

Citroën Berlingo

Featuring 1.8 Multispace



SCORECARD

Overtaking / pulling power

●●●●○

Fuel economy

●●●○○

Handling / steering

●●●○○

Comfort / ease of control

●●●●○

Interior space / practicality

●●●○○

Accident / injury avoidance

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Costs in service

●●●○○

Depreciation prospects

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IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE MANY BRITS WHO mourned the passing of that old "tin snail", the 2CV, take heart. Its successor, at least spiritually speaking, is here in the shape of the shapely Berlingo. It's a good deal more sophisticated, of course, but retains at least some of *Deux Chevaux*'s cheeky charm and fun factor – as well as boasting the world's largest electric sunroof.

Citroën's answer to the Renault Scenic seats five in comfort in the lofty, light and airy interior, thanks to generous width, good foot and knee space and vast headroom. Getting to the three back seats is awkward, though, because there are only two side doors, but at least both front seats tilt and slide and have a "memory".

There's no shortage of performance, the 90bhp 1.8-litre engine sees to that. It gives really spirited acceleration as well as relaxed cruising, thanks to a long-legged fifth gear, which also aids fuel economy. Road noise is quite loud on coarse surfaces, however.

The smooth, absorbent ride would do credit to a saloon costing twice as much, the brakes are nicely weighted and the steering is wheel-twirlingly light – but

completely devoid of feel. Because of its tall build, the Multispace isn't an ideal bend-swinger, but it handles deftly and feels surefooted.

Front occupants slide easily into the high front seats that, with the panoramic view and excellent mirrors, help to give the driver superb vision, particularly when reversing. The seats could do with more lumbar support and you have to get used to the van-like steering wheel angle – though the wheel is adjustable for rake. Clear instruments and easy-action controls – including the positive gearchange – make life easy for the driver, but can we please lose the dratted "door-open" chimes?

The rubber-matted load space beyond the big, sheltering tailgate goes from huge to cavernous when the one-piece back seats are double-folded forwards.

The main drawbacks to the Multispace are its lack of extra doors and the sort of seating versatility and options list (there's no ABS or air con) that the, admittedly more expensive, Scenic provides. All the same, we're hooked. As a budget-priced junior MPV, it's a winner.

HOW MULTISPACE COMPARES	Engine cyl/cap/pow r(no/cc/bhp)	Revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy best stop (mpg)	Brakes best stop (m/kg)	Maximum legroom - front (cm)	Typical leg/ kneeroom - rear (cm)	Steering(p) turns/ circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
CITROËN MULTISPACE 1.8	4/1761/90	3070	12.4	28.1/20.7	33	29/18	109	107/74	3.3/11.1	411
Fiat Multipla 1.6ELX	4/1581/103	3800	12.7	29.2/20.6	29	27½/20*	106	114/83	2.8/11.1	399
Mitsubishi Space Star 1.8GDI	4/1834/121	3150	10.6	27.1/20.4	38	27½/18*	109	103/75	3.1/10.0	403
Renault Scenic 1.6RT 8v	4/1598/90	3450	13.7	28.4/21.0	34	29/30*	105	102/76	3.5/10.5	414
Vauxhall Zafira 1.6 16v	4/1598/100	3630	13.1	27.0/18.8	35½	24½/18*	103	102/75	3.2/11.0	432

* with ABS

(p) all power assisted

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration time in seconds

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		2.1	4.5	8.1	12.4
IN 5TH GEAR		6.4	12.8	19.8	28.1
IN 4TH GEAR		4.9	9.6	14.8	20.7

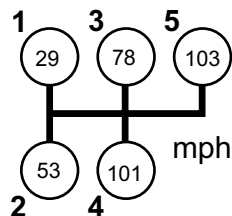
20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		12.8/9.8		13.4/9.	
			12.8/9.6		15.3/11.1

Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
		5500*		5300	4500

* for best acceleration

Gearing gives 22.8mph per 1000rpm
in top = 3070rpm at 70mph



FUEL CONSUMPTION

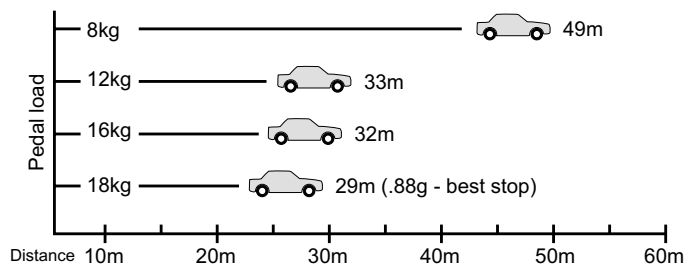
Fuel grade: unleaded Premium, 95 octane	
Type of use – air conditioning not fitted*	mpg
In the city – heavy traffic	22
In the country – quiet driving	46
Typical mpg overall	33
Realistic tank range†	48 litres/350 miles

*with air conditioning switched on, consumption will increase by 2–4% in winter and 4–8% in summer

BRAKES

Pedal feel ●●●○○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●○○○ Handbrake ●●●●○

Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (no ABS)
(A good-to-average best stop is about 28m at 20-30kg pedal load)

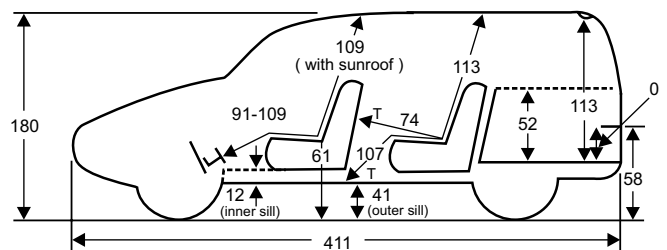


Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop:
13kg at start of test, 16kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

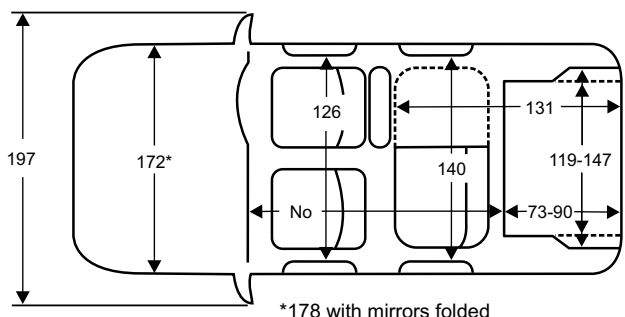
MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres

Three-door MPV



T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants



LIKES AND GRIPEs

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--|
| Clear dials and warning lights | ... | but radio and heater controls too low |
| Excellent wipers front and rear | ... | but rear washer slow to act (causing dry wipe) |
| Heating and ventilation work well | ... | but fan is noisy |
| Big tinted windows all round | ... | but four side panes only hinge open |
| Numerous storage spaces | ... | but they lack a rattle-free lining |
| Metallic paintwork is standard | ... | but there's lots of painted metal on show inside |
| Low cargo deck makes loading easy | ... | but rear bumper vulnerable to scratches |