

Citroën C4 Picasso MPV

WhatCar? verdict

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For:

The Picasso has a spacious, practical and airy interior. It also has a comfortable ride, all the seats are easy to move, and it has striking looks inside and out. Visibility is excellent, too.

Against:

It's not the sharpest MPV to drive - the steering could do with more feel, and it has a vague manual gearchange. The EGS semi-auto is slow in auto mode, too.



On the road verdict

Performance

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Diesel engines are flexible; 1.6 best
Buyers have the choice of two petrol and two diesel engines. The petrols are a 127bhp 1.8-litre and a 143bhp 2.0-litre, but the diesels make more sense, thanks to their superior economy and pulling power. The 110bhp 1.6 diesel is expected to be the biggest seller, and rightly so: it's smooth, flexible and feels perfectly suited to the car. The 138bhp 2.0 diesel doesn't feel significantly quicker.

Ride and handling

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Comfortable ride rather than a sharp drive
MPVs are designed for carrying people, so a comfortable ride for all the family is more important than a fun drive for mum or dad up front. The C4 Picasso follows this brief exactly. It rides smoothly at most speeds, with only the biggest road scars disturbing the calm, and it is undemanding to drive, with light controls. The steering could do with more feel, though, and there's too much body roll through bends.

Refinement

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Little noise; gearchanges aren't the smoothest
Both diesel engines are very quiet when cruising and largely unobtrusive at other times. Wind noise is well suppressed, too, but some road and suspension noise can penetrate the cabin. This is a very refined MPV, particularly with the optional laminated side window glass. The gearboxes aren't so impressive. The manual has a long-winded, imprecise gearchange and the EGS semi-auto is slow in auto mode, although it's much better in manual mode.

In the cabin verdict

Ownership verdict

Buying

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Competitively priced; below-par residuals expected
The Citroën is a bit pricier than many rivals, but huge discounts will be easy to negotiate, and this will help to offset the heavy depreciation it will suffer.

Quality

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Cabin looks and feels classy; reliability an issue
Step inside the C4 Picasso and you can't help but notice how classy the interior looks. Investigate further and you'll realise that everything feels well screwed together, too. Soft-touch plastics and chrome highlights add to the sophisticated look. However, Citroën needs to improve its reliability record, because it has consistently finished near the bottom of our reliability surveys.

Safety and security

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Seven airbags and stability control standard
The C4 Picasso is stuffed with safety kit. Twin front, side and window airbags are standard, as is one to protect the driver's knees. There are also four ISOFIX child-seat mountings. Standard stability control helps avoid an accident in the first place. Deadlocks (which prevent the doors being opened if a window is smashed) will deter thieves, while optional laminated side windows further boost safety and security.

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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

Behind the wheel



Funky dashboard layout; excellent forward visibility
 Tired of being conventional? Then you'll love the C4 Picasso's interior. It's far from the norm, with a fixed steering wheel hub, centrally mounted instruments and air-con controls positioned at the edges of the dashboard. It's not form over function, though. Most controls are easy to use (small stereo buttons excepted) and drivers of all shapes and sizes should be able to make themselves comfortable. A huge glass area and thin front pillars make for excellent visibility.

Space and practicality



Spacious, practical cabin; folding seats is easy
 Five adults will be comfortable in the C4 Picasso. The three identical seats in the rear row all slide back and forth individually, plus the backrest angle can be altered. Not only that, but the rear seats couldn't be easier to fold down: all you do is pull a cord on the side of each chair. The big 500-litre boot is a square shape and the loading lip is very low. There's also plenty of stowage space in the cabin.

Equipment



Good equipment levels but no base-model air-con
 LX forms the Picasso's base trim, and it comes with cruise control and electric windows. SX cars are the ones to go for, though, because they add air-conditioning and a CD player. VTR+ cars have alloy wheels, a leather steering wheel and electric rear windows, while Executive models have climate control, rain-sensing wipers and automatic headlamps.

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