

DRIVE



# Plenty of room at a great price

## Fast facts

- Max speed: 131 mph
- 0-62 mph: 9.2 secs
- Combined mpg: 52.3
- Engine: 2184 cc 16v turbo diesel
- Max power (bhp): 161 at 3500 rpm
- Max torque (lb/ft): 266 at 1800 rpm
- Max towing weight (braked) 1600 kg
- CO2: 143 g/km
- Price: £22,480 on the road

## Pros 'n' cons

- Comfortable ✓
- Big load area ✓
- Economical ✓
- Pulling power ✓
- Dated exterior X

Mazda's big estate car looks nice enough from the outside, but it hardly stands out from the crowd. It even seems a little dated inside; the traditional handbrake, the swathes of black plastic and fairly dull fabric seats don't exactly 'wow' you.

But then you lift the tailgate to see a huge, square, load area . . . and then you notice there's ample room for three adults in the back seat. And it's only at that point that it dawns on you: the Mazda6 Estate is deliberately keeping a low profile because it has nothing to prove. It knows it can deliver what you want from a large estate car and it just gets on with it!

Seriously, the Mazda6's boot can fit just about anything into it, including the kitchen sink . . .

Oh, all right, I'm exaggerating!

But it really did help me take my bathroom sink and a massive roll of

carpet to the tip this week. And, en route, I found out that the car, in 2.2 TS2 turbo diesel 163 ps guise, is not only comfortable but it has lots of power in virtually any gear you decide to slip into. The 266lb/ft of pulling power makes the estate an ideal towing vehicle, too. It'll haul up to 1600kg, which is not bad.

I guess at this point it's probably worth me writing a few basic words of caution on towing.

Firstly, it's essential you always check your vehicle is capable of legally towing a fully laden trailer. If you don't take notice, not only are you putting yourself and other road users at greater risk of accident, but you risk a fine if stopped and found to be contravening the law. In the event of an accident, your insurance will be also invalidated.

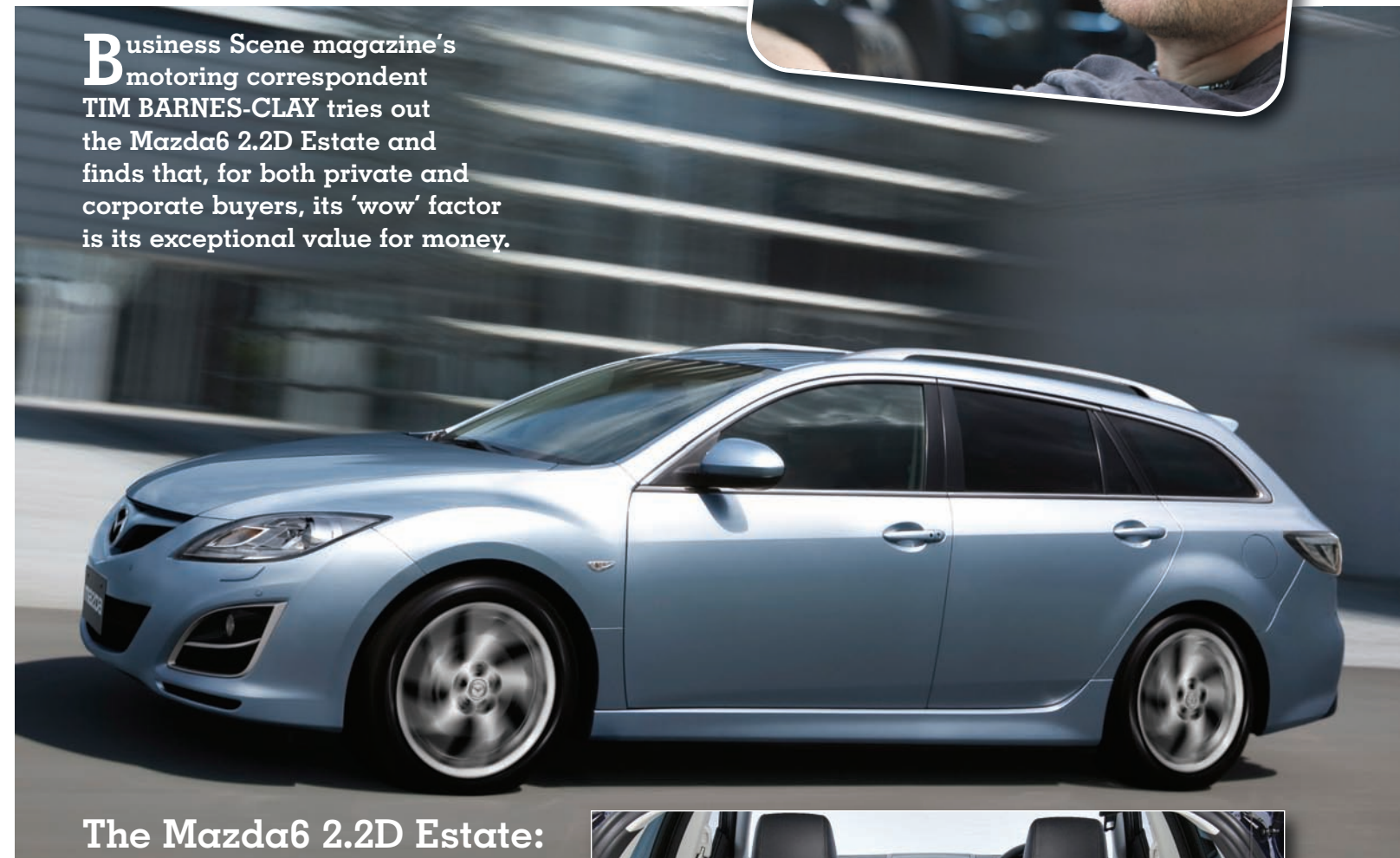
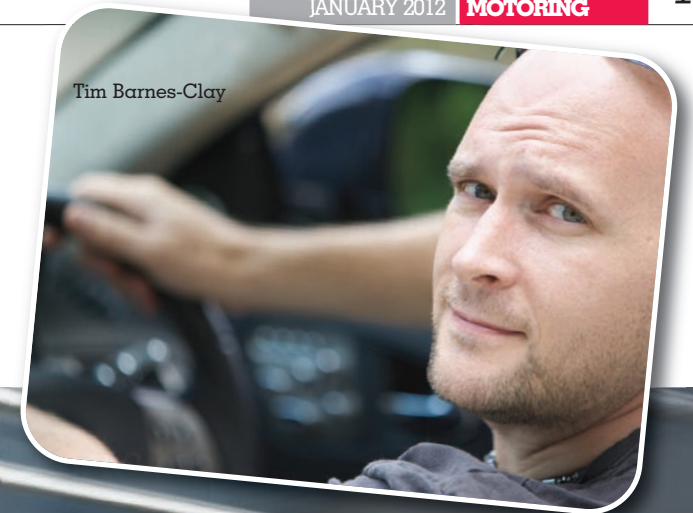
So, as a guide, the unladen weight of your trailer, plus the weight of your cargo, must not exceed the trailer's maximum authorised mass. This, in turn, should not exceed the car's maximum towing weight. I hope I've made that clear!

Back inside the Mazda6, the cabin materials, although muted, all look durable and give the impression the car will handle being used as a mobile office.

The black interior surfaces have a no-nonsense corporate appearance and the dark fabric seats look as though they'll handle years of use. The handy rear seat release levers in the load area make inserting any long

Business Scene magazine's motoring correspondent TIM BARNES-CLAY tries out the Mazda6 2.2D Estate and finds that, for both private and corporate buyers, its 'wow' factor is its exceptional value for money.

Tim Barnes-Clay



## The Mazda6 2.2D Estate: low profile until you lift its tailgate.

items (such as my roll of carpet) an absolute doddle and the seats are just as easy to click back into place again once the boot is emptied.

Getting a good driving position is easy in the load-lugging Mazda and visibility is excellent thanks to the deep windscreen and good height adjustment range of the driver's seat.

The knobs and dials on the dashboard are all laid out in a very business-like and functional way and, on the road, the car eats up the motorway miles effortlessly.

Midway through 2010, the Mazda6 range was refreshed and its engines were all tuned to deliver better economy and lower emissions. With that added knowledge mated to my few days behind the Mazda6's wheel, I'd say the Japanese estate is exceptional value for money for private and corporate buyers alike.



No-nonsense corporate appearance of the Mazda6 interior.



Room for the kitchen sink in this large estate car.