

Launch review: The new BMW X3 is refreshed, refined, and ready for you

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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When you step inside the revamped BMW X3, you just know that you are going to enjoy the ride in every aspect. At first glance, you will be forgiven if you thought this was an X5. The X3 is bigger, broader and better than ever before. Crank up the engine and you hear that distinct Beemer growl which then settles down to a purr. Engage the gear and you are off on a smooth ride. Driving on the national roads was 'sheer driving pleasure'. Off-road driving was just as good. The front has been re-designed and adds to the sportier look.



BMW presence

The new BMW X3 conveys a powerful presence. The BMW kidney grille and headlights have been redesigned along with the front apron and rear bumper, while new graphics have been applied to the rear lights. The sporty genes of the sports activity vehicle are underlined by the M sports package and the BMW X3 M40i.



M sports package with specific exterior details

The M sports package gives the BMW X3 a sportier orientation. The specific front apron features significantly larger air inlets and inserts finished in high-gloss black, as well as more pronounced air curtains. The window graphics, roof rails and BMW kidney frame and bars are optionally available in high-gloss black.

The sportier rear bumper includes a more striking diffuser finished in Dark Shadow along with two additional side air-curtain panels in high-gloss black. The standard trim includes the new 19-inch Y-Spoke 887M alloy wheel in Midnight Grey Bicolor with 245/50 R19 tyres. Additional wheels in 20-inch and 21-inch are available as an option, as well as the M sports brake with blue or red brake callipers.

M Performance insignia

Further visual differentiation is offered by the BMW X3 M40i, which shows its affiliation to the BMW M GmbH portfolio with a specific BMW M kidney. In addition to a chrome frame, it bears the typical M double grille bars in high-gloss black and with an M logo.

While the same aprons as in the M sports package are to be found at the front and rear, the aerodynamically optimised M exterior mirrors in high-gloss black, the free-form tailpipe trims in black chrome and the striking 'Two Teeth' design ensure a distinctive look.

The BMW X3 M40i is fitted as standard with 20-inch M light-alloy wheels double-spoke 699M in Orbit Grey with the mixed tyres 245/45 R20 at the front and 275/40 R20 at the rear. As an optional extra, these wheels are available in Jet Black, while other exclusive options include the 21-inch M light-alloy wheels double-spoke 718M in Jet Black burnished.

Eight colours

The X3 is offered in eight paint finishes in the regular range. The metallic paint finish Skyscraper Grey is new, and as is M Brooklyn Grey metallic from the M sports package upwards. The range of special finishes available is to be further expanded in the future.

Revised interior

The new BMW X3 adopts the centre console of the current BMW 4 Series. The free-standing, central Control Display with a touch function now offers a screen diagonal of 10.25 inches as standard in all vehicles. A 12.3-inch version of the touch display is also available as an option. The significantly improved standard equipment now also includes sports seats with covers from a new Sensatec generation in the new Ray grain and with perforated main seat surfaces, as well as automatic climate control with three-zone control.



The centre console accommodates the newly designed control island with the gear selector lever, buttons for the start/stop system, the electric parking brake, hill descent control and various driving experience functions as well as the BMW Controller. The engine start button is positioned here, too.

Diesel and petrol

Five engine options will be available. Africa for the new BMW X3. These include three diesel engines: with 110 kW in the BMW X3 sDrive18d, the 140-kW BMW X3 xDrive20d, and 195 kW in the BMW X3 xDrive30d. The petrol engine models are the BMW X3 sDrive20i with 135 kW, and the BMW X3 M40i with 285 kW.

Eight-speed Steptronic

All engine versions are combined with eight-speed Steptronic gearboxes specifically matched to the respective engine characteristics. The BMW X3 M40i features an eight-speed Steptronic Sport transmission, including paddle shifts and Launch Control, as standard. BMW xDrive all-wheel-drive makes a significant contribution to the versatile sporty flair of the BMW X3. Its rear-wheel orientation makes dynamic cornering an especially intense experience. In addition, BMW xDrive optimises both driving stability and traction over rough terrain.

Verdict

‘Sheer Driving Pleasure’. When BMW makes that statement, they mean exactly that. BMW has taken the X3 and greatly improved the vehicle from bumper to bumper.

Prices

- BMW sDrive18d - R895,658
- BMW sDrive20i - R939,798
- BMW xDrive20d - R997,176
- BMW sDrive18d M Sport - R935,658
- BMW sDrive20i M Sport - R979,798
- BMW xDrive20d M Sport - R1,037,176
- BMW xDrive30d M Sport - R1,210,764

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