All-new BMW 1 Series

This is the second-generation version of BMW's smallest car, the 1 Series, which will go on sale in the UK on 17 September.

From launch, a choice of two turbocharged petrol (116i and 118i) and three diesel (116d, 118d and 120d) engines will be available. At a later stage, more powerful (and also a super-frugal, 74.3mpg 116d EfficientDynamics version, emitting just 99g/km of CO2) will be introduced into the freshly designed, almost coupé-like hatchback.

The new 1 Series will come in five-door guise to start, with a three-door appearing next year. Naturally, the Munich company has kept to its principles of inline engines and rear-wheel drive.

The new '1' takes its styling cues from bigger brother 5 Series and Z4. Its snouty twin-grille nose is wider, lower and less bluff than before, and fronts a longer bonnet. Sizewise, it's a touch longer and wider, allowing better interior packaging and a – altogether necessary – 20mm increase in rear legroom. Luggage capacity is increased by a handy 30 litres, to 360 litres.

As an option, BMW’s highly rated eight-speed automatic transmission can be specified, as can all manner of luxury car goodies that will swell the UK price of £19,375 for a BMW 116i ES ‘on the road’. Buyers can choose from the base model, an ‘SE’ which has a few extras as standard, ‘Sport’ for big wheels and one or two styling tweaks, and a new sub-class for BMW, ‘Urban’, which has funkier looks and some slightly off-the-wall colour combinations.

And the Classic Driver view? An eight-speed-auto 118i SE with navigation, uprated sound and leather would be a superlative daily driver, no slouch (0-62mph 7.4 seconds, 140mph maximum speed) and just the thing to accompany a 997 911 and a Maserati Sebring in the garage.

Text: Steve Wakefield
Photos: BMW

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