the SE include a choice of 17, 18 and 19-inch alloy wheels and Steptronic or Steptronic Sport transmission depending on the engine variant. The interior benefits from Dakota leather upholstery, Oxide Silver dark matt trim, Sport leather steering wheel and heated front seats. The SE Touring specification includes split folding rear seats and matt silver roof rails with all body styles also having an electronic boot or tailgate.

New for the SE are folding mirrors, front electric lumbar support and Parking Assistant. Comfort, convenience and connectivity are improved with automatic air conditioning, DAB radio, Connected Package Professional and BMW Live Cockpit Professional.

The M Sport trim level adds new alloy wheel designs in 18, 19 and 20-inch sizes, the M aerodynamics package and high gloss shadowline exterior trim which now extends to the roof rails on the Touring. Inside there is the M leather steering wheel, front sports seats, a distinctive instrument panel, anthracite headliner and aluminium grey trim details. M Sport suspension is standard except on 530e and 530e xDrive models.

Building on the M Sport, the M Sport Edition has further exterior and interior enhancements. It features 20-inch alloy wheels fitted with run-flat tyres, shadowline adaptive LED headlights, new style red M brake callipers, extended high-gloss shadowline exterior trim and sun protection glass. The specification also includes an M rear spoiler and M multifunction seats on the Saloon model.

Stepping into a BMW mostly offers familiarity, it's nearly always an evolution of layout, controls and specification and the brand is stronger in its appeal for that. The updated 5 Series interior for instance is a familiar place but there are significant detailed changes.



These include the standard-fit Live Cockpit Professional with the latest BMW Operating System 7.0 and other digital services as standard.

It also includes the BMW Intelligent Personal Assistant with the latest extended functionality. This technology learns routines, habits and preferences to help the driver get the best out of the in-car functionality. Smartphone Integration is offered as standard and is now compatible with both Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

Offered for the first time on the latest 5 Series is the Remote Software Upgrade functionality which keeps the vehicle up to date with the latest software. All updates can be imported over the air, either on a smartphone via BMW Connected or directly into the car using its built-in SIM card. Installation is much like a smartphone update. The content of the upgrades can vary from new software services to improved vehicle functions. So it's the most connected 5 Series to date which neatly suits our current work and family lives.

The exterior design changes look minimal, fine-tuning the existing distinctive presence and sporting style. The BMW kidney grille has extra width and height, dropping down further into the front apron and framed by a single-piece surround. Thankfully it's nowhere near the size of the much talked about 4 Series massive vertical kidney grille shape. The headlights bring a sleek slimmer look flanking the grille. The standard full LED headlights include two U-shaped daytime driving lights to create a precise light graphic. The front apron of both SE and M Sport trim levels have also been redesigned with larger and more pronounced air inlets.





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The LED taillights now have an additional top overhang that transforms the L-motif into a C-shape. The rear apron has also been redesigned with trapezoidal tailpipes and a sportier mounted diffuser on Saloon models.

My brief excursion into the revised 5 Series range happened last week at the BMW UK Showcase event for the motoring media held at the impressive Bicester Heritage Centre. Star performers were the new 4 Series Coupé and the revised 5 Series Saloon and Touring models, plus the MINI John Cooper Works GP3 hatchback, the most powerful production



MINI every built, but that's a story for another day.

As an overview of the 5 Series line-up I stepped into the potential best selling version the 520d Touring estate with M Sport specification. Whether it's long-haul business use or executive family transport this is currently the prime model although for tax reasons the forthcoming PHEV petrol-electric plug-in hybrid versions are more financially appealing to the company car driver.

This M Sport 520d test model estate costs £45,360 on-the-road but with numerous options fitted the vehicle totalled £56,685. Other 520d Touring models start from £41,165 on-the-road for the SE spec version which looks a perfectly acceptable level to me and even the 520d SE spec with xDrive all wheel drive costs a reasonable £43,860. I say reasonable because in its executive estate sector, if not reasonable, it's competitive.

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The important, and somewhat overlooked news, is the 520d, four cylinder TwinPower turbodiesel engine now has the new 48-volt mild-hybrid technology system, and that means it is now RDE2 emission level compliant so less costly for tax, and the car's on-the-road price is slightly lower because of the reduced VED First Year rate tax. By fitting a powerful 48V starter-generator motor and a second battery, there's a significant increase in the amount of brake energy that can be regenerated and stored. This energy is used not just to supply the electrical system, but also to lighten the engine's workload and boost its power.

The starter-generator produces an electric boost that instantly makes an additional 8 kW/11 hp available, improving overtaking and start-off acceleration. The starter-generator also increases efficiency by assisting the engine when driving at constant speeds and improves comfort when the Auto Start-Stop and coasting functions are in use.





The 520d has a total power output of 190 hp and a hefty 400 Nm (295 lb.ft) of torque from 1,750 rpm. Top speed is 140 mph, 0 - 62mph takes 7.6 seconds, so this big estate is no slouch and the performance is perfectly adequate for our busy roads. It's also fuel-efficient with a WLTP Combined Cycle rating of 49.6 to 54.3 mpg, I achieved without trying 47 mpg on the busy Oxfordshire roads last week. The CO2 emissions are from 134 g/km but my heavily loaded with options test car had a figure of 146 g/km.

That means RDE2 level VED First Year road tax is £215 (was £540 pre RDE2 testing), the Standard rate for year two onwards is £150 plus £325 annual supplement as the vehicle costs over £40k and the company car Benefit-in-Kind tax charge is 32% - previously it was 36% because it carried a 4% levy prior to RDE2 compliancy. The insurance group is 31E and warranty is three years unlimited mileage.



## VERDICT

Overall the latest BMW 5 Series Touring is as before, only better in important ways. It looks classy, it's comfortable and roomy, very refined and makes motoring life very easy. The improved specification including connectivity functions are welcome and most of all the power units are now homologated to RDE2 compliancy by being more fuel efficient with less emissions, so the lower tax costs benefit all owners, private or business.

For: Remains the class leader for large premium quality estate cars, excellent to drive, new RDE2 compliant diesel hybrid engine with lower tax costs, improved specification, simplified option packs, roomy and comfortable.

Against: Costly Standard VED rate tax for five years due to the car's price, expensive options.



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





BMW 5 Series Touring 520d M Sport.

Price: £45,360 (£56,685 as tested).

Engine/transmission: 2.0 litre, four cylinder RDE2 compliant turbodiesel with 48V hybrid electric motor, 190 hp, 400 Nm (295 lb.ft) of torque from 1,750 rpm, eight speed Steptronic automatic, rear wheel drive.

Performance: 140 mph, 0 - 62 mph 7.6 seconds.





Fuel consumption: WLTP Combined Cycle 49.6 to 54.3 mpg, (47 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 146 g/km, VED First Year road tax reduced to £215, Standard VED rate £150 + £325 annually for five years as it costs over £40k, BiK company car tax reduced to 32%.

Insurance Group: 31E.

Warranty: Three years unlimited mileage.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,942 mm (16.21 ft), W 1,868 mm (6.13 ft), H 1,498 mm (4.91 ft), wheelbase 2,975 mm (9.76 ft), boot/load space 570 to 1,700 litres (20.13 to 60.03 cu.ft), braked towing weight 2,000 kg (4,409 lb).