

# Show some Respect

Ian Lamming drives the new Nissan X-Trail

## Fact File

Nissan X-Trail  
 Engine: 1.6 diesel  
 Power: 130BHP  
 0-62mph: 10.5  
 Top speed: 117  
 Combined miles per gallon: 57.6  
 Transmission: six-speed manual  
 Insurance: 19E  
 CO2 g/km: 129

I SHOULD be annoyed, very annoyed, but instead I smile a knowing smile.

Scrawled in the dirty passenger door of the Nissan X-Trail are the words 'Learn to park' and the childish representation of male fertility, if you know what I mean.

What brings a wry smile to my face is the fact that the dirt isn't just any old dirt, nor is it road grime. The mud that spatters our vehicles from late summer to spring, coating paintwork in thick, brown discolouration, is dragged onto the roads from the fields by countless tractors. It is slurry but worse than that I am pretty sure from the smell in the air that it doesn't come from animals.

So when the harsh critic left his obscene message on the paint he was doing more than pooh pooing my manoeuvring skills he was probably contracting dysentery.

I suspect he was a walker rather than a washer so I hope he enjoyed his pasty. Unlike the smell in the air, isn't life sweet?

I am a bit surprised at his outburst too as the X-Trail seems well and truly in a car parking space. It may not be between the lines but that's because the cars either side aren't, but it is parallel, so what's a boy to do?

New X-Trail is a big vehicle, it's a seven-seater, for instance, or a five-seater with a whopping boot. But it isn't difficult to drive, even in town or down narrow country roads.

The beepy warning from the rear means you can get into the tightest of places and it handles like a car.

The seating position is surprisingly low, despite cranking it up to the max, and I feel like I need to sit on a booster cushion; it's more car-like than SUV.

There seems to be a trend among designers at the moment whereby all the vehicles in any particular stable have a similar look but just vary in size. Once upon a time Nissans all looked different but today they share a common complexion, from the diddy Micra to buxom X-Trail.

So X has been Qashqaied (did you know that was a verb?) and the Quashi shares bits and pieces with Juke, if you get my drift. It forms a corporate look – and is also a bit quicker for the designers.

Inside, the X-Trail has a familiar family feel too and there's nothing wrong with that. It is comfortable and well made, has the majority of toys one would expect of such an SUV and is practical and purposeful.

It is pretty much fuss-free to drive as well. As the white stuff falls and the roads become icy slurry I do look for the four wheel drive switch only to realize with disappointment that this is the cheaper two wheel drive variant. Still, it manages pretty well and fuel consumption is good.

Hopefully, the foul-fingered felon hasn't scratched the lustrous paint with his judgmental graffiti, it doesn't look like he has, because X-Trail is a well-mannered beast that deserves a bit more respect.

