

# 2006 Nissan Pathfinder

by Gary Dickinson

## INTRODUCTION

The Nissan Pathfinder was redesigned in 2005 with expanded passenger and cargo capacity in addition to third row seating option. In 2006, Nissan added minor refinements including the addition of a 6-disc auto changer, satellite radio, and leather-appointed seat options.

Pathfinder, which was Nissan's first SUV, remains true to the adventure roots of the original with a powerful design featuring enhanced off-road capabilities with a 4.0-liter version of the award-winning Nissan VQ-series V6 engine and a fully boxed, all-steel frame based on the full-size Armada.



## OVERVIEW

I really liked the 4.0 liter V6 engine's smooth and quick acceleration. Nissan, has squeezed 270 HP out of a V6 engine entering the V8 HP range. I was also impressed by the smooth and well controlled ride. The ride was very comfortable throughout the 200 mile test drive. The cavernous cargo area is another plus for the Pathfinder.

On the other hand, the rear seat ceiling mounted DVD display was a disappointment, as was this option with other tested vehicles. This mounting location reduces rear vision through the rear view mirror (See Photo). I would prefer a low console or behind seat mounting. In addition, the rather large pillar between driver's side front and rear doors reduces rear-side visibility. Now I am not a clean freak by any means, but I like to look as nice as an older guy can. Every time I exited my pants leg rubbed against the running board. The running board is not wide enough to step on so I had to bypass it to the ground (see photo column 3). It was full of salt residue from a previous snow fall, and unfortunately my pants were also. This is a minor complaint, as it does not take much to make me look messy.

# TEST DRIVE

## TESTED VEHICLE

**Vehicle:** 2006 Nissan Pathfinder SE-OR

**Class:** SUV 4WD

**Engine:** The 4.0 liter six cylinder DOHC engine yields 270 HP at 5,600 RPM and 291 lbs-ft torque at 4,000 RPM

**Transmission:** 5-speed automatic

**Suspension:** Front-independent double-wishbone with coil-over shocks, rear-independent double-wishbone with coil on tow control link.

**Brakes:** 4-wheel disk ABS with electronic brake-force distribution (EBD).

**Base MSRP:** \$31,300

**Tested Vehicle MSRP with options:** \$35,695 (which includes a destination charge of \$605)



## INTERIOR

☺ **Room:** Roomy cabin with plenty of shoulder room, leg room and headroom.

☺ **1<sup>st</sup> Row Seats:** Provides adequate back and thigh support.

☹ **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Row Seats:** Very limited seating area. Out of the 7 person seating capacity, at least 3 better be small children.

☺ **Ventilation:** Dual zone climate control operated seamlessly with well designed and easily accessible controls.

☺ **Storage:** Whopping 79.2 cu. ft. with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> row seats flat. Ample space in console

and door pockets.

☺ **Fit and Finish:** No interior fit or finish problem found.



## TEST DRIVE

☺ **Acceleration:** Zero-60 MPH tested at 8.2 seconds, 55-65 MPH passing performance tested at 2.6 seconds.

☺ **Steering:** Well weighted with excellent on center response.

☺ **Handling:** Very well controlled even on high speed maneuvers.

☺ **Ride:** Very smooth with good road isolation.

☹ **Visibility:** Rear view vision is partially obstructed by 7" color monitor when open. (see photo above)

☺ **Braking:** Sure and responsive.

☺ **Transmission:** Smooth and responsive.

☺ **Interior Noise:** Wind and engine noise are well muffled.

☺ **Test drive mileage:** 22.5 MPG (highway driving); EPA estimates 21H/15C

## VEHICLE CAPACITIES

**Seating:** 7

**Cargo Volume:** 79.2 cu. ft.

**Passenger Volume:** 149.1 cu. ft.

**Base Curb Weight:** 4,771 lbs.

**Fuel Tank:** 21.1 gallons



## EXTERIOR

☺ **Engine Service Points:** All fluid service points are located for easy access.

☹ **Running Board:** Hard to exit without rubbing leg against Running Board. (see photo above)

☺ **Body:** No exterior fit or finish problems found.

*Test Drive is conducted and written by the Nutz & Boltz staff, who contribute their own unbiased and unfettered comments in order to meet our mission: "To help save consumers time and money, and to help save motorists lives."*