



Hummer H3

Bad boy

Review | It is the pariah of every environmentalist. It is the eye sore of decent men. It is the summum of American decadence. The Hummer has become an icon on wheels of all that is wrong and incorrect. And now the Hummer becomes even worse thanks to a new 5.3 liter V8 engine. It makes this bad boy go very well.

There's something that makes driving an SUV very attractive: a feeling of power. The high sitting position, the colossal size of the vehicle and the powerful engines give many SUV drivers the feeling of being king of the road. If there's one car that does all this, it is the Hummer.

Invincible

The steps under the doors are not just for show, they're really necessary to climb the high command post. The driver is up so high, that other SUVs look like funny little cars seen from the Hummer. The H3-driver literally looks down on everything and everyone. That feeling becomes even greater by the height of bonnet, which is at the same level as the roof of the average passenger car!

The power mad feeling is enlarged by "the show". Just leave it to the Americans. Everything on the Hummer is large and rugged. "Refinement" is a word they don't know at Hummer. This car was originally meant as an army vehicle and is therefore built for the toughest possible situations.



The interior space is overwhelming and everything is oversized. Even the buttons on the dashboard are "extra large". It all makes a drive in the Hummer an experience rather than just transportation. Despite the large interior space, the head rests are too low and therefore just neck rests. The steering wheel can only be adjusted by just a few inches.

Experience

Driving a Hummer is a remarkable experience. In contrast to many other SUVs, the Hummer is a pure off roader and everything about the car is made for that.

It starts with the huge tires. The large amount of rubber is very practical off road, but doesn't do the handling on tarmac any good. It feels like the H3 is running on four Skippy balls, with the same stability. In fact the road handling of the H3 is fair, but the sloppy suspension makes communication between driver and car very poor. Because of its vast size, the H3 is very susceptible to side wind. Only the brakes are convincing from the start: they can stop this big boy safely and within a very short distance.



Brute

The reason for this test is the introduction of a new 5.3 liter V8 engine, which is clearly an improvement. Still the H3 feels heavy and sluggish. At low revs relatively little power is available, so the car has to be really provoked to perform. When the paddle is pushed to the metal, the new eight cylinder is a real brute (305 hp). The sensation is completed by a mighty powerful V8 roar.



The sprint from 0 to 62 MPH now takes only 8.2 seconds (was 9.7 seconds for the 3.7 liter five cylinder). On the highway the new power unit has enough extra power to maintain high cruising speeds or to overtake safely. To not spoil the fun, there's no trip computer or economy-meter. Still this new, more powerful engine is a fraction more economical (read: less thirsty) than the base engine.

Off-road

However popular the Hummer is as a status symbol, this car was once designed as a real work horse. The approach (37.5°) and departure (35.5°) angles are so extreme (the front wheels almost poke through the bumper) that the H3 can climb the most improbable slopes with ease.

The ground clearance (22 cm) approaches lorry proportions. During this test terrain was conquered that normally is only the domain of dump trucks and bulldozers. On its "all terrain" tires the H3 plows through any terrain without any problems.

This is also because of the technique: when off-road the front and rear axle can be connected directly, to prevent the power going to the wheel with the least resistance and making the car borrow itself. The rear axle can be "diff locked" separately for even more grip in sand and mud.



Off course this pure off roader is fitted with low gearing: an extra gearbox in which the car is slower, but much stronger. Also, the engine power that built up so troublesome on public roads, is now perfectly controllable so the driver can easily keep the H3 between slip and grip. Everything that first seemed to be a disadvantage, is an advantage when going off road. The Hummer-experience is complete!

Conclusion

The Hummer H3 is very good at two things: the first is being bad. Those who want to misbehave or just make a statement still draw a lot of attention with the Hummer.

But there is a price to be paid for this: the driving characteristics on tarmac are poor. The car is unpractically big, noticeable heavy, very demanding and extremely thirsty. Thanks to the new V8 engine the performance has been improved and towing capacities have been increased.

The other thing the Hummer H3 is really good at is off road driving. This car has originally been designed as an invincible military vehicle and even today those roots can be found. Everything that makes the Hummer H3 unpleasant on public roads, makes the car great off road. ■



Specifications

Hummer H3 5.3 V8 Luxury automatic

Size and weight



Length x width x height	478 x 199 x 187 cm
Wheelbase	284 cm
Kerb weight	2.352 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	2.268 kg
Fuel capacity	87 l
Luggage space	835/1577 l
Tyre size	265/75R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	5328 cc
Cylinders / valves	8/2
Max power	305 PS @ 5200 rpm
Max torque	432 Nm @ 4000 rpm
Drive	four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	8.2 secs
Top speed	160 km/h
Average mileage	14.5 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	18.5 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	12.1 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	344 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 0
Price base model	Â£ 21,697