



ON SALE NOW

BMW X3 xDrive30e

Plug-in hybrid version of BMW's rival to the Audi Q5 has a 28-mile electric-only range and a classy interior
Price from £47,565



Darren Moss

Darren.Moss@haymarket.com

WE'VE BEEN VERY impressed with the latest BMW X3. It holds a five-star road test rating, putting it on an equal footing with its chief rival, the Audi Q5, and a whole star ahead of the Land Rover Discovery Sport. And now BMW is broadening its appeal to green-minded drivers, because it has launched a plug-in hybrid version.

Dubbed the xDrive30e, the model was revealed at the last Geneva motor show and is now on sale. It's powered by a combination of a 2.0-litre petrol engine and an electric motor, together producing 248bhp.

With a 0-62mph time of 6.1sec, this X3 is already reasonably rapid, but an extra 40bhp is temporarily available by utilising all of the electric motor's reserves – a boost

that should make overtakes a breeze. The gearbox is an eight-speed automatic, and you also get BMW's four-wheel drive system for extra traction on greasy roads, or if you want to venture into the wilderness.

Officially, the xDrive30e can cover up to 28 miles on electric power from a single charge. The battery is located under the rear seats in a bid to save storage space inside, but even so, this X3 has a smaller boot than conventionally powered X3s to the tune of 100 litres. Still, there should be enough space left to suit the average family.

Elsewhere, the xDrive30e is identical to regular X3 models. That means you get the same comfortable interior and class-leading iDrive infotainment system that we've praised in other models.

The xDrive30e costs slightly more than the equivalent regular X3, with prices starting from £47,565. It will go up against new

plug-in hybrid versions of the Audi Q5 (due for launch later this year) and Land Rover Discovery Sport.

Buyers wanting more electrified BMW SUVs won't have to wait for long, because the fully electric iX3 luxury SUV will join the plug-in hybrid X3 on sale next year.

Set to rival the Audi E-tron, Jaguar I-Pace and Mercedes-Benz EQC, the iX3 will be powered by two electric motors – one on each axle – and should be capable of covering at least 200 miles on a charge.

'The hybrid system produces 248bhp, with an extra 40bhp available temporarily'



X3 xDrive30e promises strong performance and potentially low running costs