

## Motoring New Car Road Test

# The new Peugeot 2008 brings style

The Peugeot 2008 looks great, but can it back it up with a great driving experience? **Darren Cassey** finds out

IT WASN'T that long ago that the very concept of the 2008 would raise a few eyebrows. Peugeot no longer accepts its place in the mainstream, instead straddling a position somewhere between its traditional rivals and more premium manufacturers.

If you've spent any time around the French manufacturer's cars recently you'll know it's perfectly capable of mixing it with the big names, with stylish cars and high-quality interiors mixed with genuine character. This cool-looking small SUV is up against some brilliant rivals, though, so does it have what it takes?

### What's new?

For Peugeot, the key selling point is the 'choose your powertrain' ethos, so there's the usual petrol and diesel options, but also an electric version with an impressive 193-mile range.

It's built on the firm's newest vehicle platform called Common Modular Platform, which gives it more space than before, helped by the fact it's 14cm longer. One great aspect for those considering the EV is that the 360-litre boot is the same across all powertrains, meaning the EV doesn't lose practicality because the batteries don't eat into the boot space, unlike many rivals.

It also gets the usual funky Peugeot styling, the 3D i-Cockpit, and plenty of driving assistance technology.

### What's under the bonnet?

There are three petrol engines offered, with the entry-level option getting a six-speed manual, the top GT version getting an eight-speed automatic, and the middle having a choice of both gearboxes. The sole diesel, meanwhile, can only be had with the manual.

Our car had the middle-spec 1.2-Litre PureTech petrol making 129bhp. It's not the most inspiring unit, but it feels like the pick of the bunch because the engine is responsive without impacting on fuel economy too much.

### What's it like to drive?

Fortunately, it's not style over substance, because out on the road the 2008 is great to



### Fast facts

- Model as tested: 2008 GT Line
- Price: From £26,580. 2008 range starts from £20,590 from Motor Mall
- Engine: 1.2-litre PureTech 130 petrol
- Power: 129bhp
- Torque (Nm): 230
- Max speed (mph): 122
- 0-60mph: 8.7 seconds
- MPG: 43.7-50.6
- Emissions (g/km): 103

■ The new model gets the usual funky Peugeot styling

drive. The steering is light around town, meaning that despite the fact it's an SUV it's easy to drive in urban areas – ideal for the school run. However, it remains composed on twisty country lanes so it's good to drive wherever you live.

The gearbox is great, too. While manuals are slowly dying out, it's good to see that some manufacturers are committed to providing a good system for those who want to shift themselves.

### How does it look?

Styling is the 2008's real draw. While many cars in this segment are guilty of looking like copies of each other, the Peugeot truly stands out with its combination of muscular fenders, sharp edges and intricate designs.

The front end has a striking headlight design, with the 'three-claw' running lights the stand-out feature, while the low centre section of bonnet and higher edges give a butch attitude to go with the chic details. Meanwhile, the rear lights follow the claw theme and make the car look extra-wide as part of a full-width bar.

### What's it like inside?

The style continues inside, too. While

many manufacturers are going minimalist these days, Peugeot is committed to having something with a bit more character. As such, there are funky lines, wedges and curves that means no surface is boring.

The central toggle switches look and feel great to use too, but style has definitely affected functionality in the cabin. For example, the quick navigation buttons are an odd touch-sensitive symbol above the toggle switches, and they provide no feedback, so they feel odd to touch but don't let you know that they've been activated. Meanwhile, the small wheel still blocks the view of the digital cockpit for most driving positions, which quickly becomes irritating.

### What's the spec like?

Priced from £26,580, our GT Line model comes very well-equipped, and looks fantastic with its extra styling touches. Standard equipment on this trim includes extensive safety kit, the 3D instrument display, perforated leather steering wheel, DAB radio with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and full LED headlights.

Our test car came equipped with some optional extras, with the £300 adaptive cruise control feeling like a good value upgrade, as does the £750 panoramic roof. However, £200 for blind spot monitoring is a little disappointing given the starting price of the car, while £1,500 is a bit steep for full leather upholstery (though this does also add a massage function).

Music fans should opt for the upgraded stereo system, which is surprisingly reasonable at £590 extra.

### Verdict

If you're looking for a family SUV that's a bit more interesting than most of the near-identical models on the market, you'll no doubt be swayed by the brilliant styling of the 2008 – inside and out.

The fact it backs it up with a great driving experience and decent practicality means the 2008 is certainly worthy of your attention. Yes, top-spec models are priced to compete with the likes of the Audi Q2, but it's much more interesting and bigger, too, so feels like good value.

If you can get past the interior quirks, there's very little to disappoint.



■ The engine is responsive without impacting on fuel economy too much



■ The styling continues inside with funky lines, wedges and curves

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# and character to the SUV segment



■ The rear lights follow the claw theme and make the car look extra wide