Used Mercedes-Benz GLC inspection checklist

What to check on a used GLC, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.

COVERS **X253** 2016–2022 **X254** 2023 on

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☐ **Tick it** if it's fine. **Cross it** if it isn't, and note what you found so you can price it into your offer.

! **Safety critical:** affects how safely it drives or protects you in a crash. Best to have a mechanic check it before you buy.

$ **Negotiate:** costs money to fix, from wear to major repairs. Get a quote and take it off the price.

1 Exterior

- ☐ **Rust.** Check wheel arches, sills and the tailgate's lower edge for bubbling paint or surface rust. Rust starting at a seam usually means water has been sitting there for a long time. $
- ☐ **Panel gaps.** Walk around the car and check panel gaps are even on both sides and paint colour matches panel to panel. Uneven gaps or a slightly different shade point to crash repair work. $
- ☐ **Alloy wheels.** Look closely at each wheel rim for kerb scuffs, cracks or signs of repair. A cracked rim is a safety risk and expensive to replace on this car's larger wheel sizes. $
- ☐ **Roof rails.** If roof rails are fitted, check they're firmly bolted with no cracking around the mounting points. Loose rails suggest heavy roof-top loads or racks have been carried. $

2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Oil leaks.** Look at the engine's oil filter housing and cooler area for wet, oily residue or drips. A damp patch here is a sign of a leaking seal that gets worse over time. $
- ☐ **Engine oil level.** Check the oil level and condition on the electronic dash readout or dipstick if fitted, looking for a clean brown colour rather than black or gritty oil. Oil that's very low or dark suggests poor servicing. $
- ☐ **Diesel: AdBlue cap.** Diesel: find the AdBlue filler cap, usually next to the fuel filler, and check it's present and undamaged. A missing or cracked cap can let in dirt that damages the system. $
- ☐ **Cold start noise.** Start the engine from cold and listen closely for a rattle from the front of the engine that fades after a few seconds. A persistent rattle on start-up can mean the timing chain has stretched. $

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Tyres.** Check all four tyres are above the wear bars and worn evenly side to side. AWD (4MATIC) models need closely matched tyres, as mismatched ones strain the drivetrain. $
- ☐ **Underbody rust.** Look underneath for rust on the floor pan or around suspension mounts, and for fresh welds or patchy new coating in one spot only. A single shiny patch among otherwise dirty metal can hide crash repair. !
- ☐ **Air suspension.** If the car has air suspension, check it sits level on flat ground and doesn't sag on one corner after sitting overnight. A corner that drops overnight points to a leaking air spring or compressor. $
- ☐ **4MATIC driveline.** AWD (4MATIC): look underneath for oil weeping around the rear differential or driveshaft. A leak here means an expensive drivetrain repair. $

4 Interior and electrics

- ☐ **Warning lights.** Turn the ignition on without starting the engine and check every dash warning light comes on then switches off once running. A light that stays on, especially airbag or brake, needs explaining before you buy. !
- ☐ **Seatbelts.** Pull each seatbelt fully out and let it retract, checking it latches firmly with no fraying on the webbing. Frayed webbing means the belt may not hold properly in a crash. !
- ☐ **Infotainment screen.** Turn on the MBUX screen and check menus respond quickly without freezing, and that Bluetooth or Apple CarPlay connects properly. A screen that freezes or restarts on its own can be a costly fix. $
- ☐ **Panoramic sunroof.** If fitted, open and close the sunroof fully and listen for grinding, and check no water staining shows on the roof lining. A slow or noisy sunroof often needs new seals or a motor. $
- ☐ **Plug-in hybrid charge port.** PHEV: open the charge port flap and check the socket is clean and undamaged, with no corrosion on the pins. A corroded port can mean the car hasn't been charged properly or at all. $

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic gearbox.** Drive from a stop and through normal gear changes, feeling for any judder, hesitation or rough, delayed shifts. Judder at low speed pulling away is a warning sign of gearbox wear. $
- ☐ **Steering feel.** Drive at a steady speed on a straight road and check the car tracks straight without wandering or pulling to one side. Pulling to one side can mean worn suspension or alignment issues. $

! **Stay safe.** Never go under a car held up only by a jack, and never open the radiator or coolant cap on a hot engine. Keep hands, hair and loose clothing clear of fans and belts when the engine is running, and do checks under the bonnet with it switched off where you can. On the test drive, hold a current licence, confirm the car is registered and insured, obey road rules, and only brake hard when the road behind is clear. Meet in a safe, public-facing place, take someone with you, and don't carry large amounts of cash to a viewing.

5 Test drive continued

- [ ] **4MATIC on full lock.** AWD (4MATIC): in a car park, drive slowly on full steering lock in both directions and listen for clunking or juddering. Juddering on tight turns suggests the all-wheel-drive coupling is binding. $
- [ ] **Plug-in hybrid handover.** PHEV: pull away on electric power alone, then let the petrol engine join in, feeling for a smooth handover with no surging. A jerky handover can mean a hybrid system fault. $
- [ ] **Brakes.** Brake firmly from a safe speed and check the car stops straight with a firm pedal and no grinding or pulsing. A pulsing pedal often means warped discs that need replacing. !

6 Documentation

- [ ] **Service history.** Check the logbook or digital service record is stamped on time with matching receipts, and look for any mention of drivetrain or electrical work. Gaps in the history can hide deferred maintenance. $
- [ ] **Roadworthy certificate.** Confirm a current roadworthy certificate is supplied if your state requires one on sale, and that its details match the car.

What this guide can't tell you about the GLC you're looking at

13+
recalls on GLCs built since 2016*

12
common faults reported on GLCs built since 2016*

1,026
owner complaints on GLCs built since 2016*

Money owing, stolen or a write-off?
A tidy car can hide all three.

What's each fault worth?
Shufti's negotiation coach turns it into leverage.

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* Shufti analysis, November 2026, of official recall notices, complaints lodged by vehicle owners with vehicle safety regulators, and independent reviews and owner forums. Faults are counted when two or more independent sources report them.

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