

Cool Customer

Ian Lamming enjoys driving Renault's new cool customer, the Megane GT

GREAT. Just what you don't need; flakes of the white stuff and I'm in something sporting a GT badge, 205HP and liquorish-thin sports tyres.

Still, could be worse, it could be automatic as well...oh, it is. This is going to be an interesting school-run then. But arriving at the gates, incident and accident-free, it just goes to show that you can never really tell how good, bad or indifferent a vehicle will be in the snow.

The strength of the new Renault Megane GT is its torque, 280 Newton Metres to be precise.

That means the power comes in smoothly, progressively, without the need to rev, so it doesn't break traction. Just take your foot off the brake and proceed at tickover and all is well.

The four-wheel steering helps in the bends as well as the rear steers its own path rather than

be dragged around the bend.

English winters being English winters, the covering of snow lasts for about the duration of the school run; just enough to annoy but not long enough to be any fun before turning to slush, then water.

But all the gubbins and gizmos that help Megane plough its own furrow in the snow also kick in when the roads are simply wet and nasty. Traction remains great and the 205HP can be exploited without fear of any sting in the tail.

If it does dry then you will be looking to press the RS button for the full performance package; more power, more feel, more noise...more fun.

Brakes, ride and handling are peerless, the seven speed auto is smooth and very quick. It is an exceptional drive yet I manage to eek out over 41mpg, which is impressive too.

Megane GT looks striking with its uniquely bold signature lights back and front and aggressive lines. Big alloys and flush-fitting twin exhausts make it look the part and the all-round package is very neat.

Inside, GT gets huggy sports seats, paddleshift and tabletesque touchy, pinch, draw and sweep control screen. Very modern, very hip and happening, very, dare I say, on-trend...yo.

Expect lots of ports for digital devices, Bluetooth and decent sound system.

Youngsters will love it and oldies will enjoy the youngsters working it all for them to choruses of 'eeh, isn't that clever'.

And it is, come rain or snow, in the slush, wet or dry, GT will make its mark.

Fact File

- Renault Megane
- Engine: 1.6 turbo petrol
- Power: 205HP
- 0-62mph: 7.1 secs
- Top speed: 143mph
- Combined MPG: 47.1
- Transmission: seven-speed automatic
- CO2 g/km: 134

