

## Mazda 3 MPS BL

2009-2013 · 2.3 MZR DISI Turbo (260 hp) 4-cylinder turbocharged petrol

Est. annual maintenance cost: €1,000-2,000

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

**What matters most:** Cold-start rattle is the telltale sign. The VVT actuator wears internally, and a rattle lasting more than 2-3 seconds on startup points to the most expensive repair on this car.

### BEFORE THE VIEWING

- Service history and oil changes**  
Ask for full records before visiting. This engine needs 5W-30 oil every 15,000 km or 12 months. Gaps or wrong oil can accelerate VVT actuator and turbo seal wear.
- Modification and tuning history**  
Ask the seller directly if the car has ever been tuned, remapped, or fitted with aftermarket parts. Many MPS cars have been modified and returned to stock for resale.
- Recall status (Takata airbag)**  
Contact a Mazda dealer with the VIN to confirm the Takata airbag recall has been completed. This is a safety recall affecting all 2009-2013 models.

### AT THE CAR

- Tyres and exterior condition**  
Check all four 215/45 R18 tyres for tread depth and date codes. Inner-edge wear on the fronts is common even with correct alignment. Look for rust around wheel arches and the tailgate.
- Cold-start VVT rattle**  
The engine must be completely cold. Listen from the passenger side for a rattling or slapping noise in the first 30 seconds. Any rattle lasting more than 2-3 seconds can point to VVT actuator wear.
- Signs of previous tuning**  
Check the A-pillar trim for holes or adhesive residue from aftermarket gauges. Look at the OBD2 port (below the steering column) for scratches from repeated plug-in use by flash tools.
- Engine mounts and idle vibration**  
With the bonnet open, ask the seller to blip the throttle. Excessive engine rocking or a visible clunk when the clutch is released can point to worn lower or passenger-side mounts.

### DURING THE DRIVE

- Full-boost turbo response**  
During a safe straight, accelerate firmly from around 3,000 rpm in 3rd gear. Hesitation or power loss between 3,000-4,000 rpm can point to fuel pump or turbo issues. Check for blue-grey exhaust smoke.
- Gearbox and clutch feel**  
Shift through all six gears at various speeds. A notchy 1st-to-2nd shift is common but grinding is not. A high biting point or slip under load in higher gears can point to clutch wear.
- Dashboard warnings and ABS**  
Confirm the ABS and traction control lights come on briefly at startup and then go off. If they stay on, the ABS module may have an internal fault, which costs around 300-500 to repair at a specialist.

### NOTES

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### THIS CAR AT A GLANCE

Turbocharged hot hatch, built 2009-2013. Can be reliable with strict maintenance, but many have been modified or driven hard. VVT actuator health is the key concern.

#### KNOWN WEAK POINTS

##### VVT actuator / chain

Cold-start rattle, risk of chain skip  
€800-2,500

##### Turbo seal failure

Blue smoke under load after idling  
€800-2,500

##### Engine mount wear

Visible rocking, clunking on throttle  
€300-800

##### Clutch and flywheel

Slip under load, high biting point  
€800-1,500

##### Ignition coil packs

Misfires under load, rough idle  
€100-300

