

WhatCar? verdict



For:

The C1 is very cheap to buy and run. It's fun to drive, and has a fresh and funky cabin.

Against:

The car suffers from an overly firm town ride and there is not enough kit as standard.



On the road verdict

Performance



Small but capable engines

There is the choice of only a 67bhp three-cylinder 1.0-litre petrol or a <n>1.4 diesel to power this little car. Performance is surprisingly good on the petrol car; we would avoid the slower, pricier diesel. The C1 can hold its own on motorways. To get the most out of it you do have to make use of the five-speed gearbox, though.

Ride and handling



You can feel the lumps on rougher roads

The ride is very firm for a small car that's designed to spend most of its life in the city, and the suspension can be heard – and felt – working over rougher parts of the road. It does handle well and manages to keep body lean in check when the going gets twisty, but modest grip limits its abilities.

Refinement



Noise is not overly intrusive

Wind and road noise is present at the national limit, but not overly intrusive. The three-cylinder engine is brash, but this sound can lend the car an appealing sporty feel on short jaunts. On longer journeys, however, it becomes wearing.

In the cabin verdict

Behind the wheel



Comfortable with good visibility

The driving position won't suit everyone because the steering column adjusts only vertically and there's no seat height adjustment. Still, there's a fresh and fun-loving character to the cabin, typified by its cylindrical heater control panel that glows orange in the dark. Visibility is mostly good.

Space and practicality

Ownership verdict

Buying



Cheap and frugal

This is where the C1's strength lies. List prices are extremely reasonable, and Citroen dealers are never shy with discounts. A year's motoring won't cost the earth, either. The C1 sits in insurance group one, and even the petrol version returns over 60mpg, while the diesel gets closer to 70mpg.

Quality



Cabin is stylish and well built

The C1's cabin is funky and well built, although some of the plastics and materials feel rather cut-price. The C1 was developed alongside the Peugeot 107 and Toyota Aygo and, like those cars, we expect the mechanicals and engine to prove reliable over time.

Safety and security



Not enough airbags

The anti-lock braking system has a feature that's designed to keep the car stable whether you hit the brake pedal on a straight road or in the middle of a bend. Two front airbags are standard in both models, but only the VTR gets side airbags. Curtain 'bags and stability control are available as a package on the VTR, if you're prepared to pay extra.

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Vehicles	Finance	Tracking	Valeting	S.M.A.R.T	Maintenance
New and Used Cars and commercial SuperCars Part Exchange	Contract hire Finance lease Hire purchase Conditional purchase	Live vehicle tracking Timesheets Site reports Mileage	Internal and external Supagard Autoglym DiamondBrite	Dents Scatches Alloy Wheels Repairs	Pay as you go Fixed Fleet support Breakdown recovery



Space for four, without luggage

Four averagely proportioned adults will just about fit in the car, although they will have to leave their luggage behind because the boot is minuscule, oddly shaped and accessed through a one-piece glass hatch. However, you can drop the 50/50 split-fold rear seats for more room, and there are plenty of cubbies around the cabin.

Equipment



Even the range-topper's a bit sparse

The entry-level VT car comes with a CD Player and an MP3 socket, but that's about it in the way of luxuries.

Unfortunately, going for the higher spec VTR version doesn't earn you much more – you get remote central locking and electric front windows, but there's still no sign of alloy wheels or air-conditioning. You can add the latter to the VTR as an option, along with things such as part-leather upholstery and metallic paint

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