



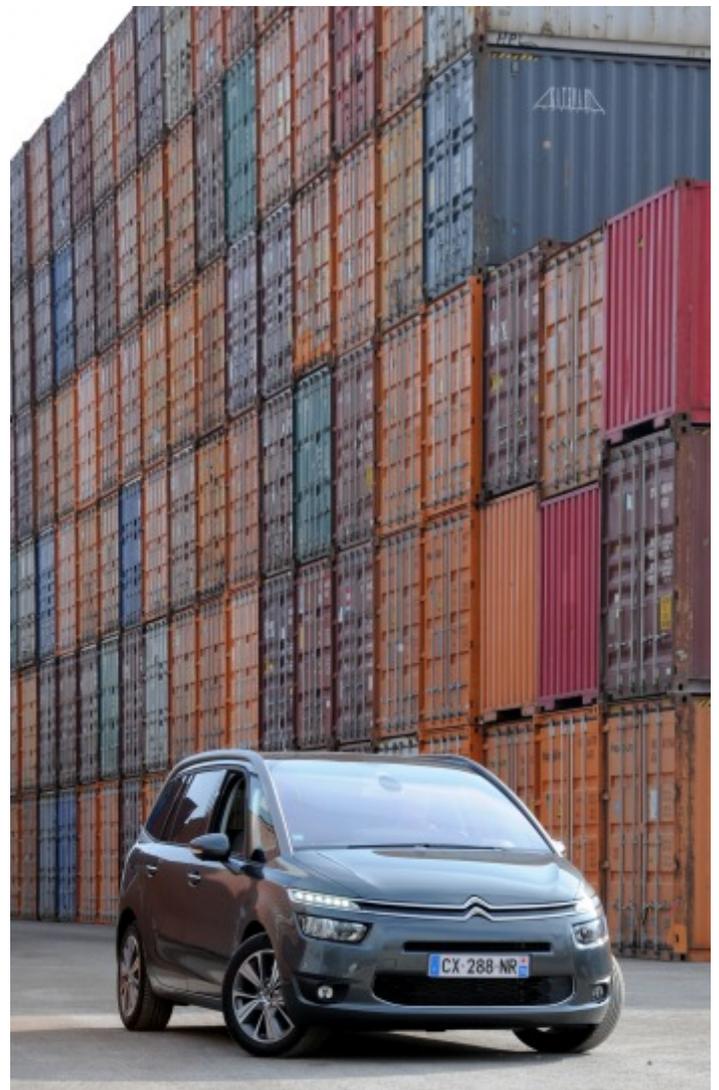
## Citroën Grand C4 Picasso

### Big is beautiful

Review | A boxy car makes the most spacious family car. However, a boxy car isn't very attractive to look at. Carmakers have been masking this by adding aerodynamics, chrome strips and cheeky looks. Citroën now takes another approach by transforming the MPV (Multi Purpose Vehicle) into a true work of art: the "Grand C4 Picasso".

Citroën's large family car is available in two flavours: the five seater "C4 Picasso" and the seven-seater "Grand C4 Picasso". The difference isn't just in the cabin space, the body styles differ as well. The five-seater has tough "street smart" looks, while the lengthier seven-seater has more elegant lines.

In either case the sidelights and dip beam are separated by a metal strip in the colour of the car. The front bumper of the "Grand C4 Picasso" driven here crosses the grille, giving the car an even more futuristic look. The roof rails are a real eye-catcher: they originate at the bottom of the windscreen, extend over the roof and then continue over the tail lights to wrap around the rear side windows. The C4 Picasso doesn't have sliding doors, but conventional pivoting doors. Citroën agrees that sliding doors are more practical, but chooses traditional hinges because of the lower weight and price.



## Space

Equipment levels are unusual as well. Every C4 Picasso features a "panoramic" windscreen which extends above the heads of the driver and front passenger. This mimics the feeling of driving a convertible. A word of warning: the electrically adjustable seats are much higher than the manual ones, so tall drivers may hit the sun visors with the top of their head.

The front passenger can enjoy a "lounge" seat. This looks like the seats found in the business class of an airplane, including the lower leg support. The headrest almost encloses the back of the head, so one can sleep with the head tilted to one side. And to top it off, there's even a massage function!



Yet, this Citroën cannot be compared to limousines from luxury brands. The massage function is very simple and repetitive, while the adjustment of the seats is limited. The C4 Picasso does offer more comfort than a regular MPV, so these seats are certainly an asset for the car. Another word of warning to tall people: the special headrests may pierce the shoulders, which is very uncomfortable.

The back seat consists of three individual seats which can be moved and adjusted. Yet again Citroën was inspired by air travel: the rear passengers have access to foldable tables. Both the head and legroom in the rear is excellent.



The "Grand C4 Picasso" has a longer wheelbase and more overhang than the regular C4 Picasso and this space is used to fit a third row of seats. Access to these seats is exceptionally easy because the seats on the second row don't just slide forward, but fold at the same time. The legroom on the third row is only sufficient for small children. This can be improved by sliding the second row forward, but then in turn legroom on the second row is insufficient. The separate ventilation on the last row is very convenient, but it goes at the expense of the headroom. Even when the optional ventilation isn't installed, the roof is still lowered.



## Spec levels

The dashboard is dominated by two rather large displays. The one installed on top of the dashboard shows information aimed at the driver. The lower, second screen is used to operate the audio, communication, satnav and climate control. To a certain level the user can arrange the information over the two screens.

Regrettably, the system often responds very slowly to the user's input and menus aren't arranged logically. Optionally "apps" can be installed to search for points of interest like cheap filling stations or tourist attractions nearby. While the average smartphone does a better job at this, it is very convenient to programme the destination from the Citroën app into the satnav with a single press of a button.

## Blue HDI

A special car demands special technology. The C4 Picasso is the first Citroën to be equipped with a "Blue HDI" engine. It delivers 150 PS / 340 Nm, which is a lot more than the base diesel (92 PS / 230 Nm). Despite this, its CO2 emissions are almost equal!

Next to the usual particle filter, a catalytic converter is installed. It uses a fluid named "Ad Blue" and thereby converts harmful gasses into water and air. This requires no action from the driver; the computer controls the whole process. A tank of "Ad Blue" lasts until the next regular maintenance.



With this powerful diesel engine in the front, the Grand C4 Picasso is a fast and very comfortable car. Noise levels are low and only in the background a faint (yet surprisingly deep) engine noise is audible. Both from a standstill and at high speed the Blue HDI accelerates with great ease.

Comfort can be increased even more by choosing the automatic gearbox. Because Citroën received a lot of criticism on their robot-controlled manual gearboxes (known as "ETG" by Citroën), the Picasso is fitted with a traditional automatic gearbox (called "BVA"). It shifts at exactly the right moments and thanks to the torque converter the C4 Picasso sets off with even more ease. The automatic gearbox is operated by a small lever on top of the steering column, as a hint to the legendary models from Citroën's past.



The automatic gearbox does use a lot more fuel than the manual version. A lengthy, calm drive with the manual Blue HDI cost 5.2 litres per 100 km. The automatic needed a litre more on the same route with the same driving style.

## Handling

An earlier test drive with the C4 Picasso learned that there's a big difference in handling between the petrol and diesel version. The cars equipped with a diesel engine handle very well and give lots of confidence via the steering wheel. These cars are a joy to drive because they can corner at incredible speeds for an MPV. The petrol versions are less capable, aren't as well balanced and score a mere "pass" when it comes to handling.

The Grand C4 Picasso doesn't just look different from the regular C4 Picasso, it also handles differently. The seven-seater focusses more on comfort, while its superb handling is reduced to just a safety feature. This is why the Grand C4 Picasso is even more suitable for travelling long distances.



## Conclusion

Many brands offer spacious family cars. Just like with other brands Citroën focusses on space and practical everyday use. However, Citroën now takes it one step further. This doesn't just apply to the design, but also to the technology.

Regrettably when fitted with all the bells and whistles that make the C4 Picasso special, it is error-prone. Some of the electronics are disturbingly slow, while some of the ergonomic gadgets aren't comfortable for tall passengers. Also, keep in mind that the vehicles with diesel engines have much better handling than their petrol powered siblings.

When opting for a luxurious version without the optional gadgets, the (Grand) C4 Picasso is a fantastic long distance car. By adding a unique charm to the spacious package, Citroën proves big can indeed be beautiful. ■



# Specifications

## Citroën Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 150 Flair EAT6

### Size and weight



Length x width x height	460 x 183 x 164 cm
Wheelbase	284 cm
Kerb weight	1.551 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	1.600 kg
Fuel capacity	55 l
Luggage space	645/700 l
Tyre size	205/55R17

### Engine and performance



Capacity	1997 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/
Max power	150 PS @ 4000 rpm
Max torque	370 Nm @ 2000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	10.2 secs
Top speed	207 km/h
Average mileage	4.3 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	5 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	3.9 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	112 gr / km

### Price

Price	Â£ 30,060
Price base model	Â£ 22,635