



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Question

What should I check when buying a used C4 or C4 Picasso

### Answer

The V5 clearly shows the CO2 level for an individual car and that is what the tax band is based upon.

However the engines have changed over the years from original Euro 1 to Euro 6 spec so emission levels have reduced, combine that with the fact that some cars are automatics, some manual and then there is piloted manual (EGS) and there can be real differences to taxation bands for what is a similar engined car from around the same time.

**You have to check the V5 before you buy to be sure what tax band an individual C4 or DS4 fit's into and what level of VED you will be paying.**

**OK the V5 is fine so:**

**You should always ensure** that any Manufacturers re-calls have been carried out. and you can now register with Citroën recalls [HERE](#) to check any car

There is also list here: - [Click Here](#) - but the fastest way to check is to take the registration number or VIN (Vehicle Identity Number) to a dealer and ask them to run a check.

Citroen have a great database of all cars and log any re-call's that have been required and carried out plus can list those that are outstanding.

Citroen Dealers are very good at fixing any issues that may arise under warranty From personal experience (and that of other site members). However the warranty is 2 years from Citroen with an Additional 1 year Guarantee with some restrictions see the [Warranty Details](#) Check the date of First Registration. All C4's come with a 3 year warranty (or 60,000 miles) From personal experience (and that of other site members).

### Buying a Car from a trader

Under the new Consumer Rights Act 2015, which came into force in October, **motorists are now guaranteed 30 days to demand a full refund if they buy faulty goods**, a law which extends to buying both new and used cars.

Previously, car dealers were simply obliged to repair the car by replacing a faulty part if the car had a problem, but the new act will finally turn the table in favour of the buyer for the first time.

**Any licensed dealer must now provide a refund for the sale price in full if a buyer returns a faulty car within the 30-day period**, and it is hoped this could also squeeze dishonest dealers out of



business.

The Consumer Rights Act 2015 also provides extra rights for buyers once the initial period is up, with dealers obliged to replace or repair faulty parts for up to six months after the sale date. Buyers can also demand a reduced price if the dealer doesn't fix the problem the first time round.

However, Pete Williams, spokesman for the RAC, noted that the responsibility for this is on the consumer, saying: 'The responsibility will lie with them if they are to benefit from the new law. This is likely to lead to some difficult disputes between dealers and buyers.'

Source: - [Click Here](#) -

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**General Advice on checking out a potential purchase:** UK MOT Fail Statistics are now available and could be useful to check any car you're looking at:

You can look at cars by year for the C4 Here: - [Click Here](#) -

You can look at the C4 Picasso by year here: - [Click Here](#) -

\* **Always look at the car in full daylight**, never in the dark or in rain that could conceal body marks, dents, rust and other defects. Check for any changes in paint colour on all panels.

\* **Check under the car, the bonnet for rust and other signs** such as welding marks -- which may show the car has been in a crash. Lift the boot carpet to check for signs of damage or welding of new metal.

\* **Under the bonnet**, look for signs of oil leaks on top of the engine, and underneath. Use the dipstick to check the amount of oil. **On a HDi (Diesel)** remove the engine cover (it just clips off) and look for any signs of leaks around the injectors. If there are, walk away as it can become expensive to sort out.

\* **Take a look at the tyres** to make sure they're evenly worn

\* **Get down in front of each front wheel** and look along the length of the car. Both front wheels should be directly in front of the rear ones -- if they're not, it could mean the car has been in a crash and ended up with a slightly twisted or 'crabbed' chassis

\* **Check the gaps** between the body panels are equal -- if they're not, the car could have been refitted badly, or may have been in a crash



\* **Check the car starts** easily from cold and without lots of exhaust smoke

\* **Check any VIN plates** have not been tampered with.

#### **Car Specific**

**Coupe and Hatch - Check the Glove Box lid** for signs of damage around the catch as it's prone to jamming and may have been 'forced' - if it breaks it will cost £68.00 to replace!

**Check the front interior door panels**, especially the section where the door release is. When pushed on it can make a creaking noise and may need the door panel removed to check behind and be padded out within with foam - mainly affects coupes as the doors are large - see the 'FAQ' - [Click Here](#) -

**Check the Cruise Control** works. They have been known to fail, with a service lamp indicator On and "Speed Control System Faulty" error message which requires a software update - [Click Here](#) -

**Check that the seatbelts rewind in OK** A lot of people have had them replaced under warranty as the early cars have a batch of seat belts fitted which lose the tension. When you take it off it doesn't re-wind fully or hangs out the door of the car when you get out!

**Check the heating system** does cool down when you turn it low with Air Con on (split zone system) as the control valve gears at the back can malfunction as can the actual sensors that control the system themselves and is a known issue

**Check the Boot 'Divider'** if fitted as it is only plastic (and not very robust) but expensive to replace as it's part of the rear boot trim section

#### **Exterior**

**Check to see if the car is fitted with a towbar** If it is, you need to ensure that it has the proper Citroen wiring kit fitted and not a 'By Pass relay'.

A 'By Pass Relay' may affect the cars electrical and braking systems and, in the event of an accident, your insurance company may invalidate your claim if the braking system is felt to have been a contributory factor. Please read: - [Click Here](#) -

**Check the indicator repeaters** under the door mirrors. They are prone to cracking and letting moisture in and may need replacement at a cost of £9.51

**Check the bonnet paintwork** - on the front near the Citroen chevrons - the paint can 'blister' due to a chemical reaction which should be covered by the paint warranty (not stone chips but what look like 'blisters' coming through from under the paint)

*Phil wrote ...*

To clarify - the paint warranty is only 3 years (the same as the vehicle warranty.) The 12 year warranty is "anti perforation" as in corrosion. The bonnet is aluminium so won't corrode, it's more of a paint reaction problem.

**Check the wipers and windscreen.** Early blades were prone to flexing and letting the rubber unseat causing the blade to come in contact with the screen and scratch it. If the wiped area is badly scratched it may fail an MOT when it becomes due. The plastic trim that runs down the side of the windscreen on the drivers side of the car can become loose, it sticks out a few MM from the top where it joins the roof. Rare but covered under warranty if the car is under 3 years or 60,000 miles

**Check the tyres!** Citroën C4's come specified with Michelins. On the VTR+ and above they're 17inch Exaltos and cost around £150 each to replace. If there is any doubt about them get them changed before you buy.

**Check the rear Tailgate Lock.** This is a known issue and can cause problems with the central locking. The tailgate should NOT 'pop' open when you unlock the car. Read - [Click Here](#) - for more information

**Coupe and Hatchbacks:** on 2+ years or older Cars the wiring to the tailgate wiper can be worn/frayed/broken - check the wiper works and open the tailgate and take a look at the wiring loom between the body and tailgate (this is now subject to a recall for 10,800 cars in April 2011) - more info here: - [Click Here](#) -



**On the VTS/Exclusive the 'follow round corner' headlights** have auto self levelling which can fail. The lights drop down and won't raise to driving position due to a sensor fault. Try them out a few times by switching on and off to see that they do auto reset.

*Rich\_Eason wrote ...*

The problems specific to the C4 Coupe VTS non engine related...

If it has Xenons, check the headlamp washer function correctly. Turn on the lights then flick the windscreen

washers and check that the water is sprayed on the lights not the ground. A common fault caused by blocked/disconnected washer feed pipe.

The Xenons can also suffer from load sensor failures. Obviously not obvious until they do fail when the lights drop and illuminate about 3ft in front of the car. Dash warning and flashing headlamp on light indicate failure. About £140- £170 repair.

Check for wear on the driver seat around the side bolsters caused by damage from abrasion.

if it has heated seats, check they work as IIRC the heated base requires a complete new seat.

If it has a spoiler fitted (as mentioned before not standard on the HDi) check for paint bubbling.

The usual checks on the CC - no damp footwells (blocked drain tube) or consistent heat out of all vents (control box problem). Also check the controls of the CC dials as these can go a bit hay wire and make it difficult to dial in a temp.

## Engine and Mechanicals

Listen/feel for 'knocks' from the engine bay when pulling away on a test drive/starting the car. It could be a failed gearbox or engine mount.

**EGS Gearbox.** (electronically operated manual gearbox, not the full automatic)

When taking a test drive listen out for a 'chirping noise' or a 'Whine' which can sound quite shrill at motorway speeds and seems to be passenger side of the engine bay.

Or sounds more like an electric motor type noise, most easily noticeable when you come off the power and slowing, sounds a bit like a milk float or radio controlled car, but the noise is there in the background all the time, raises and falls with speed of car.

That could be an internal problem with the gearbox bearings which will be expensive to repair out of warranty.

The forums on site are littered with posts on problems with the EGS (and later ETG) gearbox **So if your not experienced in car maintenance you may want to avoid buying a car with one if you don't want problems and LARGE repair bills from a Dealer!!!!.**

*GPGeorge wrote ...*

The biggest problem isn't so much with the gearbox itself its with the clutch and dual mass flywheel.

Dual mass flywheels are fitted on most diesels to take out a lot of vibration issues in the drive train and will



fail on any car not just citroens.

The way the clutch works is done hydraulically and because it's controlled by computer its fitted with a position sensor on the clutch actuator (concentric thrust bearing in old terms, citroen decided to rename it actuator for some reason) the flywheel is prone to failing around 70'000 miles and you can hear a distinct metallic clunking while the engine is idling in neutral when it starts to fail.

The other problem is the position sensor on the clutch actuator gets gummed up with dust and grime from the clutch wearing and sticks causing clutch slip and jerky take up of the drive at about the same mileage. If the flywheel rattles about it can also give the actuator a good beating causing it to leak.

**C4 1.4 Petrol.** - These are prone to cylinder head failure

I have noticed the water level dropping slowly on my car and today when I went out the expansion bottle was empty. I checked the oil filler and the expansion bottle and there were no signs of any mayo etc.

Looking at the block from the front it seemed to be rather wet on the left corner from around half way down with what looked like coolant (looks like the head join).

It has also been missfiring from a cold start which I believe is symptomatic of a slight leak of the head gasket into a cylinder.

*Phil wrote ...*

Common problem on the 1.4 petrol I'm afraid. Everything you describe points towards head gasket.

107,000 miles is a good mileage to have covered - they tended to fail at random and without reason - we've done one as low as 16,000 on that engine previously.

They can also leak oil from the cylinder head area

Note:- this is an external oil leak - not an internal oil/coolant leak.... so not detrimental on the running of the car as such. if it's only minor and the car is "older" - I'd accept it as is. If you're planning on keeping it for years to come and it's your pride and joy then get it done.

Petrol 1.6 variants can sound noisy when first started (cold) this is caused by the Hydraulic tappets used. Citroen's fix is to use a different, thinner, grade of oil!

Early **1.6 petrol** models (pre-2007) were also prone to premature clutch failure (been known as low as



10,000 miles).

**1.6 HDi's** may have a booming noise coming from the engine - like a blowing exhaust - except the exhaust is not blowing.

*Phil wrote ...*

Check the Air filter box and/or pipe work (right hand side of the engine bay between the engine and battery cover).

If you rev the engine stationery, and get someone to hold it/move it around you'll notice the noise change. The mountings the airbox sit on become worn, allowing movement and general resonance.

On HDi's check at the top of the engine for oil leaks:

Oil can leak from the 'Air Doseur' shown above onto the alternator and cause problems if left - more info: - [Click Here](#) -

## **2.0 HDi Engines**

Remember to take the engine cover off (it just clips in place) and look for signs of oil/fuel around the injectors.

Leaking injectors can lead to sump oil contamination and Turbo run away and the 2.0 HDi's are the ones prone to it.

Leaking injector seals should be replaced **BEFORE** you accept the car

Some cars have squeaky rear brakes (again petrol models) so have a listen

Chirp - chirp noise at idle from the cam belt and red dust inside the cam belt cover are sure signs you need to change the water pump before it fails and serious damage occurs.

All cars will require front brake discs at around 40-50,000 miles with the rears lasting to around 70-80,000miles (depending on driving style)

Cars older than 3 years are prone to leaking radiators (there aluminium core) where the core joins the header so take a look for signs of water at the top of the radiator at the nearside (passenger in a right hand drive car)

**C4Picasso and Grand Picasso general**



Check the bonnet alignment on the nearside (passenger on UK cars) For a picture check here: - [Click Here](#) -

The bonnet prop causes this when the bonnet is propped up for extended periods, usually overnight, or the bonnet prop is not clipped away properly and owner has to force bonnet to close. New bonnet hinge and spraying to colour I'm afraid is the only answer and 60% of older cars may exhibit this problem to some degree.

You may also notice the front wheel arch liners are sagging too, again, quite normal. Newer (58 onwards) cars have an additional lip on the inside of the wing to support the liner.

Another one is the alignment of the front bumper. The locating clips under the headlamps snap causing the bumper to slightly drop and stand proud. The added stress on the bumper also causes a slight gap to appear between the headlamp and wing. Newer cars have stronger mounts.

Check the side of the drivers seat. The 'cushions' are known to fail and are an expensive item to replace, although you can make a DIY repair as per this thread: - [Click Here](#) -

Check for water in the rear boot well. The seals on the high level brake light can fail allowing water in which collects. More Info: - [Click Here](#) -

**C4 Picasso 'Exclusive' models with Pneumatic Self Levelling rear suspension** are starting to have problems with the actual air bags at around the 3 year old mark

There is some more information in this forum thread: - [Click Here](#) - so if buying one, check that it appears to be working correctly

Always take a test drive and listen out for a 'knocking' sound from the rear, it could be a failed rear axle bush or, a simple damper sleeve which has dropped down and needs pushing back into place on cars with the standard suspension set up (springs and dampers)

## How much will it cost to run a C4?

Have a read of my long term Road Test - [Click Here](#) - which has all the details on running a Diesel

## Which model should I buy?

It really depends on what your after. Whilst the VTS/Exclusive are packed with goodies they do have more issues than others - so do 1.6 petrol engined cars.

So from personal experience I would say the 1.6 110 HDi VTR+ offers the best value for money / reliability out of the range

Finally what colour car? That is a personal choice, but there is a list of the colours available here - [Click](#)





[Here](#) - so you can see what is/was available from launch in 2004

To see what Citroën Dealers have to offer take a look at the Official [used car locator](#)

### **Petrol or Diesel?**

It's going to be a difficult call for buyers I'm afraid - Diesel is supposed to be cheaper to run so if your doing 25,000 miles p.a. and intend to replace the car at the end of year 3 then it's not an issue

If you intend to buy the car and run it beyond 75,000 miles + then it may be cheaper to go for the new BMW/PAS petrol engined models as fuel economy has improved and servicing costs are less than the HDi - that's as long as Diesel is 10p a litre more expensive than Petrol here in the UK

In Europe the difference is not so clear cut

Buying used? - well if looking for a Diesel I would avoid a car with a Particulate Filter, unless it's low mileage and you don't expect to run it past 75,000 miles or so due to the additional costs of Eolys and the FAP filter - or it has passed that point and all the work has been done.

**Not all Diesel Engined cars are DPFS (Particulate Filter) so no EOLYS or DPFS Filters to worry about** There is a FAQ - [Click Here](#) - with the VIN engine ID which will let you know if a car has the 'Particulate Filter' system or not

If it does EOLYS is around 75,000 miles and DPFS Filter at 112,500 miles for a 1.6 HDi and 80,000 miles for EOLYS and 120,000 miles for the filter according to the Citroen Service Schedule

(It's the same for the C4 Picasso and Grand Picasso)

But care needs to be taken to ensure your buying the right model! - [Click Here](#) -

The difference - in reality a car with DPFS will have lower emissions and lower Road Tax but that's far offset by the potential additional servicing costs which adds additional costs of several hundred ( £) pounds.

*Phil wrote ...*

This is confusing.. but here goes!

The 2,0HDi is on 20,000 intervals, so the official replacement interval is 80,000 up to RP number 10380. (75,000 on the 1.6HDi)

There's a bit of overlap between RP 10381 and 10388 when they were switching to 120,000 (112,500 on 1.6HDi) intervals and anything from 10389 is definitely 120,000 (112,500 on 1.6HDi) intervals for replacement of the filter, with just the fluid being topped up at 80,000. (75,000 for 1.6HDi)



Exchange filters are available, but they carry a huge surcharge (APPROX £500+VAT) so it may be best to have your old one off ready to give to the dealer when you pick the new one up... either that or find a friendly dealer that will trust you to bring the old unit back!

Now picking a filter at random to give you an idea of price (there are a fair few options depending on chassis number and engine size etc.) but an exchange FAP filter will be anything from around £200 inc VAT - a brand new one costing in the region of £600.

### **GAP INSURANCE - WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?**

For a premium starting at just £55, you can be safe in the knowledge that should your vehicle be a Total Loss (stolen or written-off,) you won't lose a penny.

You may have a 'new for old' Motor Insurance, which will replace your vehicle with a new model as long as it is under a certain age and covered less than a stated mileage. But unfortunately, should your vehicle be stolen or written-off a day after the 'new-for-old' policy expires, the insurance company will give you the trade value and not a new vehicle. GAP will give you the full price you paid for the vehicle.

Cover varies depending on who you buy GAP Insurance from, but most offer 3 years cover. If you prefer to select your own term and claim value Click4gap offer this for terms of up to 4 years with a one-off payment. Click4Gap offer cover for both new and used vehicles, cars purchased privately or from a dealer, bought on finance, cash or contract hire. Cars can be up to 7 years old when the policy is purchased.

### **Owners Opinions**

*Rich\_Eason wrote ...*

The VTS HDi and 180 Petrol require you to drive in a different manner to get the best out of both.

The HDi is low down torque "puller", where as the 180 is wound up and needs revving. If you do the miles I would suggest the HDi is a bit like a "GT" spec in that it will cruise comfortably with the power to hand when required.

The 180 on the other hand sits a smidge sub 4000rpm at 70mph but winds itself all the way round to 7000 if required. The 180 to me has two distinct driving styles, relaxed if you change just as it comes on boil about 3600rpm, otherwise leave it in gear and press harder and feel the tug in the seat. On a good day it is also feels quicker than the book figures suggest. Around town expect anywhere between 18 and 22mpg on the open road 37mpg + is possible. The best I've ever had is 41mpg but that was a boring drive.

*BigJohnD wrote ...*

We have a 1.6HDi 110 C4 VTR+ and Focus Zetec 1.6TDi 110 - not the 2 litre I admit, - both with 5 speed gearboxes. The cars are direct competitors in terms of price and spec/branding.



The Citroën is much roomier, better equipped, far more comfortable with superb armchairs compared to the Focus's hard small perches.

The Citroën diesel is prepared for economy and gives a good 10% better mpg than the Ford, but Ford will out drag C4 in a sprint, being lower geared.

The Ford has the heated front screen, which is very good.

On long journeys, it's no contest; it's the C4 every time.

And, though motoring journos would have you believe otherwise, the C4 is the more reliable, and it is the Ford which costs us more, with mostly electrical problems - premature battery failure caused by dodgy charging; faulty locks on rear doors; leaking rear hatch; rear wiper despite all parts being changed (possibly related to leak) &c.

*Wozza wrote ...*

Personally I would always get the 2.0 petrol. Couple changes and it is up near the 190hp mark. With a decent gain in torque at all revs. The diesel will respond similarly but it is heavier, chassis isn't quite as well set up, and even with remap etc won't reach the same power as the Petrol.

I find with a remap on the 2.0 180 it's turned it into a bit of a different car. Got a bit more low end pull now so don't have to rev as much and getting 30mpg around town isn't that difficult any more.

Mine gets similar MPG to my 1.6 petrol which I don't find too bad.

With it revving up to 7300rpm as well you have a big power band there. Torque is virtually flat once you get to 3000rpm it basically stays at the same level until around 7000rpm. So nice wide torque band.

Generally I think it is quite a good engine. Gives you the mad 7000rpm fun when you want it to. But perfectly happy to pootle around letting you change up at 2000rpm.

However if you don't want to be changing gear as much then the 1.6 Turbo or 2.0 HDi will be the better choice. The 180 doesn't have the same kind of torque so you will need to drop it a couple of gears to get an over taking manoeuvre done quickly. However it will wind up to law breaking speeds much quicker. If you test drive one make sure you can get it to a 60 or 70 road. As it isn't time to change out of first when going for it until around 40 - 42mph.

Last updated: 21/10/2012

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**Details**



*Info 02 March 2009 by Web Admin Only*

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C4 - DS4 Owners