

SMALL SCHNITZER

With 204 hp, the 116i by AC Schnitzer should go as well as a BMW 125i, but at least as well as a 118i. But because it stumbles during the measurement from a standing start, that's only partly true.

Normally a white 1-series BMW is not a car to turn heads. But the ACS1 1.6i in solid Alpine White causes everyone to look. Is it all all superficial? Or does the tuned compact BMW with the 1.6 litre turbo engine have some substance? Because a standard 116i really has some way to go when it comes to driving pleasure.

Body/quality: Décor stripes from the eighties, delicate open-work five-spoke 19" wheels which sturdily fill the wheelarches with their wide shoulders, front and roof spoilers: the Schnitzer certainly doesn't look shy and retiring - the engine power appears three times on the car: 204 hp.

Driving pleasure/thrust: If you're tense with anticipation in view of the large wheels and lowering, you can relax again: the springs and dampers give a decent ride over all the bumps in the road. Agility is improved only by the lower centre of gravity. Understeer is a long way away. The high boost pressure (1.1 instead of 0.7 bar) releases the four-cylinder engine from its restrictions.

Driving performance: Only 14 hp less than a 125i and 35 more than a 118i, so there should be a seven before the decimal point... can the small turbo live up to its big promises? No. The ECU shuts off the boost pressure and so sabotages a rapid getaway for the measurement from zero to 100 km/h. Another pity - at 210 km/h, the ECU shuts the tap. The 118i from Schnitzer (225 km/h, 0-100: measured 7.6 s) however keeps going.

Suspension/comfort: With precise steering, rear-wheel drive and suspension designed for comfort, the 1-series is a good basis for tuning. Schnitzer replaces the soft standard components with a height-adjustable solution, with dampers which can be adjusted for compression and rebound. A successful conversion which gives more feedback and leaves enough comfort.

Price/cost: A 118i is reasonable and at an extra 2900 Euro, costs only a little more than the tuned 116i. The suspension is worth the money, the accessories have a solid effect.

Summary:

Is performance worthwhile? Yes, on acceleration the Schnitzer shows how strong it is. The suspension shows the effects of the loving routine with which the Aachen-based company tunes BMWs. Despite the generous wheels and lowering, the 1-series remains suitable for everyday use and gives more driving pleasure than the standard car.

Skirt, films and roof spoiler make the 1-series a real eyecatcher. Five spoke 19" wheels, conflicting engine tuning.

Technical data:

Engine	R4 turbo
Installation position	Front longitudinal
Capacity	1598 cm ²
kW (hp) at rpm	150 (204) / 5900
Power to capacity ratio	128 hp/l
Nm at rpm	290 / 3000
Drive	rear-wheel
Gearbox	6-speed
Brakes, front	Discs, internally vented
Brakes, rear	Discs, internally vented
Tyre size	225/35 R 19
Wheel size	8.5 x 19 inch
Length / width / height	4324 / 1765 / 1390 mm
Weight to power ratio	6.7 kg / hp

Measurement values:

0 - 100 km/h	8.0 s
60 - 100 km/h in 4th gear	7.0 s
80 - 120 km/h in 5th/6th	8.8 / 13.7 s
Braking distance 100 km/h	cold 36.9 / warm 35.3 m
Top speed	210 km/h (governed)
Test consumption 100 km	8.1 l Super Plus
Empty weight / payload	1370 / 455 kg

Prices:

Standard vehicle	€ 23,250
Performance upgrade	€ 2,194
Suspension	€ 3,097
Wheelset	€ 2,167
Accessories	€ 3,060
Interior	€ 1,449
Price test car	€ 35,217