

Audi A4 Avant 2.0 TDI 190 S line

Price: £35,430

Engine: 2.0-litre 4cyl turbodiesel, 187bhp

0-60mph: 9.1 seconds (tested in damp)

Test economy: 39.4mpg/8.7mpl

CO₂: 113g/km **Annual road tax:** £30

MODEL TESTED: Audi A4 Avant 2.0 TDI 190 S tronic S line
PRICE: £35,430 **ENGINE:** 2.0-litre 4cyl, 187bhp

Driving 3.7/5

THE A4 Avant uses the same MLB architecture as the saloon, which has been created for cars with longitudinal engines. It's made with steel and aluminium, so it's strong yet lightweight, and saves around 100kg over the outgoing car, which helps to improve handling, performance and efficiency.

Unfortunately, damp conditions meant it couldn't match the performance figures of the saloon we tested in Issue 1,395. The Avant managed 0-60mph in 9.1 seconds, while the saloon recorded a time of 7.0 seconds, but as the cars have identical kerbweights, they should deliver similarly impressive performance.

Still, the A4 Avant was faster than the Passat in the rain, even though they use the same 187bhp 2.0-litre diesel. Closely stacked lower ratios in the seven-speed twin-clutch gearbox boosted the A4's performance, although it struggled in higher gears.

Seventh gear is especially long, making for frustrating progress. The top ratio is so tall that the engine is turning over at just 1,400rpm at 70mph, which means the gearbox kicks down to sixth with even the lightest touch of the throttle, and the downshift is rather jerky, so progress is far from smooth. This is a shame, because in every

other respect, the Avant is quiet and composed, with low levels of wind and road noise.

Adding 19-inch wheels means the ride is firm around town, but it settles down at higher speeds. The larger tyres promote torque steer on bumpy roads and follow cambers in the tarmac, though.

Yet the biggest disappointment is the lacklustre handling. Drivers expecting the same agility and engagement found in MQB cars, like the Passat, will be surprised that the A4 isn't nearly as responsive.

The steering is reasonably precise and there's good grip, but it isn't as involving overall as the 3 Series. While the BMW dives eagerly into corners, the Audi feels slower to respond and lacks enthusiasm; even the Passat has a livelier feel.



CO₂/tax

113g/km
£30 or 20%



Practicality

Boot (seats up/down)
505/1,510 litres



Performance

0-60/30-70mph
9.1/7.7 seconds



Braking

70-0/60-0/30-0mph
56.2/32.6/8.8m



Running costs

39.4mpg (on test)
£40 fill-up

BMW 320d Touring M Sport

Price: £35,620

Engine: 2.0-litre 4cyl turbodiesel, 187bhp

0-60mph: 7.2 seconds

Test economy: 48.7mpg/10.7mpl

CO₂: 119g/km **Annual road tax:** £30

MODEL TESTED: BMW 320d Touring M Sport
PRICE: £35,620 **ENGINE:** 2.0-litre 4cyl, 187bhp

Driving 4.6/5

THE 3 Series has consistently been the handling benchmark in the compact executive class, and the Touring estate is just as accomplished as the saloon. Strong performance and agility are expected, but it's the comfort and refinement that give the latest BMW a narrow edge here.

Behind the 320d's trademark double-kidney grille is a 2.0-litre diesel that serves up the same 187bhp as the TDI unit found in the A4 and Passat. We managed to test the 3 Series on a dry track, and recorded a best time of 7.2 seconds, but while that was quicker than the Audi and VW, which were hampered by damp conditions, it's not as fast as the A4 saloon we tested in the dry in Issue 1,395.

The 3 Series and A4 were well matched during our in-gear assessments, with similar acceleration times in third and fourth. In higher gears, a better spread of ratios meant the BMW was happy to accelerate even in eighth, and it didn't suffer from the sensitive kickdown that plagues the A4.

Away from the track, there's virtually nothing to separate our trio. The 3 Series' engine has a gruffer note than the Audi's, although both cars have plenty

of insulation to keep their cabins quiet, and the BMW pulls strongly and revs keenly to its 5,000rpm red line, allowing you to breeze past slower traffic. Better still, the keen acceleration means you'll spend less time on straights before you get to a corner, where the 320d excels thanks to its suspension and steering tweaks.

Here, the balanced rear-wheel-drive handling, well weighted and progressive steering plus strong grip combine to deliver proper driver engagement. Also, you can adjust the steering and throttle settings using the four-stage Drive Performance Control, although the EcoPro mode severely blunts responses.

The Passat feels nearly as nimble, but unfortunately the Audi can't compete. What's more, the BMW's poise and pace don't come at the expense of comfort. Our test car had the excellent £515 adaptive dampers, which deliver a supple ride in Comfort, yet tense up for rock-solid body control in Sport mode. If you select only one option when specifying a 3 Series, then we'd recommend this suspension upgrade.



CO₂/tax

119g/km

£30 or 21%



Practicality

Boot (seats up/down)

495/1,500 litres



Performance

0-60/30-70mph

7.2/7.2 seconds



Braking

70-0/60-0/30-0mph

62.4/33.1/8.2m



Running costs

48.7mpg (on test)

£58 fill-up

Volkswagen Passat Estate 2.0 TDI 190 R Line

Price: £30,770

Engine: 2.0-litre 4cyl turbodiesel, 187bhp

0-60mph: 9.3 seconds (tested in damp)

Test economy: 44.3mpg/9.7mpl

CO₂: 110g/km **Annual road tax:** £20

MODEL TESTED: VW Passat Estate 2.0 TDI 190 DSG R Line
PRICE: £30,770 **ENGINE:** 2.0-litre 4cyl, 187bhp

Driving 4.2/5

AS with the A4 Avant, the Passat Estate tested here is powered by a 187bhp 2.0 TDI diesel, although it sits transversely in the engine bay, not lengthways like the Audi's. Our test model had a six-speed manual gearbox, but it shared its ratios with the six-speed DSG, so real-world acceleration figures are similar.

We performance tested a manual Passat on the same damp track as the A4 Avant, but the slippery conditions meant we couldn't get the power down consistently and managed a best 0-60mph time of only 9.3 seconds. VW quotes 0-62mph in 7.9 seconds for the DSG model, which is the same as the A4 Avant with the same engine, although our figures through the gears from 30-70mph put the Passat three-tenths

behind the Audi. In-gear performance trailed the A4's slightly due to the wider spacing of the six-speed box.

On the road, the Passat delivers an excellent mix of comfort and handling. Turn-in is eager, there's decent body control and the VW feels more agile and alert than the Audi in bends. Our car had the £185 XDS electronic diff, which boosts cornering ability by lightly applying the brake to the inside front wheel to keep the nose tight to the apex. This all but eliminates understeer.

Take it easy, and the VW is supremely refined. There's very little engine noise, and the suspension soaks up bumps in town well. R Line models feature firmer suspension than the standard Passat, but you'd hardly call it uncomfortable. Head for the motorway, and while there's a bit more tyre noise than in the standard Passat, the soft suspension, quiet engine and standard adaptive cruise control combine to make the VW a capable long-distance driver.



CO₂/tax

110g/km
£20 or 20%



Practicality

Boot (seats up/down)
650/1,780 litres



Performance

0-60/30-70mph
9.3 (damp)/8.0 seconds



Braking

70-0/60-0/30-0mph
52.0/31.9/9.9m



Running costs

44.3mpg (on test)
£67 fill-up

COMPARING DRIVING PARAMETERS OF Audi A4 Avant, BMW 320d Touring, Volkswagen Passat Estate.

THE VOCABULARY TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE TEXTS ☺

<p>Audi A4 Avant</p> <p>outgoing car – poprzedni model handling – obsługa steering - prowadzenie performance – osiągi efficiency - wydajność downshift – redukcja boost – zwiększać, poprawiać struggle – zmagać się, wysilać się composed – opanowany, zrównoważony tarmac - asfalt cambers – wyboje lacklustre – bez wyrazu responsive – czuły, elastyczny progress - przyspieszenie</p>	<p>BMW 320d Touring</p> <p>benchmark – punkt odniesienia accomplished - doskonały refinement - wyrafinowanie narrow edge - przewaga hamper - ograniczać better spread of ratios – lepiej dobrane przełożenia at the expense of - kosztem</p> <p>Volkswagen Passat Estate</p> <p>transversely – w poprzek lengthways – wzdłuż damp – wilgoć, mokro slippery - śliski</p>
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READ THE TEXTS ABOUT Audi A4 Avant, BMW 320d Touring AND Volkswagen Passat Estate AND FIND THE EQUIVALENTS OF THE FOLLOWING POLISH WORDS IN ENGLISH.

Audi A4 Avant	
wzdłużnie umieszczony silnik	
masa własna pojazdu	
siedmiobiegowa skrzynia biegów	
dwusprzęgłowa skrzynia biegów	
moment obrotowy	
brać zakręty	
pryczepność	
BMW 320d Touring	
ocena skrzyni biegów	
zrzucanie biegu na niższy	
wyciszenie	
zawieszenie	
napęd na tylne koła	
Volkswagen Passat Estate	
komora silnika	
na zakrętach	
podsterowność	

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Audi A4 Avant

1. What is the difference between Audi A4 Avant and its previous version?
2. Why can't the results of the Avant be compared with these of the saloon?
3. What is the problem with the seventh gear?
4. Why is handling disappointing?

BMW 320d Touring

1. What were the results of the in-gear assessment?
2. What is the difference between driving in Comfort and Sport mode?

Volkswagen Passat Estate

1. What were the consequences of testing the car in slippery conditions?
2. Does XDS electronic diff eliminate understeer?

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE THREE CARS?

Audi A4 Avant	
Advantages	Disadvantages
BMW 320d Touring	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Volkswagen Passat Estate	
Advantages	Disadvantages

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