

Mercedes-Benz E220 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY Saloon Executive SE

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I **COMMUTE** 130 miles to my office quite regularly. It's not a pleasant journey driving eastbound along one of the UK's most congested A roads. Yes, that's right; I'm talking about the A14.

It's a dual carriageway where HGV's heading to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich take about 10 minutes to overtake each other - and when that's not happening I'm normally stuck in gridlocked traffic on the A14/A1 intersection.

Not that I'm complaining. Well, certainly not when driving the Mercedes-Benz E220. You see, the German motor is not really a car, it's better than that - it feels more like a great big mobile armchair. It's so comfortable and it has all the accoutrements that you need for a relaxed business-style commute on British roads.

On the move, the E220 soaks up potholes and glides along almost as if it was on a cushion of air. The rich sound system helps melt away any tension - it's so resonant that you really do feel like you are in your own living room. Back on planet earth, the sat-nav is easy to operate and the hands-free Bluetooth system is convenient. And when the traffic does grind to a halt, the cushioned headrests just take the stress out of things when you need to lay your head back and accept you're not going anywhere for a while.



PROS 'N' CONS

- Comfortable ✓
- Long distance cruising ✓
- Safe ✓
- Equipment ✓
- Cumbersome on country lanes X

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 142 mph
- 0-62 mph: 8.7 secs
- Combined mpg: 56.5
- Engine: 2143 cc 4 cylinder 16 valve twin turbo diesel
- Max. power (bhp): 168 at 3000 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 295 at 1400 - 2800 rpm
- Max. towing weight (braked) 1900 kg
- CO2: 133 g/km
- Price: £30,995 on the road

Okay, the Mercedes-Benz E220 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY is a large motor, so it sometimes feels a little heavy and unwieldy on twisty country lanes, but it feels safe - and it should do. You see, for more than 50 years, the saloons in the E-Class range have been acknowledged as trendsetters in the safety field. The current car continues this tradition with the very latest assistance and protection system. The technologies involved make the E-Class an "intelligent partner" who can see, feel and react reflexively in critical situations and, if necessary, act independently to prevent accidents or mitigate their consequences. With this concept the E220 not only protects you, but also contributes decisively to the greater safety of other road users.

Long-distance comfort and state-of-the-art safety aids aside, the Mercedes' combined fuel economy of 56.5 mpg means that you can enjoy prestige motoring without incurring high fuel costs. And with the E-Class emitting just 133 g/km CO₂, you can rest assured that this car is environmentally-friendly too.