

Mitsubishi Shogun

Featuring 3.0 V6 LWB



BECAUSE FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES have become increasingly popular over the last few years, particularly those which manage to combine car-like comfort and refinement, even big-time players like Ford and Vauxhall now want a piece of the action.

The Range Rover and latterly the Land Rover Discovery have consistently hogged the top slot in the sales charts, but the Mitsubishi Shogun has given this pair a good run for their money over the years.

To resist the advances of a multitude of new arrivals in the 4x4 field, Mitsubishi revamped the Shogun a while back. Apart from new, more-rounded styling and "Super Select" transmission, which now offers permanent four-wheel drive for road use, the latest Shoguns also boast improved equipment, better steering and suspension, and an uprated gearbox.

As before, three-door short-wheelbase and five-door long-wheelbase versions are available, with a choice of either a 2.5-litre turbo-diesel or a three-litre V6 petrol

engine. You can have either engine in either body style, with the option of an automatic gearbox on the V6.

This three-litre five-door version produces a smooth, sweet-natured but, nevertheless, quite modest 150bhp, so it's no greyhound off the mark. In fact, hampered by the big blunt bull-bars at the front, the two-tonne Shogun manages 97mph flat out, while the 30-70mph sprint takes about 15sec through the gears, or 34sec in fifth gear. This is reasonably lively considering the bulk that has to get moving, but little quicker than the smaller engined, less powerful and more economical Vauxhall Frontera and Nissan Terrano manage to achieve.

The Shogun offers a very pleasant way to travel, though, with generous glazing giving everyone a good all-round view, while the roomy, high-set cabin provides a commanding driving position and ample space in which to stretch out. Even without the Diamond Option Pack, there are plenty of comforts to cosset the occupants, and although you're frequently aware that

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there's a big, lazy three-litre churning away up front, things are reasonably subdued for most of the time.

Because the Shogun gobbles up the miles at a respectable rate, it's not surprising that it's fairly thirsty on fuel. Overall, we averaged 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ mpg, but this can vary from about 13mpg if you're heavy-footed or on short journeys around town, up to 20mpg or so on gentler driving or longer trips. There's an appropriately sized fuel tank to match the engine's size and thirst, but even so, fuel stops will rarely be more than 300 to 350 miles apart.

The Shogun's size, weight and prominent cornering roll discourage over-exuberant driving, but the sharpened up steering produces more positive, car-like responses through the bends. As with many off-roaders, the Shogun's poor steering lock proves something of a handicap around town, although power-assistance keeps things light.

Thanks to the addition of a viscous-coupled centre differential, the Shogun's transmission now allows either two- or four-wheel drive to be used *on* the road, in addition to its already well-rounded off-road proficiency. Low ratios cater for squelchy mud or steep climbs, while centre and rear diff locks can be engaged whenever maximum traction is called for.

It's no joke hauling this much weight to a standstill, and in fact the brakes give rather disappointing maximum stopping power. However, the Shogun can be specified with "Multi-Mode" anti-lock brakes as part of Mitsubishi's option pack. The benefits of ABS are rare to this class of vehicle and, as the name hints, the system also works under off-road conditions.

One of the Shogun's big attractions is the five-door's seven-seater capability (with all seats facing forwards), and the versatility that allows various seating permutations and even a makeshift double bed. Space isn't a problem – in the front two rows, at least – although access to the rearmost seats is poor. Restricted leg space makes these best suited for children – and there's always a fight to get there.

The side windows all slide open and there's a big

electric sunroof. Heating and ventilation prove powerful and easy to manage, and there's a separate blower and controls to keep those in the back happy.

The Shogun's big, side-hinged tailgate opens from the (safer) nearside, and can be opened from inside, too. Luggage space isn't as good as you might expect, however, because intruding wheelarches and the side-hung, folded-up rearmost seats steal too much room. Cargo space is far more restricted behind a full complement of passengers, but to be fair, this applies to many multi-seaters.

What the Shogun may lack in interior style is more than made up for by a lot of neat little practical touches and a wide assortment of goodies. As well as the anti-lock brakes, the option pack provides leather seats (which are heated and independently sprung), variable-rate suspension and an electronic compass to go with the altimeter (yes, really), the inclinometer and the thermometer that are already provided as standard.

In addition to a warranty that's still more generous than most (three years/unlimited mileage), the Shogun also comes with a fine reputation for build quality and durability, factors that help to maintain keen demand and, consequently, low depreciation for this model on the used-car market.

VERDICT

This latest, attractive looking Shogun makes small but significant strides in virtually all the key areas, with its drive train, versatility, refinement and equipment levels helping it to maintain a leading position among the bigger, more expensive off-roaders. Its fine build, generous warranty and broad appeal as a rugged yet very civilised workhorse, should also preserve keen demand for good, clean, pre-owned examples in the future.

Unfortunately, though, the Shogun isn't as affordable as it used to be, particularly in this equipment-laden, top-of-the-range form, but as they say, you get what you pay for.

HOW THEY COMPARE		Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Max speed (mph)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes best stop (%g/lb)	Maximum legroom – front (in)	Typical leg/kneeroom – rear (in) [†]	Steering turns/circle (ft)	Overall length (in)
Maximum seating capacity in brackets											
Mitsubishi Shogun 3.0 V6 (Petrol) LWB [7]	2972/147	97	15.2	33.7/23.5	17 $\frac{1}{2}$	71/60*	40 $\frac{1}{2}$	41 $\frac{1}{2}$ /32 $\frac{1}{2}$ (27/26)	3.7/41 $\frac{3}{4}$ (p)	186	
Land Rover Discovery 2.5Tdi (Turbo-diesel) [7]	2495/111	86	23.5	38.1/25.2	28	85/50	41 $\frac{1}{4}$	39/29 $\frac{1}{2}$ (centre-facing)	3.8/39 $\frac{1}{4}$ (p)	178	
Nissan Terrano 2.4i SLX (Petrol) [‡] [7]	2389/122	98	15.3	38.7/25.1	24	74/35	41	41/31 $\frac{1}{2}$ (24 $\frac{1}{2}$ /26)	4.4/37 $\frac{1}{2}$ (p)	180 $\frac{1}{2}$ ♦	
Toyota Previa 2.4 GX (Petrol) Automatic [8]	2438/133	105	12.8	NA (auto)	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	101/35	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	36/32 $\frac{1}{2}$ (38 $\frac{1}{4}$ /28 $\frac{1}{4}$)	3.5/39 $\frac{1}{2}$ (p)	187	
Vauxhall Frontera 2.4i (Petrol) Estate [5]	2410/123	95	15.1	36.9/23.7	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	84/60	42	41 $\frac{1}{4}$ /33	3.5/41 $\frac{1}{2}$ (p)	185 $\frac{1}{2}$ (5 seats only)	

[†] sold also as identical Ford Maverick

*with ABS

[‡]dimensions for (p) power assisted

third row seats
in brackets

♦ excludes
spare wheel



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

ENGINE

Type and size front-mounted, longitudinal, 60° V6; water-cooled. 91.1mm bore x 76.0mm stroke = 2972cc. Iron block and alloy head; 4 main bearings

Compression ratio 8.9:1

Valve gear single belt-driven overhead camshaft per bank operating two valves per cylinder via roller-rocker arms

Fuel system Mitsubishi ECI-Multi electronic multi-point fuel injection, three-way regulated catalyser and lambda sensor. 92-litre (20.2-gallon) tank, with low-fuel warning lamp. Fuel required: unleaded only, 92 octane minimum

Ignition system fully programmed electronic, integral with fuel injection, via coil and distributor

Maximum power 147bhp at 5000rpm

Maximum torque 174 lb ft at 4000rpm

TRANSMISSION

Clutch 9.4in dry plate, diaphragm-spring; hydraulically operated. Pedal load/travel: 24 lb/5¹/4in

Gearbox 5-speed (all synchromesh) and reverse. Ratios: first 3.92, second 2.26, third 1.39, fourth 1.00, top 0.83 and reverse 3.92:1
(4-speed automatic available on 3.0 V6 petrol)

Final drive 4.87:1 "Super Select" 4WD with centre differential, to rear or all four wheels. Lockable centre and rear differentials. Transfer box ratios: high 1:1, low 1.92:1

Mph per 1000rpm 21.6 in top, 17.9 in 4th (20.9/17.3 on standard tyres)

Rpm at 70mph 3230 in top gear (3350 on standard tyres)

CHASSIS

Suspension front: independent by double wishbones, torsion bars and an anti-roll bar. Rear: three-link live axle with trailing arms and a Panhard rod, coil springs and an anti-roll bar. Dampers: telescopic all round (with three-way adjustable damping as part of Diamond Option Pack)

Steering power-assisted recirculating ball, with 3.7 turns between full locks. Turning circles average 41³/4ft between kerbs, with 63ft circle for one turn of the wheel

Wheels 7JJx15 alloy (standard), with 265/70R15 110S tyres. (31x10.5R15LT 105S Goodrich Radial All-Terrain T/A on test car)

Brakes 8.9in ventilated discs front, 10.7in solid discs rear (incorporating drum handbrake) with vacuum servo assistance. Three-channel "Multi-Mode" ABS (as part of Diamond Option Pack) fitted to test car