

/// FIRST DRIVE //



Although purists might take issue with BMW's use of forced induction, there's no doubt this is the finest, most refined M5 ever. While its previous V10 iteration was memorable, it was also on the edge of civility. Yes, it was a fun ride, but sometimes you just want to drive a car rather than tame it.

On the street, the new M5 is the embodiment of smoothness, the type of ride that brings an unconscious smile. BMW has done great things in the suspension department, instilling the chassis with a superb blend of firmness and comfort. The M5 features a simplified damper control system allowing the choice of three, easy-to-dial settings. At its softest, the M5 simply floats over nasty tarmac while the most aggressive treats drivers to near race car-like stiffness. Right in the middle is where the M5 feels best, communicating its movements with near telepathic feedback.

The transmission borders on sentience as well. There are no less than six settings for the new M DCT seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox, ranging from an economy-minded auto mode to a stick-banging manual setup. The M5 features BMW's brand-new fully active M differential, which utilizes a multitude of sensors around the car that divvy the torque across the rear axle for maximum bite. Unlike the previous SMG transmission, M DCT leaves the M5 with shifts so smooth they are almost unrecognizable. Sure, you can still do the work yourself with the steering wheel-mounted paddles, but