

Mercedes-Benz A-Class A140 Classic SE 5d

BEHIND THE WHEEL

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

Comfy seat and a good driving position, but the interior isn't as well thought out as some of the newer competition. Armrest (where fitted) interferes with the handbrake. Interior is beginning to look a little dated



HANDLING

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

Much publicised early problems soon sorted by Mercedes-Benz. The one you drive will be stable, well-suspended and a pleasure to drive. It might be small, but it's still a Mercedes-Benz. Firm suspension, wide tyres and electronic stability control all assist stability; fun to drive with minimal body roll; good grip inspires confidence; steering is direct and well-weighted. Ride is notably firm - and a particular bugbear for some owners.

Wheelbase:

2423 mm

SAFETY

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

Famous for failing the Swedish 'elk test' - an early car fell over when braking and steering sharply - A-Class is now one of the safest small cars around. A four-star Euro NCAP rating, electronic stability control, ABS, traction control, and twin front and side airbags all help to keep car and occupants out of trouble. Security is good for a small car, with an immobiliser, central locking, built-in radio and a visible VIN.

Euro NCAP

Adult occupant rating:

★★★★☆

Child protection rating:

n/a

Pedestrian rating:

★★★★



COMFORT

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

The interior offers the practicality expected from a mini-MPV; the rear seats can be moved, folded or removed completely, leaving more load space than a big estate. However, the narrow body means that rear space is a bit tight for three adults. The scarcer long wheelbase models offer more head and legroom than most executive cars.

Length: 3606 mm
Width: 1719 mm
Height: 1575 mm
Weight: 1105 Kg
Noise: 72 dB

PRACTICALITY

★★★★★☆☆☆☆

With all seats in place, it's adequate. Rear seats slide forward and back for more storage space. They also come out (as does the front seat).

Braked towing weight: 1000 kg
Luggage capacity (seats up): 390 litres
Turning circle: 10 m
Unbraked towing weight: 400 Kg

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PERFORMANCE



Four petrol engines: 1.4, 1.6 and the lively 1.9 and 2.1 petrol; and a 1.7 CDI turbo-diesel, which actually outperforms the 1.4, although it's noisier than the nippy, refined 1.6. The 1.4 is really for town use; both it and the 1.7 CDI feel sluggish when pushed to achieve higher speeds. The tiddler 1.4 is great in the city, cheap to run and just about capable on the motorway. Diesel is very economical, but easily powerful enough for any driving.

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| BHP: | 82 |
| Engine capacity: | 1397 cc |
| Cylinders: | 4 |
| Fuel delivery: | Multi point fuel injection |
| Gears: | 5 Speed |
| Top speed: | 106 mph |
| Torque: | 96 lb/ft |
| Torque: | 130 Nm |
| Transmission: | Manual |
| Valves: | 8 |
| Zero to sixty: | 12.5 seconds |

RELIABILITY



Check the comments on Parkers website owners reviews. Plenty of problems, nothing consistent, but Mercedes-Benz must be very concerned.

- Car check body:** Check doors for car park scrapes, paint chipping problems, leaks from sunroof.
- Car check engine:** Should run like clockwork, occasional fuel-injection problems, check the service history.
- Car check other:** Electrical faults, worn anti-roll bar links. A-class models built between April 2002 and April 2003 should have visited Mercedes-Benz workshops for a precautionary inspection. In the worst case, cracks in the recess for the plastic covers of the wiper arms can cause the wiper arms to become detached.

RUNNING COSTS



Good on petrol, reasonable to insure and re-sale values are strong despite the fleets of former hire cars on the market. Servicing can be pricey.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Insurance group: | 5 |
| Click here for an insurance quote | |
| Miles per gallon: | 39 |
| Fuel capacity: | 54 litres |
| Euro emissions standard: | 3 |
| CO2 emissions: | 170 g/km |

Vehicle excise duty for cars registered on or after 1st March 2001, is now based on the fuel type and carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions levels of individual vehicles.

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| VED Tax Band: | E |
| VED for 12 months: | £150 |
| VED for 6 months: | £75 |

Company car tax for the year 2005/2006; for tax purposes the list price of a car includes delivery charges but not road tax and new car registration fee.

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Annual tax at 22%: | £639 |
| Annual tax at 40%: | £1161 |

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