

Goody two Shoes

Ian Lamming plays in the big league with Mercedes' enormous estate car, the E Class

LAWELESSNESS comes with age. Thing is, the older you get, the more belligerent you become and the more rules and regulations only apply to other people, not you.

Just as well then that Mercedes' new E Class is such a goody two shoes. On the brand new long commute, from new home to school drop off, the A66 switches back and forth from dual carriageway to single and back again.

Another thing that comes with age is laziness so as the road is straight and speedy the cruise control is employed for the legal limit of dual carriageway, 70mph, not single's 60mph. Can I be bothered to adjust the speed? Probably not your honour.

But with the E Class this isn't a problem. The satnav knows better than me projecting the legal limit onto the screen and flashing if the car exceeds it. But cleverer still is the way that it automatically decelerates into the 60mph and accelerates back into the 70mph without lazybones here doing a thing.

If you think that's clever you should see the way the built in radar monitors cars in front, slowing where necessary, warning if you don't react accordingly. The wizardry also works with the steering. As long as the little steering wheel shaped light on the dash is green then the car is using a camera to monitor the white lines and help you steer.

Gosh, it's all so clever. There are also cameras all round that give you hi-res views behind, when reversing, in front when manoeuvring and from above (somehow) when things are looking a bit tight.

The dash is one enormous TV screen onto which you can choose what to project, anything from maps to a host of info, speedo, or rev-counter, which is stunning.

The interior is gloriously well laid out, built and specified. Being an E Class there is an incredible amount of space for occupants and a gargantuan load bay.

A double-decker mouse looks after myriad

functions rather than relying on touch screen and the sound system is tremendous.

The total package makes the lengthy commute a delight, particular as E Class also drives exceptionally well thanks to lusty 2.1 litre diesel motor, super-slick nine speed automatic gearbox and suspension that can switch from comfortable to sporty with consummate ease.

The Mercedes easily achieves 45mpg too, which is impressive given its performance. The tailgate is electric, which is a real boon when you are staggering along carrying everything an eight-year-old school boy needs nowadays and the E Class looks impressive in the car park at drop off allowing said youngster to walk up the drive with head held high. Keeping daddy out of trouble will also help the boy's esteem and standing in the school community and the Mercedes is guaranteed to do just that.



Fact File

- Mercedes E Class Estate
- Engine: 2.1 diesel
- Power: 194hp
- 0-62mph: 7.7secs
- Top speed: 146mph
- Combined MPG: 67.3
- Transmission: nine-speed auto
- CO2 g/km: 120