MINI Cooper 5-door – Road Test

Published: December 8, 2025

Author:

Online version: https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/mini-cooper-5-door-road-test/



The Mini has been part of the British and European car market for over 65 years and is still not ready to be pensioned off against much

younger rivals, writes Robin Roberts (and WheelsWithinWales).

Since becoming part of the BMW Group in 1994 the famous British Leyland and subsequent Rover Group models have been completely reinvented, modernised and brought very much up to date.

You only have to look at the current range to appreciate it has something for everyone while still retaining its distinctive eye-catching and trendy styling both externally and inside.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

The MINI range covers both petrol and electric models with three-doors, five or six doors and a rare convertible as well as soft-road all-wheel-drive. Top models cost £41,655 but the range begins at £25,265.

Our Cooper 5-door is one of the most popular with its lively yet long-legged triple cylinder petrol engine matched with an economical seven-speed automatic gearbox. The combination produced very good economy with spirited performance thanks to very clever software available at the touch of a button or two.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

Those buttons deserve a little explanation with a plastic turn-key for starting or stopping the engine, a linear pull switch to select direction of travel and column paddles for manual changes and boosting acceleration if needed for overtaking.

A mode switch also allowed a user to stretch the economy or speed up responses and give it a kart-track like character. It all worked beautifully and immediately.

It really is hard to tell at first if it’s a three-cylinder engine, so smooth and quick is the pickup thanks to a neat turbocharger with very minimal delay deploying itself unless you are in the miserly mode. Even the noise it makes is not unpleasant.

Whatever mode chosen, the acceleration was very smooth and it was easy to drive in town or country roads, and had a relaxed nature on a motorway.

Brakes were progressive and powerful and the auto-hold was very effective on the steepest slopes while the steering, which felt firmest in the sporting settings, gave a good turning circle when parking and was not twitchy on twisting tarmac. Handling was highly responsive, roadholding leechlike.

Secondary controls, and there were a lot of them, were grouped on the wheel-spokes, column and about the fascia or the truly massive touchscreen in the centre of the dash.

The near-ten inch or 24cms touchscreen is a masterpiece of design and software development, changing the display with the chosen modes or selected features and far more comprehensive than we can go into here. It just worked very well and produced big clear displays. There is no info-display directly infront of the driver.

Heating and ventilation was highly effective regarding temperature, direction output and capacity and the powered front and rear windows were quick acting.


TOTAL
310 mi
MINI
AIRBAG
EXPERIENCES
ENGINE
17 °C


TOTAL
00000 mi
310 mi
POWER
FUEL
OFF
OFF
14:43
17 °C
EXPERIENCES
ENGINE
SET
MODE

Oddments room was good, not generous, with small compartments throughout and the electrically operated fifth door revealed a flat, wide loadbed with a small lower compartment but it was not long and anything more than shopping would necessitate dropping the rear seatbacks.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

Access for the driver and passengers was a little bit of a duck and twist arrangement, particularly into the rear three seats and then they found the leg and headroom was tight as well as the shoulder room for anyone over a child's build.

Infront there was clearly more room, a good electric seats' adjustment range and nicely supporting bolsters.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

The MINI's ride is firm, even bumpy at times, due to the short 2 metre (just under 7ft) wheelbase and big wheels on the test car. You can hear the suspension trying to insulate the cabin but it only partly wins the battle and the road noises add to the busy engine note and low level wind waffling from the mirrors and upright windscreen.

There was a time, long ago, when the Mini's visibility was a strongpoint but today's safety-set shape created thicker pillars all round and you need to trust in the sensors and reversing camera as well as keep an eye on the door mirrors.

Lights and wash/ wipe were good but left some areas of glass unswept and dirty at times.

VERDICT

The sophistication of the latest MINI is very good for a small car and you can see how it's benefitted from BMW's experience building bigger models.

Of all the competitors in its class, the MINI still stands out, if not in height, but refinement and features and shows it has aged well with a few facelifts.

For: Great performance with unexpected economy, taut handling, very well equipped, smooth powertrain, strong headlights, stylish.

Against: Tight rear legroom & small boot, indifferent ride, constant road, wind and engine noise, some visibility issues.



FAST FACTS

Model: MINI Cooper 5-door

Price: £31,250

Mechanical: 154 bhp, 1499cc 3 cyl petrol, 7 speed auto

Max Speed: 140 mph

0 – 62 mph: 7.7 secs

Combined MPG: 45 mpg

Insurance Group: 21

C02 emissions: 141 g/km9.71 to

Bik rating: 34%, £540FY, £195SR

Warranty: 3 years/ unlimited miles

Size: L 4.04 m (13.25 ft), W 1.97 m (6.46 ft), H 1.47 m (4.82 ft)

Bootspace: 275 to 925 litres (9.71 to 32.67 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,145 kg (2,524 lb)

© ***WheelsWithinWales***