



## Mercedes-Benz CLS Shooting Brake Gap in the market?

Car review | No brand sells as many different models as Mercedes-Benz. From small to large, from super fast to highly economic; Mercedes-Benz has it all. And now the brand introduces a new model no one else has on offer; an estate car with the sporty lines of a coupé: the Mercedes-Benz CLS Shooting Brake.

The "CLS Shooting Brake" isn't unique. In the distant past many brands offered a sleek estate car. And for many years the term "Shooting Brake" has been used to describe a vehicle that is both sporty and roomy at the same time. However, currently Mercedes-Benz is the only make to offer a Shooting Brake.

And the CLS Shooting Brake is a logical addition to the current portfolio. The E-Class is a comfortable long-distance vehicle. The S-Class is one notch up and is meant to be chauffeur driven, with the owner sitting comfortably in the back. The CLS is meant for those who want more than just an E-Class, but still want the joy of driving themselves. The Shooting Brake adds the usability of an estate to that package.

To make sure the CLS remains affordable, the car is equal to the E-Class underneath. In that way Mercedes-Benz had saved itself the trouble of designing a whole new vehicle.



What is new, is the bodywork. There's more focus on design and, as far as Autozine is concerned, the Shooting Brake looks even better than the "normal" CLS. Thanks to the long roofline the basic shape is more elegant, making the Shooting Brake look sleek and sophisticated.

The design is emphasised by the chrome trim around the window edges and the fold in the body panels just before the rear wheels. Thanks to this clever shape, reflecting light accentuates the shape once more. Just

look at the photo of the silhouette of the car, which was shot against the sun. In any other cars the shaded side of the vehicle would be one dark, indistinguishable blob, but thanks to the reflecting surface the CLS still looks stunning.



## Space

With the CLS, design is more important than practical use. The boot measures 1.550 litres and that's smaller than that of a basic CLS and much smaller than an E-Class Estate. Only the Shooting Brake can be fitted with a (cherry) wood floor and aluminium rails. And that's typical of the Shooting Brake: appearance and personality come first.

Optionally the boot lid can be opened and closed automatically. The optional air suspension ensures that the CLS handles the same, no matter what the payload or weight of the car.



To emphasise the difference with the E-Class once more, the driver and co-driver sit less upright. This does go at the expense of the legroom on the back seat. When the CLS is fitted with "Multi Contour" seats as well, the driver won't make friends with the rear passengers. These seats can be adjusted in other ways, but have a hard rear side which presses against the knees of the rear passengers. On the other hand, the "Multi Countour" seats are a joy for the driver and worth every single penny because of this.

## Equipment

Just like the E-Class, the CLS can be fitted with all the luxury and safety features Mercedes-Benz has on offer. For example, a video camera and radar keep track of nearby vehicles. A computer reads traffic signs and shows items like the local speed limit in a display between the speedometer and revcounter as a reminder. On a pending doom (like a car in the blind spot or an extreme difference in speeds) the CLS can act all by itself or merely warn the driver to avoid an accident.



Of course, the CLS comes with a combined audio, satnav and communication system. This can now be extended with apps which have been developed by Mercedes-Benz, and run on the iPhone (for now, Android support is not available). The sound quality of the basic audio system is artificial and tiresome, so the optional Harman/Kardon system is recommended.



## Diesel

To emphasise its sporty character, the CLS is only available with the strongest engines available on the E-Class. Only the base engine is a four-cylinder, all others have six or even eight cylinders.

Yet, for this test the base model with the four-cylinder diesel was driven and it was a pleasure to drive. Of course this base engine lacks the grandeur which is

typical for a car like this. Yet, comfort levels and performance are sublime for a basic four-cylinder engine.



This is also thanks to the well chosen gear ratios of the seven-speed automatic. In most circumstances the engine speed is so low, that this four-cylinder operates as quietly as a six-cylinder. Because the four-cylinder has slightly less reserves available, sometimes it can be noticed that the automatic switches gears. However, this isn't disturbing.

Thanks to superior aerodynamics and significant weight reduction, the 204 PS / 500 Nm the diesel develops is more than sufficient. For example, a sprint from zero to 62 mph takes just 7.8 seconds and many petrol cars wouldn't be ashamed of that.

A true arsenal of fuel-saving measurements make the CLS pleasantly frugal. According to the brochure the "CLS Shooting Brake 250 CDI" consumes as little as 5.3 litres per 100 km. During the test drive it turned out that with a calm driving style it is easy to do with even less fuel than that.



## Handling

Despite its promising looks, the CLS is not meant to be a sports car. Even the Shooting Brake is a true Mercedes-Benz, meaning that comfort always comes first. Both steering and brakes give very little feedback, it is almost as if the car doesn't want to be driven fast.

Instead a calm, smooth driving style is rewarded. In this case the CLS is highly comfortable and covers vast distances with great ease. When the CLS shows this much superiority the owner feels privileged to drive a special car like this and that's how it should be with the CLS.

## Conclusion

Mercedes-Benz has already offered more different models than any other brand. Yet the German carmaker saw room for one more model: an estate car with the sleek lines of a sporty coupé. This has been a well-known concept for many years and is called a "Shooting Brake". As far as Autozine is concerned, Mercedes-Benz has brought this concept back to life with honours.

Despite its sporty looks, do not expect a sports car. Even the base model with a very frugal diesel engine is a seriously fast car, but only in a straight line. The "fun to drive" is not because of its dynamic qualities, but comes from the high levels of comfort and refinement. For example, its smart electronics and many driver's aids make daily life with the CLS more pleasurable. In the shape of the CLS Shooting Brake a welcome dose of spaciousness and elegance is now added to that package. ■



# Specifications

## Mercedes-Benz CLS Shooting Brake 220d

### Size and weight



Length x width x height	496 x 188 x 142 cm
Wheelbase	287 cm
Kerb weight	1.745 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	2.100 kg
Fuel capacity	59 l
Luggage space	590/1550 l
Tyre size	245/45R17

### Engine and performance



Capacity	2143 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/
Max power	170 PS @ 3000 rpm
Max torque	400 Nm @ 1400 rpm
Drive	rear wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	8.6 secs
Top speed	220 km/h
Average mileage	4.7 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	INF l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	INF l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	125 gr / km

### Price

Price	Â£ 49,440
Price base model	Â£ 49,440