

MG3

– First Drive

Words and photos: George Woodward

With the 3 rolling into sales centres across Britain, MG Motor's summer of fun is drawing to a close and it's time to get serious.



More than two years in the making, the MG3 is set to make its entrance into the fiercely competitive 'B-Sector' market. This is the largest segment for car sales in the UK, and the only sector that has seen a natural growth in recent years. Thankfully then, a team of 300 engineers and 60 designers in Longbridge have created a car that stands out from the crowd.

The key to the MG3 is personality. This is a car with a unique look that can be personalised to suit the demands of every customer. The MG3 is available in 10 different colour options, with a further 10 graphics packages available. There is further customisation available with a choice of colour coded interior options and part leather seats available on the top-of-the-range 3Style model.

At a glance the MG3 looks great: sporty yet refined. Search a little deeper and you're rewarded with details like the MG logo on the headlight covers, a square tip exhaust and a diffuser style rear bumper. A row of these side by side makes quite a spectacle.

At the launch of the MG3 Guy Jones, sales and marketing director for MG Motor UK, said: "The MGB, Britain's most loved sports car, was built to deliver stylish, fun motoring at a fraction of the price. The MG3 is an evolution of those principles."

MG Motor are predominantly targeting their new supermini at an audience of 25 to 34 year olds looking to buy their first new car. For this tech-savvy customer base, the first question many potential buyers ask when they walk in to any car showroom is: "Will my phone connect?"

Connecting your phone to the MG3 could not be easier. It goes without saying that these days phones are used for far more than just making phone calls, yet MG Motor seem to be one of the first manufacturers to embrace the potential of a smartphone. Yes, you can make and receive calls and stream the music saved on your mobile through the car speakers, but an optional dashboard mount



means you can also use your phone's built in navigation system to guide you home.

Pricing is certainly going to play an important role in the success of the MG3. In its own right the MG3 is a good car, but when you consider the very top model is just a pound shy of £10,000, you begin to realise you won't find a better car for your money.

So what do you get for your £9,999? Take a deep breath, because our top-of-the-range 3Style test car came with air conditioning, a DAB digital radio, 16" alloy wheels, electric windows, cruise control, hill hold control, bluetooth audio streaming, automatic lights and wipers and of course, LED daytime running lights. MG Motor have successfully managed to undercut and outspec the competition.

The interior of the MG3 is surprisingly spacious. There is plenty of headroom and comfortable seats with a wide shoulder space. Even for six foot plus passengers such as myself there was plenty of legroom on the back seats. In fact I can't name another

hatchback that offers as much space for its passengers.

In urban areas the MG3 delivers everything you would expect from a modern city car. The engine is quiet, the steering light and the drive incredibly smooth. Take it out of the city and onto the B roads MGs naturally call home and you soon get a feel for what this car is really capable of.

At the heart of the MG3 is an incredibly well designed chassis, which gives the MG3 its exciting and agile handling.

The 1.5 litre NSE engine produces 105bhp. This is a considerably larger engine than any other car on the market at the same price. However, most of the power comes into effect in the mid to high rev range. You really have to work the engine to get the most from it. Unfortunately this has a rather negative effect on the fuel economy.

With a combined mpg of 48, MG know that this is not the greenest of cars you can buy, but with a very impressive insurance rating of group 4E the 3 will be very cheap to

insure, balancing out the everyday running costs of the car.

The MG3 is now available to test drive yourself from all MG dealers across Britain. MG Motor UK have assured us that new dealers will be and are being added at a fast rate over the coming months. A marketing campaign for the MG3 will begin later this month.

The MG Car Club was delighted to unveil the MG3 to the public at our premiere event, *MGLive!*, back in June. The Car Club has a long running tradition of welcoming new models into our ranks and the MG3 is no different. MG3 owners are of course invited to join the Car Club, with the MG6 Register set to incorporate the MG3.

Find your nearest dealer and book a test drive now at www.mg.co.uk.



