

# Power and precision come together in the all-new Mercedes-Benz X Class V6 Turbo

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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First launched in April 2015, there have since been several improvements to the Mercedes-Benz X Class, most notably, the powerful 190Kw six-cylinder engine that delivers refined power and exhilarating output of 550Nm.

This double cab can achieve 0 to 100km/h in 7.9 seconds but let's face it, this vehicle is not built for speed, but more for power, comfort and agility. And if you like the off-road driving experiences, then you will love the X Class V6 Turbo, with its ground clearance of 220mm and all-terrain hugging capabilities.

In a very recent driving X Class experience, I had the pleasure of giving the vehicle 'stick' both on tar roads as well as testing off-road conditions. I threw almost everything at the X Class and it responded with aplomb.

The vehicle has a very stylish look and appearance that almost begs you to get behind the wheel. The 7G-Tronic Plus automatic transmission and 4Matic permanent all-wheel drive, the new X350d 4Matic flagship model develops 190 kW and a peak torque of 550Nm.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Driving on tarred roads, one can hardly hear the engine and the synchronisation between the gearbox transmission and the engine was one of 'perfect harmony'. But then again, you would expect nothing less than a brand like Mercedes-Benz – voted as the “world’s most valuable premium vehicle brand for 2018” – and the result is quite simply the most powerful double cab on the market and the most expensive too in its class too.

Driving stability and handling both on and off-road is very impressive with its permanent all-wheel drive. There is a choice of engine and transmission response levels at the driver's fingertips, from comfortable to sporty, the X350d 4Matic offers the perfect blend of sportiness and practicality for an outdoor life.

## Driving preferences

Let's look and see what the X350d 4Matic offers as far as individual driving preferences go...

There are five driving modes, too many I'd say. The engine response can be changed by a quick scrolling of a control that is right there at your finger-tips, from relaxed and comfortable to sporty and dynamic.

- The Comfort mode is activated automatically when the engine starts. It provides comfort, emphasising harmonious accelerator characteristics as well as early automatic shift points.
- The Eco mode provides noticeable low engine speeds and will save you a few litres of gas, especially if you must drive the vehicle in mainly urban conditions.
- The Sport mode literally speaks for itself. In this mode, acceleration is instant. The rev of the V6 Turbo engine dictates to the automatic transmission with respect to gear changes. Hence, if you had to drive at high revs, then expect to hear and feel the automatic transmission changing more rapidly, giving you all the power, you would need.
- In the Manual mode, you choose the gear changes by use of paddle-shifts located on the steering wheel. I tried this a few times but have to say that 'novelty' wore out very quickly and I reverted to 'auto' mode.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

- If you are a bundu-basher and love the off-road experiences, then you will love the Off-Road mode. This mode is suitable for driving on challenging terrain. It offers higher shift points combined with adjustable and comfortable accelerating in need. The emphasis is on the word 'in need' as once you select this mode, the vehicle literally takes over and all you have to do is guide and nudge the double- cab on very challenging terrain.

The excellent performance and traction on a wide range of driving surfaces are all thanks to the 4Matic permanent all-wheel drive with low-range reduction gear and differential lock on the rear axle.

### **So many choices**

There are three all-wheel-drive modes to choose from: 4Mat for increased vehicle dynamics, 4H for improved traction off-road, and 4L for tough off-road terrain.

With the all-wheel-drive system and the suspension with its long spring travel and ground clearance of 222mm, the X-Class V6 effortlessly climbs gradients of up to 45 degrees, goes across water courses with a depth of up to 600mm, and maintains its agility on inclines of almost 50 degrees.

Before driving up the steep incline, I wondered if I would make it to the top as once you start on the incline, all you see is the bonnet at a 45-degree angle. This is where the belief of the off-road capabilities of the all-new 4Matic low range gear and differential lock comes into being. A soft touch on the accelerator pedal and you are halfway up. Another nudge and you clear the gradient with the greatest of ease. Once you get back on level terrain, there is a huge sense of personal relief and accomplishment. Just very impressive. But here again, its all thanks to the synchronisation of the engine and gearbox.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

### **Safety first**

The X-Class V6 offers various comfort and safety features that take the 'worry' away from the driver. The basis for the high level of occupant protection is provided by the tenacious body shell with its high-strength passenger cell.

Standard safety includes seven airbags and the i-Size attachment system for two child seats. With optional Active Brake Assist and Traffic Sign Assist, two driver assistance systems are at the ready to simultaneously increase active safety and comfort. In addition, the top of the range X350d 4Matic, features Active Lane Keeping Assist.



## Two equipment lines for the X 350 d 4Matic

The X 350d 4Matic is available in the equipment lines Progressive and Power, both of which set new standards for comfort and value in the midsize double cab segment.

The Progressive line has 17-inch 6-spoke light-alloy wheels, air vents in electroplated silver chrome, leather-lined steering wheel and parking brake as standard. The infotainment system includes eight-speakers, enough to put you in that party mode when cranked up.

In the high-end POWER line version, standard features include a simulated, chrome-plated underride guard in the front bumper, a chrome-plated rear bumper, 18-inch 6-spoke light-alloy wheels, LED High-Performance headlamps, electrically adjustable seats, and the Audio 20 infotainment system with a multifunctional touchpad.

So, what is all of this going to cost you? Lets' not make any bones about it, this is the most expensive double-cab in its class/segment.

- The Progressive line will cost you R904,188 (Including Vat and CO2 tax)
- The top of the range Power line will set you back R973,188 (Including Vat and CO2 tax).

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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