



Our new C4 Hatchback 1.6 HDi 110 w/ EGS, etc 25/09/2008

25th September 2008

MurrayHenson, 14 February 2010

First, let me say that it's still not here yet. This thread is where I will be noting my experiences with purchasing and registering the C4 here in Krakow, Poland. Perhaps other ex-pats can learn from my experiences. I also intend to issue regular reviews on my experiences to date with, basically, everything concerning the new car.

So, anyway, it's still not here. We originally were interested in placing the order for the new C4 at the end of April or beginning of May. We were rebuffed by the Piotrkow Trybunalski Citroen dealership we'd chosen to work with. They advised us that Citroen wasn't accepting any orders at that time for the C4. We confirmed that another, more local dealership was in the same boat. After much going back and forth and talking to Citroen Polska we were allowed to place our order. At the time, Citroen Polska told P-T dealership that this was a special, one-off allowance. The order was officially placed on June 12. We were told to expect the car "at the end of August or beginning of September."

In mid-August we started calling the dealership wondering about the order. We were told that Citroen Polska hadn't told them much but that shipments would start at the very end of August. In the first week of September we started to grow a bit concerned as we had holiday plans for the 12th (my b-day). The dealership told us that Citroen still couldn't tell them anything other than the car was in transit. The 12th came and went. We were told then that it would be here between the 15th and the 20th. On the 20th we were told that it would "definitely" be here this week. Now, on the 26th, we have been told that it will "definitely" arrive on the 29th. This is within a 21 day grace period (to expire October 3rd) that the dealership informed us that they/Citroen has before we would be able to ask for a full refund.

While the dealership has been, as far as I can tell, faultless in this transaction, Citroen and/or Citroen Polska has not. We now have very serious reservations about special ordering another Citroen (next time it would be a C5 Exclusive). The repeatedly broken promises and missed dates have caused no end of havoc on our lives, not to mention the absurd amount of time it has taken for Citroen to allow the order and to finally (theoretically) deliver it - five months in all.

While we have written a formal complaint to Citroen and to the dealership (which they forwarded on to Citroen) we've heard nothing back. This sort of thing does not inspire confidence in Citroen, nor their products much less their ability to deliver their product. However, our sales person informs us that they are in negotiation with Citroen with regards to compensation for the various missed delivery dates and broken promises. The salesperson has been made aware of how thoroughly irritated we are that it has come so close to the end of the 21 day grace period and how disappointed we are with the lack of communication from Citroen.

Next big set of thoughts to be on Tuesday or Wednesday. IF the car arrives as promised (not holding my breath though) the dealership is to send us some inspection paperwork with the VIN so that the bank can finalize the loan and generate some additional paperwork which will allow us to register the car with the



local government, get license plates and then, last but not least, start the insurance on the car. At that point we will be allowed to visit the dealership and take possession of the car. Finally, I will put a C4Owners.org sticker on it and, if plans aren't ruined again, drive it with my wife to, roughly, Venice, Italy.

01/10/2008 - The good news: The car's at the dealership (which I shall be reviewing after finally taking delivery - thanks to Dave for adding the list of Polish dealerships!). It's been inspected and all seems well with it or so says our sales person.

The bad news: Since we're taking a loan to pay off the car, though, the dealership had to overnight us the paperwork. While we had requested - and they had agreed to - "Before Noon" delivery of the paperwork, the dealership sent it out "whenever we dang well feel like it" delivery. My wife is, literally, on her way to intercept the courier at one of his stops, otherwise we'd miss the courier today and not be able to process all of the paperwork needed in order to pick the car up on Saturday.

When my wife called the dealership and spoke to our sales person, the first thing she asked was, "Do you NOT want us to get the car this week?"

It is, honestly, a thoroughly maddening process. Our upcoming holiday is as much to get away from work as it is to get away from the entire process of buying the car.

03/10/2008 - Another quick update: The bank approved our loan yesterday and gave us the "we really do promise to pay, cross our hearts and hope to die, poke a needle in our eye if it's a lie" note where they agree to send a large amount of cash to the dealership. This morning we got the plates, temporary registration paperwork and stickers. The dealership has agreed to release the car to us based on the bank's promise note so we're on schedule to take possession of it tomorrow, around noon.

The dealership and Citroen did agree to compensate us for the delays, broken promises and general aggravation. If anyone is interested, PM me if you want to know how exactly they are comping us. I don't feel it is appropriate to mention it here other than we are pleased with their offer and feel that is fair.

I may try to take a couple of photos with my iPhone when we pick up the car and upload them somewhere. Otherwise gotta wait a day or so because we're driving it straight from the dealership in central Poland to Padova, Italy.

09/10/2008 - We got here more or less ok, more on the later when I'm not typing on my iPhone.

The car is amazing. I love the EGS, the cruise control, the space in the boot, the seats (16 hours in them - continuously, basically - and not feeling too bad!)... Even the pano roof is nice. My wife and I both love the front/rear parking radars.

Small jiggles: my iPhone + USB box doesn't display titles. Not sure why. And I would love if, on Auto, the headlights always came ok while starting and went off when the car was turned off. The headlights - brightness-wise - are great.



More later!

18/10/2008 - Thoughts after 3200km.

It's been a week and 3200km, so I figured I'd update this post with my thoughts and opinions again.

My wife and I are back from Italy, to where we'd driven our C4 immediately after taking possession. On the way to Monselice, Italy from Belchatow, Poland, we crossed through southern Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria and northern Italy. There've been a variety of terrains and road conditions.

To remind everyone: we ordered a C4 1.6 HDi w/ EGS and the "SX Pack" plus a bunch of extras. The "SX Pack" isn't the standard UK "SX" stuff, it's sort of a mix of things AND we ordered a bunch of extras on top of it. Panoramic roof, bluetooth, fancy wheels (can't remember what they're called), parking radar front/rear, heated mirrors, anti-theft/breakin package, alarm, auto-dimming rear-view mirror, USB Box, roof racks, mud flaps, etc.

As of right now, there are three issues, all fairly small: I'm still working on getting MP3 titles from my iPhone 3G to show up on the car's radio display. Going through the manual hasn't helped but I need to sit down and spend a bit more time with it. I also need the dealership to turn the lights, when on the Auto setting, so that they're always on and automatically turn off when we stop the car and remove the key or open the door. Lastly, the alignment seems to be off slightly - it drifts a bit to the right. It's not horrible but I checked several times.

Everything else is Really Good.

- EGS transmission: awesome. I wonder if I will ever go back to a manual. The variety of ways to shift (or to have it auto-shift) is amazing and amazingly thorough. Occasionally when going through a roundabout at low speeds and needing to VERY quickly accelerate (stomping on the gas) it will agonizingly hesitate when in full-auto mode. I prefer to use the paddles to shift down and then stomp. Otherwise, it's great.

- Cruise control: the best cruise I've ever used. The ability to fine-tune the speed coupled with the digital display is so powerful. There have been long stretches of time and road where I never touched the accelerator - I just adjusted the speed via cruise control up or down a bit in order to pass someone or to adjust to the flow of traffic.

- Headlights: The stock headlights are more than adequate. Slovakia, where street lighting is but a fabled myth, really lets them show off a bit. Here again I liked the ability to adjust the headlights up or down a bit depending on road conditions. This is probably not exactly how this setting was intended to be used but it's nice that it's there. When the headlights are on non-dipped ("bright" setting is what I'd call it) they are very bright.

- Steering wheel controls: Nice to have everything all in one place. Fairly easy to use, though a few times I adjusted my speed or volume when meaning to do the opposite.



- Bluetooth stuff: I don't get a lot of calls on my phone so we just tested this out with my iPhone 3G and my wife's Nokia 6230. Fairly simple to set up and use. This is not something we'll probably use a lot but it is cool nonetheless.

- Fuel usage: We've had, as I said earlier, a variety of terrains (crossed the Alps and the Tatras) and driving situations (urban, metro-area, highway/autostrada)... so far we've averaged 5.2l/100km aka 54.3 MPG (UK). Monique, our car, is currently telling us that we've got 800km left after 560km traveled @ 4.8l/100 aka 58.9 MPG. Quite good considering we were in a 6km long, 80 minute tailback not too long after we entered Poland (a poor welcome-home reception). Before we bought the car I figured we'd end up with 5.2l/100 or 15% off the combined 4.5l/100 cycle and so far I've been exactly right. On this last tank of fuel @ 4.8l/100km we were running the A/C almost the entire time, a GPS (12v socket), headlights, stereo and phone charger (12v socket to 75w converter to phone charger transformer plug). The only time we didn't run the A/C was in the traffic jam.

- Seats: great! We stopped every 2-3 hours for a quick stretch but after 17.5 hours there and 15 hours back we weren't really sore or in any sort of discomfort. My wife found that her seat belt, the upper bit, was rubbing in an irritating way against her neck. I did not experience that, however. We're considering buying one of those little pads that can be fitting on the seat belt for future long journeys. My wife loves the center box/armrest thingie because both she and I can rest our arms/elbows there. I still find the door rests a little awkward but "ok". I would have preferred them not to mess with the trim so much there because it reduces a single surface area into two with different levels.

- Radio/CD/MP3 player & speakers: besides the titles from the USB box, no complaints. Speakers sound good, plenty of bass for my tastes. I like the volume control knob; it's nice to have that "analogue touch" even if it is probably more digital than analogue.

Other little comments: I'm 6'2". When I sit *upright*, meaning that I am not slouching at all, my head is VERY close to the roof. Not even a finger's worth of space between my noggin and the roof. I usually don't sit quite that vertically though. Getting in/out I've bumped my head against the sun visor or door frame a few times. That is par for the course for me, however. I have the steering wheel as far up as it will go and it's just far enough - just a bit of space between my legs and the bottom of the wheel (so it's ok). Oh and I tried to sit in the back behind the driver's seat when it is all the way back and it's almost impossible to get my size 11 Dr. Martens shoes into the rear passenger space (in or out). Sitting back there was a bit cramped (head hit the roof, no space and can't really slouch). I wouldn't want to be me in the back seat for more than a short journey.

When I asked my wife if there was anything she would like to add she said, simply, "I love it."

We'll be visiting the dealership in a few weeks to get the alignment looked at, headlight auto-thingie done and to pick up some winter tyres.

24/10/2008 - I did find the up/down seat adjustment (yay!) and the Preset 2 button DOES display the track info but I was hoping more to see the track listed or shown, err... well, here:



Oh and one other note: A quick-ish visit to the dealership and they sorted out the auto-setting for the headlights so they auto come on when the car gets turned on and then auto-shut off when turning it off. It's a simple little thing but, honestly, I LOVE IT.

08/11/2008 - Time for another semi-quick (read: probably rather lengthy) update.

Our C4, Monique, is at around 5,700 km now. We recently drove it from Krakow to Meiningen, Germany, and back visiting some distant relatives of mine. It was quite foggy, in some places where you couldn't see more than about four "lane dashes" ahead. The fog lights (and, occasionally, high-beams) helped as did slowing down to about 50-55 mph. We left Krakow at about midnight, so the dark and fog were challenging.

Our distant relatives thought the C4 was quite nice and said so quite a lot.

Only issue I can spot at this point is a bit of ...it's not trim... not sure exactly how to describe it, though perhaps it would be considered trim? Anyway, there's a large piece of material directly under the glove box that is drooping a bit. Not entirely sure how it is supposed to be affixed so when we visit the dealership next time we'll have them make sure it doesn't droop any more; it clearly shouldn't be.

Semi-issue: still breaking the car in and fuel consumption is, despite our efforts, a bit higher than we would like it to be. We're about 14% over the estimate of 4.5 litres/100km ...meaning we're doing about 5.1 litres, combined, over the entire 5,700 km driven. In particular, at our typical highway speeds of 60 mph (exactly 60, that is) we usually see consumption range between 4.1 and 4.7 litres/100km on the instant read out. To achieve 3.8 we have to drop it down to about 55 mph. Though, to be honest, when we're in the car the A/C or heater is on at 21C, headlamps are always on, my little Garmin GPSMap 60 Cx is powered by the 12v socket and the iPhone is powered by the USB box (and is playing music or video). Annnnd occasionally a 12v car socket to 70W standard-plug converter is there to power a laptop, charge a phone or whatnot. So the 14% drop is reasonable, I suspect, though obviously I wish we could power all the gadgets and have two people + luggage in the car at 60 mph and get 3.8 litres/100km fuel consumption. I suspect that it may improve a bit as time goes on. We're happy with the fuel consumption nonetheless; it's half what our old Xsara used.

Speaking of fuel, I've filled up twice now with 100% biodiesel (B100), diluted down to B10 after mixing it with the regular fuel in the tank. There is a chain of Polish stations called "Bliska" that sell B100 and regular diesel. When the time or opportunity has been right we've stopped, put 5.5 litres of B100 in and then filled up the remainder of the tank with regular diesel. Done that twice now and will probably continue like this for awhile. I've noticed no difference in fuel consumption or performance differences when running entirely on regular diesel versus the B10/Regular90 blend.

As before, driving with EGS is a dream. Oh, one little note here though: Not long after crossing the border into Germany my iPhone accidentally fell off its perch as we were going over a bumpy patch of road at about 40 KPH. As my hand shot out to grab it, I knocked the gearshift into reverse. My attention had obviously been diverted so it took a moment to realise that when I stepped on the acceleration pedal that the car was just free-revving. I looked down and realised what I'd done. Shifted it back into "A" mode and all was well, no stop or anything else needed. Good, smart car.



To sum it up: we're exceedingly pleased with the C4 so far.

25/12/2008 - My wife's brother just started leasing a C4 Hatchback, in pearl red, with a 1.6 litre petrol engine. He's actually had a few issues with it already - the parking radar seems to beep at speeds below 10 kph, regardless of what is in front/behind him, along with some other odd electrical issues - some interior lights aren't working correctly among other issues - but, actually, he's still happy with the car. He intends to take it back to the dealership - the same that my wife and I bought our car from - and have them sort the various issues out. I expect they will do just that as "the family" has now bought a C5, a C4 and leased a C4 all from the same small, local dealership.

Monique - our C4 - continues to run flawlessly. We're at about 7100 kilometers now. Just put on a set of Michelin Alpin winter tyres; they will probably stay on until Feb or March, depending on the weather of course. I don't notice much more road noise but my wife is convinced that the ride isn't quite as harsh on the 16" wheels.

Fuel consumption on our last fill-up, with a decent mix of urban and motorway driving was 5.3 L/100 km aka 53.3 MPG. The overall average for all of the 7,100 kilometers continues to be 5.3 L/100 km (53.3 MPG). We do not do a LOT of city driving but there is definitely some - I'd say 20-30% in terms of running time. We've filled up several times with 100% biodiesel, diluted down to 10% (5.5-6.0 litres of B100 + 55 litres of regular diesel).

Basically... **I continue to LOVE driving this car.**

09/03/2009 - Just hit 8500 kilometers this evening. Right before it turned over to 8500 I filled it up at Statoil (68.8 p/litre). For the last few fill-ups we've been doing between 5.1 and 5.2 L/100 km (45.2 to 46.1 MPG)... during the last 2,000 kilometers there's been a healthy mix of urban/suburban driving with motorway driving. For the last few months there has been a lot of from-cold, in-city driving as I go back-n-forth between our flat and the gym about 5 miles away three times a week. So the fuel economy has suffered a bit but obviously not much.

I think the average speed for the entire 8500 kilometers is around 67 kph (41 mph) and average fuel consumption, according to both the car and my own calculations is 5.2 litres/100km.

Other than the car desperately needing a bath and that loose bit of trim I mentioned awhile back, nothing needs fixing. Even when it got down to -10C (14F) it still started up right away and that's with 5-10% biodiesel in the tank. I continue to love everything about the car, starting with the EGS and how it drives and ending with how good it looks when it's nice and clean.

I'm planning on taking it to the dealership where we bought it from pretty soon for an oil change and to check the airfilter and so that they can fix that bit of loose trim. Probably have them swap the winter tyres at that point, too.

03/10/2009 - t's Monique's birthday (1st!) this week so it was time for a service and check-up.



Before we took it in we stopped at Statoil and filled up. Got a very respectable 4.7L/100KM (60.1 MPG) out of the last tank though admittedly it was about 70% motorway driving. Over the last 13150KM we've averaged around 5.1L/100KM (55.4 MPG).

During this first service they checked the brakes, suspension, liquid levels (radiator fluid was a bit on the low side so they topped it up), battery, belts, "rubber fittings" (CV boots?), handbrake, tyres, cleaned the fuel filter, etc. Also changed the oil and oil filter and swapped out the pollen filter for a new one. Oh and since I forgot to tell them not to wash it they washed it, too.

I commented that they might find some rust on the brakes - we only ever drive the car once a week, sometimes just once every two weeks - but everything came back a-ok. Which was very good since the oil change, pollen filter change, antifreeze top-up and inspection set us back a staggering 719 PLN (£155). I should quit being an accounting manager and get a stake in a Polish Citroen dealership since it's practically a license to print money.

Other than the cost of this service - which technically wasn't necessary since we hadn't even done 20,000 KM yet (but, hey, it's been a year and I figured it was time) - we continue to love the car. My wife and I are always on the look-out for other C4's in particular and other decent cars in that class (Volvo C30, Peugeot 308, Subaru Impreza, etc.) and always come away thinking that we bought the very best car. Not that we bought the best car that we could afford - just flat-out the best car, given our requirements.

22/01/2010 - Hit 15,000 kilometers on a drive from Krakow to Gdynia today. When I started the car in the morning it was -14C (7F) and during the trip the temperature dropped down to -19C (-2F). No issues though before starting the car the glow plug light was on for 2-3 seconds. And because we'd left the car in the same spot for three straight weeks (too much snow and ice and such for driving) the parking brakes had frozen. A little forward/reverse/forward/reverse action broke them loose and all was well after that. Had to put in windscreen fluid rated down to -22C (undiluted) but it was working ok still at -17C last time I had to clear the windscreen. I didn't try the rear windscreen fluid emitter because it always seems pretty weak. Instead, I tried pouring some water on the rear screen and then walking forward to hit the wiper function. Between the time I poured the water and hit the wiper function the water had frozen on the glass.

No other comments to make other than at this fill-up, with about 1100 kilometers on the trip meter/tank we found out that average fuel consumption for the last tank was at 4.4 litres per 100 kilometers (64.2 Imperial Gallons). Quite pleased with that, especially considering that all trips recently have had two or three people in the car, in freezing (-5 to -15C) conditions on winter tyres.

25/01/2010 - Well, it had to happen: finally had a problem with our C4. Of course, it had to happen out in the boonies and as I was trying to pass someone, natch. I'd given the accelerator pedal a bit of a push and the EGS system down-shifted and, about a half-second later I decided that I still didn't have enough power and down-shifted manually. Heard a beep, saw the check-engine light come on and felt loss of power as I was just about to complete the overtake of someone else. Depollution System Fault!

Sighed, tapped the brake, slid back behind the guy and got into the emergency lane. As the car came to a halt it juddered and died. I was not entirely pleased. After a few moments of cursing I turned the car off and



back on. Check engine light stayed on and after about 15 seconds or so of running the DSF error came up again (and has every time we've stopped and restarted the car). I revved it up and down pretty good and took off. Per the manual we took the ol' cat o' nine out and beat the heartily. Meaning I popped it into "Sport" mode and drove it pretty vigorously for about 15 minutes.

After about 10 more minutes of more normal driving we stopped at a roadside diner. Turned it off and let it sit for about 30 seconds, then turned it back on. Still with the check engine light and error message. After lunch we called the dealership. They said it might be related to the fact that it's been so dang cold ...and it was a cold day here. At one point it was down to -21C (-6F) and they thought the diesel fuel might have gelled slightly, though I don't see how that is connected to the generation of a DPFS issue. At any rate, we made an appointment for Saturday. I assume they will just clear the error because we drove another... 500 or so kilometers, coming back from Gdynia (northern Poland) without so much as a hiccup.

So, somewhat unnerving losing power like that but all in all it certainly could have been worse. Plus, as I normally drive VERY sedately it was good to have an excuse to belt it a bit.

PS: While in the diner I double-checked C4O via my iPhone 3G and saw that other people had similar issues, that the "italian tune-up" was the thing to do, that at least one person had driven 100 or more miles after getting the error and that someone had had the same thing happen while passing someone. Reassuring news - at least a little bit.

30/01/2010 - Went out to get the car today so it could be driven to the dealership... and the dang check engine light never came on! Filled it up with winterized diesel and then headed over to the dealership anyway. They said they were sure the DPFS fault and loss of power was due to diesel gelling (it was about -18 ° C (0 ° F) at the time) and it seems fairly plausible.

Started and stopped the car three times and never saw the check engine light come back on so... I guess all's well that ends well!

14/02/2010 I've posted this elsewhere, but I *love* the EGS/semi-auto gearbox on our C4. It is second nature now to let it do its thing 98 percent of the time and to either put it in manual mode or to drop it up or down a gear, as needed, with the paddles.

I find it effortless to drive whether on motorways, single-lane roads (loads of them in Poland) or in the city. It handles shifts so smoothly and serenely that I have no idea what other people are talking about when they complain it is jerky or unpredictable. I basically like it so much that I will, if possible, get our next car with EGS as well.