

CLASSIC DRIVER

Mercedes-Benz GL Class for 2006

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Mercedes-Benz has announced a new model in its range. The GL Class will rival Volvo's popular XC90 as an occasional off-roader with big cabin space. The car will be premiered at Detroit in January 2006, with deliveries of the US-built car starting in America in the spring, and Europe next September.

The car's dimensions (length 5088 mm, width 1920 mm, height 1840 mm) are promised to give ample space for up to seven passengers, and Mercedes promise two full-size seats right at the back. The distance to the middle row of seats is 815 mm, with 979 mm headroom for passengers. If you need fewer seats, the rear individual seats can be stowed electrically at the push of a button, either individually or in tandem to provide a completely flat load surface. In the five-seater version, luggage compartment capacity is 1240 litres. The GL-Class can provide up to 2300 litres of load capacity, with the load compartment measuring 2128 mm in length.

The THER-MATIC automatic climate control system fitted as standard in the GL 320 CDI provides consistent temperature for all seven seats both in the depths of winter and on those sweltering summer days. The versions with V8 engines such as the GL 420 CDI, GL 450 and GL 500 come with the standard-fit multi-zone THERMO-TRONIC system, which offers even more climatic comfort. Other standard-fit appointments include ARTICO man-made leather upholstery combinations, electrically adjustable front seats and a fixed rear glass roof above the third row of seats.



4MATIC – the permanent four-wheel drive from Mercedes-Benz – provides the GL-Class with handling to suit the conditions. It also has standard-fit AIRMATIC air suspension, speed-sensitive power steering and ADS Adaptive Damper System fitted as standard. Handling when pulling a trailer should be no less impressive thanks to the ESP® component TSA (Trailer Stability Assist). TSA defuses critical driving situations involving a trailer before they become dangerous by precisely applying the brakes, while AIRMATIC provides fully automatic level adjustment.

Special off-road features such as Downhill Speed Regulation (DSR), hill-start assist and off-road ABS assist the GL-Class driver off road. The Off-Road Pro engineering package, standard on all ECE models, means the GL-Class can also handle the most extreme off-road terrain. This includes a two-speed transfer case with a low range ratio and 100 percent differential locks for the transfer case and the rear axle. The modified AIRMATIC air suspension, designed specifically for the more demanding conditions, increases the ground clearance to a maximum of 307 millimetres where required, and raises the fording depth to 600 millimetres.



The engine line-up in all GL-Class models should provide competitive drive comfort, performance and fuel consumption figures compared with other vehicles in the class. Alongside the 165-kW/224-hp V6 engine in the GL 320 CDI, the range of diesel models includes the new-generation high-performance V8 diesel in the GL 420 CDI, which now has an out-put of 225 kW/ 306 hp and maximum torque of 700 Nm. Both diesel-powered versions undercut the EU 4 limits and feature a maintenance-free diesel particulate filter. In addition to the newly developed 5.5-litre, 285-kW/388-hp engine in the GL 500, launched earlier in the new S-Class, the second unit in this ultra-modern V8 family of engines is celebrating its world premiere in the GL-Class. In the GL 450 the 4.6-litre engine develops 250 kW/340 hp. Both engines also fulfil the stringent EU 4 limits (USA: LEV II standard).

All GL-Class engine variants come with the standard-fit 7G-TRONIC seven-speed automatic transmission with DIRECT SELECT. The claimed excellent performance and low fuel consumption result not just from the combination of ultra-modern engines with 7G-TRONIC and the friction-optimised powertrain, but also comparatively low gross vehicle weight thanks to the unitised body and the good aerodynamics (Cd 0.37) for such a large vehicle.

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