

# BMW 318i F30

2015-2019 · 1.5L B38 3-cylinder turbocharged petrol (136 hp)

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Est. annual maintenance cost: €750-1,350

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Mileage \_\_\_\_\_ Price \_\_\_\_\_ Seller \_\_\_\_\_

**What matters most:** The B38 three-cylinder is more reliable than the N20 it replaced. Focus on cooling system condition and whether the turbo wastegate rattles.

## BEFORE THE VIEWING

### Recall status

Takata airbag and coolant heater recalls affect some F30s. Ask the seller to confirm all recalls are completed, or check with a BMW dealer using the VIN.

### Service records and oil intervals

BMW's long-life service suggests 30,000 km oil changes, but the B38 benefits from 15,000 km or annual changes. Look for consistent records at those intervals.

### Confirm it is an LCI with B38 engine

The 318i only existed as the post-2015 facelift (LCI) with the B38 three-cylinder. If listed as pre-2015, it is a different model. Worth confirming before visiting.

## AT THE CAR

### Tyres and exterior condition

Standard sizes are 205/60R16 or 225/50R17. Check tread depth, age (four-digit date code on sidewall), and uneven inner-edge wear, which can point to alignment issues.

### Cold start and engine sound

Start the engine cold and listen during the first 30 seconds. A brief rattle that fades is normal for three-cylinders, but persistent metallic noise can point to timing chain stretch.

### Coolant level and hoses

Open the bonnet and check the coolant expansion tank (right side of the engine bay). Low coolant or visible residue around the tank cap can point to water pump or thermostat issues.

### Oil leaks around the valve cover

Look along the top and sides of the engine for oil seepage or wet spots. The valve cover gasket tends to harden after 80,000 km. A faint burning smell with the bonnet open is another sign.

## DURING THE DRIVE

### Turbo wastegate rattle

Accelerate gently between 1,500 and 2,500 rpm and listen for a metallic rattle. A light rattle is a known B38 trait, but a loud or persistent one may mean the actuator needs attention.

### Steering feel over bumps

Drive over speed bumps and rough patches. A clunking noise from the steering column area is a widespread F30 issue caused by dried-out grease in the electric steering rack.

### Dashboard warnings during driving

Watch for a drivetrain malfunction warning or check engine light during the drive. These can point to turbo, ignition coil, or sensor problems that are not visible at standstill.

## NOTES

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## THIS CAR AT A GLANCE

Entry-level petrol 3 Series, built 2015-2019. The B38 three-cylinder is a step up in reliability from the N20 it replaced. Cooling system and wastegate are the main watch points.

## KNOWN WEAK POINTS

### Electric water pump

Fails around 80,000-120,000 km  
€500-1,200

### Turbo wastegate rattle

Metallic rattle at low RPM  
€150-2,000

### Valve cover gasket leak

Oil seepage from heat cycling  
€300-900

### Electric steering rack

Clunking over bumps, all F30s  
€50-1,800

### Timing chain stretch

Rare, front-mounted, easier fix  
€800-1,800

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