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Latest Audi A5 Cabriolet – Road Test

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Audi's A5 Cabriolet.

...test-driven by Robin Roberts (Miles Better News Agency).

Audi know a thing or two about successful niche marketing, and the revised A5 Cabriolet is a brilliant example of the brand doing what it does best, but at a price.

It's not cheap but its very, very good and the range is extensive and comes with a lot of tempting options - which you have to very carefully pick over to ensure you get exactly what you want.



Revised in 2016, the A5 Cabriolet four-seater is now lighter, larger inside with added comfort and convenience features including seat belt microphones, one touch powered fabric hood and front or four-wheel-drive, with a choice of seven petrol or diesel engines, all based around the packages for the A5 coupé.

More significant changes have been made to the front and rear suspension design, steering and chassis to make it more rigid but also lighter, at the same time as improving roadholding and handling.



We were given the highly popular A5 Cabriolet S line Sport with permanent four-wheel-



drive and the 252 bhp four cylinder petrol engine mated to a seven speed automatic/manual gearbox. Options on the test car included bigger wheels and tyres - which increased emissions and first year tax fee, rear camera, storage pack, technology pack and virtual cockpit.

The beefy turbo-charged petrol engine was an instant starter, pulled well from low revs and through the gears without any audible complaint or sign of hesitation in the 1,710 kg (3,770 lb) test car.

Changes were silken and swift whether going up or down the box and in a slick movement you could use column-mounted paddles or the gearstick to make manual changes if preferred, without losing any refinement.

Without trying we averaged 35 mpg, while at steady motorway speed we saw it heading towards 40 mpg, and even in town it did not dip below 30 mpg.



I loved the weight and feedback through the steering wheel, the good turning circle and lack of any vibration at speed even over bad roads and the brakes always inspired confidence as well as admiration for the way they effortlessly slowed the car with utter control and the parking brake held it on a our regular test slope.

The new suspension has given the car sharper handling and better control while the longer wheelbase and wider track improve the ride quality, and our test car had the optional individual settings system for the ultimate in personal taste.

With a quick-folding big hood you lose a little vision to the rear when in place but it's not much thanks to the low waistline and big window. It's the slow wipers in heavy rain at



motorway speed which were of more concern to me. Lights are bright, far reaching and their LED beams clearly define the road and hazards ahead without blinding oncoming drivers.

Inside, the driver has an enormous amount of information before their eyes and fingers with the optional active instruments display tailored to particular requirements, with large and small gauges as selected, and all were clear and bright in any light conditions.

Column stalks controlled most-used secondary features, with additional buttons or rotary controls on the centre console, the infotainment display or on the lower edge of the fascia. Once you get used to the positioning and roles you appreciate their effectiveness.

Heating and ventilation was very good, particularly when the roof was down and you could have warm air throughout to feet as well as heated seats for the colder but bright winter days. It was a powerful, well directed and sensitive system and with the hood latched down it was very warm inside.

The boot space was good but not massive. You have to load items carefully to maximise the capacity available and the ability to drop the seat backs was useful to simply increase the load area.

Getting into the back seats was not too difficult thanks to the big doors and electrically moved front seats, and once seated the room in the back was good for anyone up to teenagers and even headroom was generous with the roof closed.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

In front the head, leg and elbow room were all very good and you could easily tailor the steering and set the memory for that and seats. Oddments space was adequate but not generous, with some space lost to the shaping of the door bins so I settled for the trays and recesses on the console and a small bin between the front seats.



There are not many four-seater convertibles on the market while there are more 2+2 types or simple two-seaters and they come in with a stiff price ticket. You really have to decide if you want and will like a convertible four-seater, but the Audi A5 Cabriolet range gives you the additional option of a four-wheel-drive transmission for bad weather roads without compromising sophistication.

VERDICT

It really is an open or shut case in favour of the Audi A5 Cabriolet 2.0 quattro.

For: Refined, roomy, responsive, smooth-riding, sophisticated, cosy interior. Lots of kerb appeal.

Against: Expensive options push up the final price and BiK tax penalties, modest boot space & opening, slow wipers at high speed, restricted rear visibility with the roof raised.



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

Audi A5 Cabriolet S line 2.0 quattro auto.

Price: £45,390 (as tested £50,150).

Engine/transmission: 2.0 litre, four cylinder 252 bhp turbo-petrol, seven speed auto, quattro AWD.



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Performance: 149 mph, 0-62 mph 6.3 seconds.

Fuel consumption: 35 mpg.

Emissions and taxation: CO2 152 g/km, VED road tax £500 First Year rate then £140 Standard rate plus £310 annual supplement for five years as the vehicle costs more than £40. BiK company car tax 29%.

Insurance Group: 34E.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4.64 m (15.22 ft), W 1.95 m (6.40 ft), H 1.39 m (4.56 ft), boot space 380 litres (13.42 cu.ft), two doors/four seats.