Kia Proceed 1.6 GDI GT estate – Road Test

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Author: Robin Roberts

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Kia ProCeed 1.6T GDI GT family sports estate...

...By Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

On the back of their best-ever half-year sales performance, Kia has launched a series of updates across its range for 2020.

As it prepares to roll out some new models and expand its electric model choices, the Korean car-maker cannot seem to let a wheel slip in the showrooms and takes every opportunity to build on its success.

Part of that is completely new product while some careful marketing also means special editions and updates to firm favourites, such as the stylish Kia ProCeed five door family estate.

It’s a comprehensive make-over for the Kia range with the entry level Picanto getting stop & go and new trim; a ProCeed special edition is added; Ceed is given updated satnav and display; Sportage gets 48V mild hybrid system on diesels and the stunning Stinger is fitted with electronically controlled suspension and offered in electric blue paint, with a 2.0 petrol engine.

The ProCeed range runs to nine models with choice of 138 bhp 1.4 and 201 bhp 1.6 petrol engines, manual and automatic gearboxes, or 134 bhp 1.6 diesel, also with six-speed manual or seven-speed automatic boxes. Current prices run from £23,840 to £29,460.

We have previously tested the Kia ProCeed 1.6 CRDI GT-Line 134 bhp diesel with manual gearbox and this time went for the 201 bhp 1.6 GDI turbo-petrol with seven-speed automatic transmission.

The Kia ProCeed shooting brake reflects its sporting style, falling between a conventional saloon or hatchback and full estate body styles and it’s a popular design trend among up-market manufacturers. It’s also an alternative to the now ubiquitous cross-overs and SUVs and sets owners apart from them.

The gutsy 1.6 GT turbo petrol engine is used in the Ceed GT and does a very good job delivering strong pulling power for a quick getaway and overtaking while returning satisfying real-world economy and potentially more if you are really gentle on the throttle.

Pick up is good with 265 Nm (195 lb.ft) between 1,500 and 4,500 rpm but you have to “manage” the automatic transmission to get the most out of it as the top three ratios are overdrive and do not provide a lot of pull. Use the manual mode and it transforms the ProCeed GT into a much more sporting model, and that can be useful if loaded or towing.

Power delivery was instant, unhesitating and strong with very smooth changes through the gears, even decelerating and is the first use of Kia’s new dual clutch transmission, offering selectable normal or sport modes to meet a driver’s wishes.

It wasn’t particularly noisy either and when pushed it generated a pleasant growl and deeper exhaust note, but never seemed stressed or strained.

Steering and brakes were faultless, with a good turning circle and feedback, excellent strong stopping ability with modest pressure underfoot, and the parking brake was very effective.

Secondary controls were packed onto the steering wheel spokes, column stalks, along the fascia and console and need familiarisation but worked well and silently. Instruments were not large but simple and clear with a changeable display infront of the driver and an eight-

inch infotainment screen on the console top.

There are multiple airbags throughout, advanced braking with cruise control, parking assist features and integrated communications so as not to distract the driver.

Heating and ventilation was straightforward, worked well and quietly with good output, temperature control and distribution in the cabin. Oddments room was reasonably good for a family car.

I liked the deeply shaped and supporting seats, set lower in the ProCeed than its hatchback stablemate to compensate for the lower roofline in the completely different body to the original five-door design. Seat adjustment was wide and there was plenty of leg, shoulder and headroom.

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Even in the back the seats were cushioning and roomy with generous support and quickly folded down to gradually increase luggage space. The loadbed was low, long and flat but not particularly high with the coupé-like flowing roofline.

The wrap-around effect of the rear half design and deep c-pillars meant rear vision was restricted and you have to rely on sensors and a reversing camera, which is not always ideal.

This Kia comes highly specified even in standard versions, and combined with a keen pricing structure it will give many more expensive executive cars a run for their money and lacks nothing in sophistication and refinement, but beats most with its very long warranty and residual value.

Access to the loadspace and cabin was very good, wide-opening doors and a high-lift fifth door mean you can easily get in or out, or load items.

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The ProCeed 1.6 GDI rode and handled very well for what is not a sports car. It absorbed most bumps without pushing them through the cabin even if you could hear the suspension working away and tyres rumbling over tarmac. A few really bad potholes did make themselves felt but generally it was a very composed chassis and suspension.

There was a tendency to understeer and run wide on tight turns but nothing to really concern a driver and it all came together when you eased off the throttle or steering. Body roll was minimal as was pitching under braking or acceleration.

High performance automatically adjusting headlights, big wipers and strong wash-wipe functions meant good vision at all times.

VERDICT

The Kia ProCeed 1.6 GDI is eye-catching both outside and in, it lacks little, goes well and economically, and has a refinement which many rivals would envy, particularly at this price.

It is easy to see why Kia has done so well in the UK with its strong design, engineering and marketing.

For: Engine and gearbox very smooth, lively performance, economical, refined; excellent seats and comfortable ride, very good warranty.

Against: Some rear visibility issues, not a huge maximum loadspace, rumbles from suspension and road surfaces.

Mini Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Kia ProCeed 1.6T GDI GT family estate.

Price: £28,140.

Mechanical: 201 bhp, four cylinder, 1,591cc turbo-petrol engine, seven-speed auto.

Performance: 140 mph, 0–60 mph 7.2 seconds.

Fuel consumption: Combined cycle 38.6 mpg

Emissions and taxation: C02 emissions: 142 g/km, VED road tax £205/£145. BiK company car tax 29%.

Insurance Group: 21.

Warranty: Seven years/100,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities:

L 4.61 m (15.12 ft), W 1.80 m (5.91 ft) , H 1.43 m (4.69 ft), Boot/load space 594 – 1,465 litres (20.98–51.74 cu.ft).