

CLASSIC DRIVER

[The new BMW X5 in 90 seconds](#)

Lead

What are the highlights of the new BMW X5? Give us one and a half minutes of your time and we'll tell you...

This is the third generation of what BMW calls its Sports Activity Vehicle (or SAV), and what everyone else calls a big SUV or 4x4. The first version arrived in 1999 and the ethos hasn't changed since then: the X5 prides itself on offering decent off-road ability, generous interior space, and – what perhaps sets it apart from most competitors – genuine driving pleasure, despite its height and weight.

This latest model is an evolution of the 2nd generation, rather than a revolution: similar in overall design but improved and updated throughout, from the aerodynamics to suspension (now more supple) to the drivetrain, but with a strong emphasis on comfort and refinement.

Some of the most subtle but extensive changes are to be found in the cabin. Just assume that everything has been assessed and improved, with safety, connectivity and generally hassle-free motoring at the top of the engineer's checklist. Take, for example, the new BMW Parking Assistant, which will find you a parking space, and then park for you – not just by steering into the space but also by operating the throttle and brake, while entertaining you with a 360-degree surround-view of the outside of the car. Meanwhile, you can now have heated seats in the second row, and luggage space has been impressively increased: an extra 30 litres with the seats up, and an extra 120 litres with them folded. And so on and so forth, with all those little (and big) details that help to make the X5 driver's world an easy, comfortable, happy one.

Buyers will be able to choose from five TwinPower Turbo engines – four diesel and one petrol – although you get no choice over the transmission: the X5 only comes as an eight-speed auto. But there is now, for the first time, a four-cylinder X5 with that BMW speciality: rear-wheel drive.

When the latest BMW X5 goes on sale in the UK this November, it will be priced from £42,590 OTR for the rear-wheel drive model, and from £44,895 OTR for 4WD.

Gallery

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