



Renault Kangoo

Family Fun

Car review | Off we go on holiday: Mummy, Daddy, son and daughter as well as a whole load of luggage. The journey takes us to the South of France for a week's worth of fun. Of course, the Autozine family travels by car; and on this occasion, the particularly pleasant (test) drive is in the new Renault Kangoo.

Families are already expensive enough. With this in mind, Daddy decided not to go for a MPV. Such family vans are indeed extremely practical, but also expensive. Daddy was of the opinion that estates were a little bit more economical, however in some cases they don't always offer enough space. Consequently, Daddy eventually went for this "ludo space": a no-nonsense car, which offers a lot of space at a keen price.

Once upon a time, cars such as the Renault Kangoo were only used by builders and courier companies. However, their driving characteristics and comfort have been refined over the years that the Kangoo is now also popular as a family car. The first encounter reveals why.



Luggage

As standard, the luggage space measures 660 litres. According to the children, "You'll be able to get a lot more into that than uncle's big, posh car". A pram fits nicely into the rear, as does a large luggage set and of course all the necessary sports equipment. Moreover, the luggage space is easily accessible since the rear shelf can be folded in half. Also very handy: this rear shelf can be clasped behind the back seat allowing free access to the luggage.

When required, the back seat can be folded down completely. Removing the headrests or the base of the back seats is no longer necessary. In one movement, the luggage space can be increased to 2.75 cubic meters. That's big enough for a living room suite or fridge! For businesses, it's important to know that the Kangoo now fits a Euro-pallet both in length and breadth. Depending on the model, the seat on the right-hand side can be folded up, whereby there is then room for items up to 2.5m in length!



If that is not enough, Renault has also kitted the Kangoo out with a clever roof rack. Literally with a flick of the wrist, it's possible to adjust in length (less wind noise, lower fuel consumption) or breadth (for bicycle racks or roof trunks).

In the rear

At first the children didn't consider the Kangoo a cool

car. They wanted to go on holiday in a sports car. However, once they were installed in the rear of the Kangoo they were as pleased as Punch. In the ceiling, they found their own storage compartments. In the central console, there was a 12-volt plug for computer games, laptop or DVD player. In the backrests of the front seats, there were fold-down tables. Finally under the floor, there were also hidden storage compartments, but don't go around telling everyone!



As there are two large sliding doors, getting into the back of the car is easy. These doors allow lots of space to get in and out of the car and are also much handier than hinged doors in tight parking spots. Extremely unusual are the (electric) windows in these sliding doors which open completely. As a rule, sliding doors have either cantilever windows or windows that only open half way. Also very clever: when the tank top is open, the sliding door is blocked preventing overenthusiastic children from causing any damage.

In the front

Up in front, the atmosphere is also pretty good. The amount of space is overwhelming. The Kangoo beats every estate and most MPVs. Daddy is a prominent member of the "Tall People's Club " however in the Kangoo even he has a several decimetres of headroom! The disadvantage is consequently that the Kangoo is more than 1m80 in height which can pose a problem in parking garages.



The dashboard has been set out spaciouly and offers a lot of storage space. In particular the storage compartment placed centrally above the dashboard is extremely practical as a piece of A4 fits in perfectly. This is not only handy for company cars full of reams of paper but also during this trip it quickly filled up with road maps and inspiring brochures from tempting fun parks.



Above the windshield, there is a broad compartment where everything and anything can be thrown into it. The second interior mirror deserves a special mention: it's possible to keep an eye on the children in the back.

The lively colours and solid finish of the dashboard remind you more of a private car than a company van. Since the Kangoo is meant as an economical space wonder, the car is only equipped with the absolute necessities. It is only with the options that the Kangoo is as luxurious as a private car, but then the Kangoo is

just as expensive.

Refueling

On this journey, the Kangoo will only be stopping for driver change as re-fuelling is only required once. The diesel engine measures only 1.5 litres, but thanks to the so-called "variable turbo" full power is available over the entire rev capacity. It consequently feels as if the engine delivers more than the promised 110 pk/240 Nm! In spite of all this the engine is satisfied with only 5.7 litres of diesel per 100 km. Only the "Kangoo Family" is equipped as standard with a particle filter, the business style "Kangoo Express" has to do without, unfortunately.



The engine is neither particularly aggressive nor lively, however it is very powerful. First gear is exceptionally short. This makes it easy to accelerate with a heavy cargo or trailer. The Kangoo is definitely not a quick car, but its engine capacity is sufficient to keep up with the traffic or to overtake when necessary.

The Kangoo is also available with 1.6 litres petrol engine. This provides a similar capacity and consequently drives nearly the same. Both engines are remarkably quiet for such a car. Over 100km/hr, the wind noise is considerable, which doesn't help in the comfort stakes.



Bends

The performance of the Kangoo is similar to that of an (economical) private car. The road handling highlights that the Kangoo is certainly not your average family car. The steering is indirect and requires many wheel rotations in order to make a turn, which makes the car feel larger than it is. Moreover the Kangoo is high, resulting in it leaning pointedly in turns.

This is all a question of getting used to the car, since during the trip the Kangoo was constantly able to prove itself. Daddy continually took the roundabouts more bravely and Mummy showed that she knew a thing or two about steering on the spaghetti junction. In comparison with the previous Kangoo, this new generation is almost 10% broader which results in better road handling.

The Kangoo is equipped with brake disks on all the wheels. So when the oldies are having a little bit too much fun, the Kangoo can be brought to a standstill both rapidly and safely.



Conclusion

It was a lovely holiday! And that was partly due to the car. The Renault Kangoo is a car which offers more space than an estate and is more economical than a MPV. Thanks to the practical and well thought-out kit, all the space is used to the maximum.

The Kangoo remains essentially a company car, but with this second generation the difference with an ordinary private car is smaller than ever. Since the Kangoo is now much broader, the road handling is also greatly improved. With the extra sound insulation, the Kangoo is now as quiet as an economical private car driving up to 100 km/hr. The modern engines provide good results with a modest fuel consumption. Consequently there was lots left over from the money-pot for this wonderful holiday!■



Specifications

Renault Kangoo dCi 106 Expression

Size and weight

Length x width x height	421 x 183 x 184 cm
Wheelbase	270 cm
Kerb weight	1.405 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	1.050 kg
Fuel capacity	60 l
Luggage space	660/2866 l
Tyre size	195/65R15

Engine and performance



Capacity	1461 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/2
Max power	105 PS @ 4000 rpm
Max torque	240 Nm @ 2000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	13.2 secs
Top speed	169 km/h
Average mileage	5.7 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6.4 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.3 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	151 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 14,050
Price base model	Â£ 11,200