



Citroën DS5 DStyle e-HDi 110 Airdream

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THIS IS a fine medium sized car - especially where looks and seating comfort are concerned. It's just a shame the six speed electronic gearbox blights an otherwise decent drive.

In auto mode my DS5 demo was a bit like a rocking horse sliding downhill. It rocked forwards then backwards every time it went up or down a cog. However, using the automated manual paddle shifts all was well, but that kind of defeats the object of having a car that's meant to change gear without you moving any body part unnecessarily.

While I'm in gripe-mode, I have to say that if you want a vehicle with a bit of a bite, then don't bother with the e-HDi 110 model. It's so sluggish - 0-62mph comes in a painfully slow 12 seconds. But, grumbles out of the way, and as I mentioned in the opener, the DS5 is a looker. If you want a French fancy with lots of interior frills and features too, then the Citroën will work for you.

The driver-focused cockpit fuses the driving position of a coupé with the finesse of a Gran Turismo. Highlights include a wraparound dashboard and wide central

console, whilst a tasteful analogue clock adds a touch of sophistication to the DS5's interior. LED lighting appears throughout, bathing the controls in an ambient display of intermittent reds and whites. Acoustic treatments ensure a high-quality cabin atmosphere and insulation from road and wind noise is excellent thanks to laminated windows.

Driven carefully (and let's face it, how can you not drive this unhurried DS5 model sensibly?) then it'll return up to 64.2mpg on an average run.

This is partly due to the Airdream model's Stop & Start micro-hybrid technology that reduces CO2 emissions by up to 15% when driving in congested areas. Other plus points consist of a three year, sixty thousand mile warranty and a maximum five star safety rating.

So, would I pay £24,900 for a dawdling, fluffy, eco-hatchback? I suspect not; but my mind might well change if I get the chance to drive the DS5 mated to a manual gearbox. For me, even though the car's slow on the uptake, the Citroën's EGS six-speed gearbox is the real fly in the ointment of an otherwise well-equipped, attractive motor.

PROS

- Looks
- Interior
- Fuel efficient
- Safe

CONS

- Slow
- Electronic gearbox

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 119 mph
- 0-62 mph: 12.0 secs
- Combined mpg: 64.2
- Engine: 1560 cc 4 cylinder 16 valve turbo diesel
- Max. power (bhp): 110 at 3600 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 199 at 1750 rpm
- CO2: 114 g/km
- Price: £24,900 on the road

