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# **BMW 5-Series (530d) Test Drive Review**

[caption id="attachment\_35579" align="aligncenter" width="500" caption="2011 BMW 5-Series - Click above for high resolution picture gallery"]



[/caption]

**Car tested:** 2011 BMW 5-Series (530d)

**Price OTR Mumbai:** Rs. 57,81,082/-

The BMW 5 Series (F10) has evolved into a more comfort friendly mode of executive transport. Though many still prefer the exterior of the older (E60), the evolution is noticeably apparent. The F10 is longer and wider and is based on the F01 7 Series platform, so basically you get skeleton of the 7 Series with a 5 Series badge. I get behind the wheel of the top of the line 530d and find out if its as good as it looks. We have already [reviewed the BMW 520d](#) and thus i will not go into too much detail but cover the differences between the two.



Exteriors are the same except for the 530d badge at the rear.



Under the hood lies a 3.0 litre (2993 CC), in line six cylinder powerplant with Variable Geometry Turbo which punches out 245 bhp @ 4000 rpm and a mind boggling torque of 540 Nm @ 1750-3000 rpm. The same engine powers the 525d, which produces 204 bhp @ 3750 rpm and max torque of 450 Nm @ 1750-2500 rpm. The difference of 41 bhp and torque of 90 Nm is attributed to the injection pressure between the two cars. The piezo injectors operate at a maximum injection pressure of 1600 bar and 1800 bar respectively in the 525d and 530d respectively. This 200 bar boost changes the equation completely.



Mated to this engine is an eight-speed automatic gearbox with the option to shift manually through tiptronic function and well as the paddles on the steering wheel. This gearbox only features in the 530d and the 535i. Unlike the 330i, the left paddle controls the downshift and the right is used to upshift. The gearbox has four single gearsets and five shift units interacting to give 8 forward gears and one reverse gear. This arrangement allows only two of the five clutches to move along open in each gear thereby resulting in smooth and quick shifts with minimal lag. Even the transition from eighth gear to second is pretty quick.

## BMW 530d

### PERFORMANCE GRAPH



The 525d stops the clock on a 0 - 100 run in 7.2 seconds with a top speed of 236 kmph, while the 530d zooms to the same in 6.3 seconds (Official BMW timing), a full 0.9 seconds less than the 525d. Under less than ideal

conditions, our test car did the same 0 - 100 run in 7.1 seconds. The paddles can soup up things nicely, downshift and floor the pedal to the metal and the 530 will dart forward like an arrow which is meant to hit the bullseye. The engine note in the process can make most heads turn and some jaws end up dropping & drooling over the sound, while the sporty looks can prove to be eye popping.



The suspension can be tuned as per the requirement. I must mention, that the 530d offers the best ride and handling balance in the entire segment. The suspension stiffens up in the Sports setting and this can be used for spirited runs. The Normal mode is ideal for the routine city driving. It also has the longest wheelbase in the given segment, this attributes to a better axle load distribution. BMW cars have been victims of criticism in the past due to their stiff ride but the handling has been always at the head of the game, this time around, the 530d appeals to both the sections of the society. The 5 Series is the first one to feature Electric Power Steering in the segment and this enhances comfort while driving especially at low speeds. Braking is perhaps the best in the segment, i stepped on the brakes at 140 kmph and the 530d stopped with utmost ease, mind you this was on a completely wet surface.



HUD or Heads up Display was first used for military aviation purpose wherein the pilot would have all the information without taking his eyes off the horizon, the same feature is now available in commercial aircrafts and high end automobiles. The HUD projects the data on the front windshield, visible only to the driver. Navigation is seamless as shown in the picture. The best part is that your passengers won't have a clue if you are using the navigational aids once you turn off the voice guiding feature.



For those who can be distracted by this at night or simply like it the conventional way, the HUD can be turned off by a flick of a button.



The 530d features a larger 10.2 inch screen which shows various parameters. The screen also works in split screen mode, thereby showing two different groups of data in a single view as shown in the picture. The lower models get a 7 inch screen. The same also serves as the display for the rear camera and parking assist. After 144 km of rev limiter driving, the 530d returns 9 kmpl. Phenomenal.



The rear passengers get two individual screens behind the front seats.



A DVD player is located in the central , console. Passengers can attach individual earphones and can enjoy music, videos etc from the iDrive or from their portable players through the RCA port.



The rear remote, notice the distinct similarity to the iDrive.

[caption id="attachment\_42414" align="aligncenter" width="500" caption="Instrument Cluster"]



[/caption]

Instrument cluster is very modern indeed. The lower end is an LCD screen which blends beautifully with the dials. This screen shows you various parameters.

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Cruise Control works well and speed changes can be made down to the single digit.



The BMW 530d is superbly impressive and comes fully loaded with the latest technology like the HUD,

Regenerative braking, 8 Speed gearbox etc, however, the price differential over the 525d is perhaps a bit steeper than one would like for the extra power and goodies on board, all said and done, this is the best piece of transport in the segment for the enthusiast with its driving dynamics and if you love sitting at the rear, you are likely to feel pampered too.



#### **Whats Cool**

- \* Performance
- \* Styling and Design
- \* Ride and Handling dynamics
- \* Features such as Regenerative Braking, HUD etc
- \* Built Quality
- \* Road Presence



#### Whats Not So Cool

- \* Price differential over 525d
- \* Rear Legroom
- \* Runflat tyres

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