

SPECIAL REPORT

BMW X2 HAS USER-CHOOSERS IN ITS SIGHTS

Latest addition to Group's X range has the design and high-tech features that are bound to appeal to fleets



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Launch of BMW X2 puts focus on driving dynamics

Compact SUV sits lower than its X1 stablemate for improved fuel economy



The BMW X2 combines stand-out design and desirable hi-tech features that help give it unique appeal for user-choosers as a company car.

The latest member of the X family, launched this spring, is a compact SUV, like the X1, but trades some of the ruggedness for a sleeker coupé silhouette, with a greater focus on driving dynamics.

Although it has a similar footprint on the road to the X1, being just 2cm shorter, the X2 is 7cm lower, bringing advantages in aerodynamics resulting in improved fuel economy, as well as a lower centre of gravity, making the car feel more engaging and responsive.

A rear spoiler helps contribute to the X2's low Cd figure of 0.28, which would have been exceptional for a family hatchback not too long ago.

Short overhangs mean interior space is maximised for the X2's size, as well as giving it a more purposeful stance.

The X2 debuts a new BMW design cue, with the twin 'kidney' grille more elongated at its base than at the top, and helping make the car seem broader and giving it greater presence on the road.

The X2 range is offered in SE, Sport, M Sport and M Sport X derivatives. Full LED headlights come as standard on Sport, M Sport and M Sport X models.

The bi-LED light for low beam and high beam is more effective at illuminating the road.

The M Sport and M Sport X models are available with wheels up to 20 inches, which is uncommon for the compact crossover segment.

As standard, both models are fitted with 19-inch wheels. Standard wheels for the SE

model are 17-inch V-Spoke style light alloy wheels, but 10 other rim designs can be specified as options.

The side skirts of the BMW X2 help emphasise its dual role as part-SUV.

The cladding is black on the SE and Sport models and grey on the M Sport X. The C-pillars feature the BMW roundel for the first time on any model in the range.

On the SE and Sport models, the rear bumper comes in the vehicle colour and matt black. The M Sport models feature a diffuser-look cladding inlay in metallic dark grey. M Sport X models, meanwhile, get a bespoke diffuser insert in the same grey as the side cladding.

Inside, all but the SE variant come with a black high-gloss trim on the dashboard, while all derivatives have contrasting stitching in the instrument panel surround.

The interior of the M Sport model comes with a combination of fabrics in the upholstery, including Alcantara, with the M Sport X adding leather upholstery as standard.

Eye-catching highlights can be added by opting for the new, perforated Dakota leather in Magma Red or the fabric combination upholstery with yellow contrast stitching to match the Galvanic Gold metallic exterior paint shade.

An optional lighting package in the Plus pack allows drivers to set their own lighting mood for the interior by choosing from a range of colours.

The LED lighting in the trim surfaces of the instrument panel and door panels forms a continuous band that extends all the way around the cabin to the rear.

There is also a two-part panoramic roof option that opens like a conventional sunroof.

The X2 is currently available with a choice of two diesel engines and one petrol engine. Dependent on specification, CO₂ emissions start at 118g/km for the front-wheel drive 18d sDrive, and 133g/km for the front-wheel drive 20i sDrive.

The 20d is available only as a four-wheel drive xDrive variant, while xDrive is offered as an option on the 18d, for those who want the all-weather benefit and security of all-wheel drive traction.

The 18d comes with a six-speed manual gearbox, whether choosing sDrive or xDrive, while the 20d xDrive is only offered with an eight-speed automatic. The 20i sDrive has a seven-speed dual-clutch automatic.

An all-wheel drive xDrive 20i will launch in 2019, as well as a more powerful diesel variant, the XDrive 25d, making it available across the entire range.

The X2's driving responses can be adapted by using the Driving Experience Control switch, allowing the driver to choose between default 'comfort' mode, efficiency-enhancing 'Eco Pro' mode and 'sport' mode.

The pre-programmed set-up available via sport mode gives the car quicker steering and sharper throttle responses.

If the optional Dynamic Damper Control is specified, the car's suspension can be adjusted even more precisely to individual requirements. Drivers can choose between two settings – 'comfort' or 'sport' – using the Driving Experience Control switch.

The result is firmer suspension offering solid road holding and reassuring comfort over any surface.

The M Sport suspension fitted as standard on the BMW X2 M Sport and M Sport X includes tauter spring and damper tuning and is 10mm lower than the standard suspension.

The X2 offers the now familiar iDrive Controller and optional voice control (within Tech pack) with touchscreen operation as standard for the control display. The touchscreen can also be used easily by the front passenger.

Standard specification for every BMW X2 includes a 6.5-inch Touch Control Display with navigation system. The display is designed to provide the driver with a quick summary of the most important information at any particular time.

There is the option of the full-colour head-up display, also featured within the Technology Pack, which projects driving information and navigation/assistance system readouts onto the windscreen into the driver's field of view.

BMW Connected+ provides integration between smartphones and the car via the control display. One example of a new Connected+ service is Share Live Trip Status which allows the driver to share their current location and time of arrival with business colleagues, friends or family.

Among the other highlight features enabling connectivity anytime, anywhere are the optional WiFi hotspot preparation (available in Tech Pack), which equips the BMW X2 to host a built-in WiFi hotspot with LTE speeds, and optional wireless charging (available in Tech Pack) for compatible smartphones.

Apple CarPlay is also available, but only via a factory order option code.

A suite of the latest safety and assistance systems are available in the Drive Pack, with further features in the Driving Assistant Plus pack.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BMW X FAMILY



X1
Now in its second-generation, the X1 offers a choice of petrol and diesel, front-wheel drive and four-wheel drive in a compact SUV package. The X1 complements its rugged looks with a spacious interior for a compact SUV and offers competitive fuel efficiency and running costs for fleet operators.



X3
BMW's medium SUV entered its third generation in 2017, with a new 2.0-litre petrol engine offered in the UK alongside diesel variants. The entire line-up comes with all-wheel drive ability as standard, and 50:50 front-to-rear weight distribution, while there is a new high-performance version for the first time in the new X3 M40i.



X4
New for 2018, the second-generation X4 combines coupé styling with all-terrain ability, and includes more generous interior dimensions than its predecessor as well as new technology. To maximise appeal across the range of user-choosers, the X4 has a high-performance diesel in the X4 M40d as an alternative to the petrol-powered X4 M40i.



X5
The original X5 helped set the trend for 4x4s that had off-road ability yet were capable of engaging the driver on asphalt too. Available with a choice of four-cylinder and six-cylinder diesels, the X5 also has a range of petrol and high-performance X5 M diesel options, as well as a plug-in hybrid to appeal to those who want to minimise their BIK tax liability.



New X5
The all-new X5 SUV has been redesigned and is now bigger and better to drive than ever. Two efficient, yet powerful, diesel engines are available, alongside a petrol option. The most frugal xDrive30d achieves average fuel consumption of 47.1mpg with CO₂ emissions of 158g/km. The X5 also has a host of innovative safety features.



X6
The X6 was the first car to combine the exclusivity of a coupé body with the ability of a 4x4. Many others have since followed and more rivals are on the way. The range includes a choice of three six-cylinder diesel power outputs, including a high-performance X5 M50d, as well as a V8 petrol version.



Lighter, longer, roomier – that's the latest BMW X4

Inside and out this second-generation SUV has premium feel drivers expect

"BMW Connected enables route planning to be carried out on any device while taking real-time traffic information into account"



Latest X4 has a more aerodynamic shape

The second-generation X4 is new for 2018 and, although more spacious than its predecessor, it also weighs less and has a more aerodynamic shape.

The new BMW X4 is 81mm longer than its predecessor, with 54mm added to the wheelbase and 37mm extra width. It is also 3mm lower.

While the X4 retains the brand's trademark BMW grille and twin headlight units, the new horizontal LED fog lights integrated into the outer air intakes distinguish the front end from the other X models. All models feature adaptive LED headlights as standard.

There are three model derivatives, with Sport as the entry-level variant, offering standard leather upholstery, variable sports steering and M Sport suspension, reversing camera and parking assistance, standing on 18-inch wheels.

The M Sport model has a more dynamic look, hinting at its more performance-oriented driving experience with aerodynamically optimised front and rear aprons and side skirts, and accents in high-gloss black.

M Sport X adds some off-road enhancements, with styling accents in grey, as well as unique air intakes, side skirts and rear underguard.

In addition, the new X4 can now also be specified with options from the BMW Individual portfolio. Extras designed to give the exterior design a more exclusive feel include the BMW Individual

paint finish Sunstone metallic and 21-inch BMW Individual light-alloy wheels.

The X4's interior has a premium feel and attention to detail is in keeping with a vehicle in this sector, while sports seats with contoured side bolsters provide improved lateral support in extreme handling situations.

Electric window buttons, the start/stop button, the multifunction buttons on the sports steering wheel and the controls on the centre console can have galvanic detailing as an option.

Meanwhile, ambient lighting, adding extra light sources around the centre console and instrument panel, in the door panelling and in the footwells, enhances the sense of wellbeing. The lighting mood can be adjusted by the driver, with a choice of six colours.

The specification of each of the M Sport and M Sport X models includes exclusive interior design features which set them apart.

The M Sport model also comes with M-specific sports seats, an M leather steering wheel and an anthracite-coloured BMW Individual headliner, complemented by interior trim strips in 'aluminium rhombic' with accent strips in pearl-effect chrome. The M Sport X model features all of the M Sport interior content with a unique dark aluminium rhombic and pearl-effect chrome accent trim.

The standard Vernasca leather upholstery is now also available in Tacora Red alongside a

new black with red contrast stitching option, both exclusive to the all-new BMW X4.

The BMW Individual portfolio offers an additional number of model-specific options. These include BMW Individual extended Merino leather upholstery (in the colour combinations ivory white/black, Fiona red/black and Tartufo/black), BMW Individual interior trim in piano black and door sill strips with BMW Individual lettering.

A wider choice of optional extras compared to the outgoing model offers greater scope for customers to increase the comfort and functionality of their X4.

The range includes electrically adjustable seats, heat seating for the front and rear and active seat ventilation. A panoramic glass roof with much larger dimensions than the predecessors can also be chosen as an option. The sun-blind is electrically operated, as is the front section of the glass roof.

The standard acoustic glass for the windscreen reduces noise levels while driving, while the front side windows can be specified with this type of glass as an option.

Another new option is the BMW Display Key. Fuel level, remaining range and service information are all shown on its 2.2-inch touch display, while the key can also be used to lock the doors, close the windows and operate the optional auxiliary heating system.

Three full-size seats are fitted in the rear

compartment of the X4, providing passengers with an additional 27mm of legroom over the previous model. The boot has a capacity of 525 litres and the load space can be expanded to a maximum of 1,430 litres by folding down the sections of the rear backrest, with its standard 40:20:40 split.

There is also the option of the extended storage pack, comprising features such as additional hinged compartments, USB ports and 12V sockets, as well as multifunctional hooks and lashing rails in the boot.

The X4 has the latest-generation power units including three diesel engines – xDrive20d, 30d and M40d. Joining the BMW M Performance model of the M40d will be the petrol-powered six-cylinder in-line engine M40i. All model variants direct their engine's power to the road via an eight-speed Steptronic transmission and BMW xDrive intelligent all-wheel drive. Gear selections can be made manually using the shift paddles on the steering wheel.

The BMW M Performance models and the BMW X4 xDrive30d are equipped with an eight-speed Steptronic Sport transmission offering fast gear changes as well as a 'launch control' function. The standard-fit Driving Experience Control switch lets drivers choose from 'sport', 'comfort' and 'Eco Pro' set-ups, while the BMW X4 M40i, BMW X4 M40d and BMW X4 xDrive30d models also add a 'sport+' mode.

All model variants comply with the require-

ments of the EU6d emissions standard. The system of emission control for the petrol engine includes a particulate filter that reduces particulate emissions, while the diesel models feature BMW BluePerformance technology comprising a particulate filter, an oxidation catalyst, a NOx adsorption catalyst, as well as an SCR catalyst with AdBlue injection.

The X4 xDrive 20d, producing 190PS, offers CO₂ emissions from 142g/km, dependent on specification.

The X4 comes with the latest version of the iDrive operating system, with its 6.5-inch Control Display screen.

The voice control system has also been improved and can now follow freely formulated instructions. There is also the option of using BMW gesture control, allowing certain functions to be operated with simple movements of the hand or fingers, which are registered by a 3D sensor in the centre console and translated into the relevant commands.

The X4 has standard cruise control with braking function as well as collision and pedestrian warning with city collision mitigation. The optional semi-autonomous active cruise control with 'Stop & Go' traffic jam assistance function is capable of braking the vehicle to a halt and setting off again automatically.

The Driving Assistant Plus safety pack includes a Steering and Lane Control assistant,

Lane Keeping Assistant with active side collision protection, and Crossing Traffic.

BMW ConnectedDrive offers intelligent connectivity between car, driver and the outside world and assists with journey planning.

Using a flexible, open mobility cloud platform, BMW Connected works alongside Apple iPhones and iWatches, smartphones and smartwatches running the Android operating system, and the Amazon Alexa voice-controlled personal assistants.

BMW Connected enables route planning to be carried out on any device, based on calendar entries, while taking real-time traffic information into account and making allowance for a refuelling stop if necessary. It then transfers the data to the car's navigation system when it is time to set off. A message notifying the user of the ideal departure time is sent to their smartphone or chosen device. In addition, the personal mobility assistant also lets customers call up vehicle data such as fuel level and range via their device or lock the vehicle via Remote Services, a feature which comes as standard.

Other features include BMW Connected+, which allows the driver to share current trip status by text message; live link (Share Live Trip Status) and seamless transfer of route guidance to a smartphone or smartwatch once the car has been parked, allowing full door-to-door navigation.



Joined up thinking – how BMW meets customer expectations

Once you have enjoyed the benefits of tech such as RTTI you won't want to go back



Drivers expect to be able to use phone technology in many aspects of life – including their cars

Vehicles have become increasingly connected in recent years to keep up with customer expectations and demands for an extension of the technology they use in everyday life.

Chris Hollis, product manager for BMW ConnectedDrive, says the Group has long been at the forefront of offering new features that help drivers with convenience.

He says some of the latest technology can also positively impact the bottom line of a business operating company cars by helping reduce costs.

He says: "Customers now expect a high level of connectivity in all vehicles, be that Bluetooth and navigation, or digital services such as Real Time Traffic Information (RTTI) or Remote Services.

"Where BMW is concerned, all models come with digital radio, built-in 4G Sim, BMW navigation and Bluetooth as standard.

"In addition, vehicles get a great level of ConnectedDrive technologies as part of standard three-year subscriptions across all models.

"This now includes ConnectedDrive Services, Emergency eCall (for the lifetime of vehicle), BMW Online, Map Updates (either USB or Over the Air), Connected+, access to the BMW Connected App, RTTI and the introduction of Remote Services (for the lifetime of the vehicle)."

Hollis says some of the features are not merely a showcase for what BMW can offer, but a successful anticipation of what customers will soon be looking for in their next car.

He says there is a good mix between meeting customer demand and anticipating future needs through innovation, and often there are no additional subscription costs during a fleet lifecycle.

"All BMW vehicles have Remote Services and RTTI as standard," he says. "This means no extra costs from third party providers for the first three years of the vehicle lifecycle on RTTI so there is a financial consideration.

"Remote Services can be used to organise your

"Customers now expect a high level of connectivity in all vehicles"

Chris Hollis, product manager for BMW ConnectedDrive



day with routes sent directly to the navigation which is a great time saver. Fuel and range can be reviewed remotely via the Connected App.

"Remote lock/unlock feature provides a safety net in case you lock keys in your vehicle, so no need for expensive call out charges."

RTTI – accurate traffic information – means fleet customers spend less time stuck in traffic jams.

"Connected+ allows drivers to send a live journey schedule to contacts in their phone book as a live URL to highlight arrival times for meetings – this gives a safety feature where the driver does not need to call if they are running late."

Hollis believes drivers will view technology such as RTTI as impossible to live without once they have enjoyed the benefits.

"It updates every three minutes with dynamic route guidance based on the latest highly accurate traffic information," he says.

"It also includes hazard warnings with drivers being warned of ice, heavy rain, fog and breakdowns within a three-mile distance of the hazard. Again this is standard on all vehicles.

"RTTI includes On-Street parking, showing probability of available spaces within city centres in nine major cities in the UK – and further expansion is expected in the near future."

But with technology improving much faster than vehicle lifecycles, there is a danger new features could suddenly appear dated.

Hollis believes it is possible to future-proof services by updating them during the vehicle's life.

He says: "We are working with digital services so software updates can be completed after the vehicle has been built and services updated remotely via data pushes to the vehicles. For example, RTTI was live before hazard preview and On street parking were introduced. These were issued free to all vehicles running iDrive 5 and above.

"Maps will update as standard either over the air or via USB for the first three years of the vehicle life. After this point map updates are available but chargeable at £69.95 for two years' subscription.

"Services are continually being developed and in many cases will be created for a range of iDrive systems, so customers with perhaps the later generations of iDrive system in certain instances can also benefit from the new services."

In addition, to support BMW's commitment to future software upgrades, we have just announced the launch of a Remote Software Upgrade feature on the new BMW X5 and 8 Series, which keeps the vehicle up-to-date with the latest software. All updates can be loaded onto a smartphone via the BMW Connected app when linked to a domestic WiFi network or imported directly via the BMW's built-in SIM card, which happens automatically over the air for important vehicle upgrades.