



Audi A4 (2007 - 2015)

The best helmsmen ...

Review | Where do you find the best helmsmen? If it were up to Audi, they would all be seated behind the controls of the new A4. The newest generation of Audi's success story would be the sportiest car in its class. On top of that, the A4 promises unprecedented luxury and innovative technology. Can the A4 fulfil these claims or is it all bravado?

All on board, the new Audi A4 will be leaving shortly. There is plenty of space for four people, as the new A4 is longer and wider than ever. Notably the wheelbase has increased in size, which is beneficial to the available legroom in the rear. Upfront the large seats are unmissable, especially since they are adjustable in all directions, including the length of the seat base.

Onboard

The dashboard is partly orientated towards the driver enhancing that cockpit sensation. Centrally placed on the dashboard is located MMI, the "Multi Media Interface", from which the driver is able to control audio, navigation, communication and character of the car.



In comparison with similar systems from other car manufacturers, MMI has sombre graphics and little intuitive control. In the A4, the system has not been modernized, resulting in Audi somewhat missing the boat. However, the A4 is available with a new audio system. Apart from the standard radio/CD player and a "premium" Bose sound system, the A4 is equipped with B&O loudspeakers and amplifiers. At a normal volume level, this is a very fine sound system; however

when the volume is notched up a level to kick-start the party, the B&O system tends to blare and distort the sound.

Drive Select

Where the A4 is equipped with "Drive select" it is possible to adjust the steering, suspension and engine to comfortable or dynamic as desired. The result is a helmsmen's car offering barges full of driving pleasure.



The sporty version drives like a small sports car. In dynamic mode, the suspension is solid but not uncomfortably hard. Road handling is excellent with the A4 bestowing many a driver with a massive grin as they wind their way through the bends. Exactly as Audi promises, the new A4 is the sportiest car in its class.

However, there should be a great big "but". During this test drive, many models were examined. The basic model without "Drive select" and without sports suspension is a lot less exciting than the top model and at this basic level the A4 is no more than simply a good car with good road handling.



Light

The A4's road handling is partly due to the lightweight construction of the car. With the A4, Audi has flown in the face of tradition and not used aluminium, which would make the car costly. Instead modern steels, which like aluminium are light and extremely strong, are employed resulting in a light car which is automatically manoeuvrable and more economical.

Moreover the A4 has been designed so that weight of the car is positioned equally over the front and back wheels as much as possible. This makes a noticeable contribution to a more dynamic style. In addition the strong carriage is vibration-free, which benefits the comfort levels.



Safe

The new A4 is equipped with numerous new safety

systems. When the steering wheel vibrates, "Lane Assist" warns when lane changes are made accidentally (in other words: without indicating). With a light on the side mirror, "Side Assist" indicates the presence of a car in your blind spot.

The most significant extra is the "Dynamic Steering", which makes steering dependent on the situation, either direct or indirect. At high speeds steering is indirect, so that it is easier to drive straight ahead. At lower speeds on a winding road, control is direct with the car acting in an accentuated sporty style. This same electronics are used to make corrections easier in emergency situations.



In spite of Audi's motto "Vorsprung durch Technik" (which translates to "Advancement through Technology") all these systems have been copied from other brands. It all makes for a safe and modern A4, but none of it is innovative.

Engine room

The A4 is available with three petrol and three diesel engines. The test drive starts with the flagship: the 3.2 litre V6 with Quattro four-wheel traction. This is without a doubt the party animal of the series. The 265 bhp six cylinder engine is seriously quick, but yet if required can still be driven as a stately limousine.



According to expectations, the 1.8 litre TFSI will become the most popular petrol engine. Thanks to the innovative technology this relatively small yet economical engine delivers nevertheless a considerable capacity of 160 bhp. Also due to the light weight of the car, the 1.8 T performs very well and delivers an abundance of driving pleasure. Particularly in combination with Multitronic gearbox, the 160 bhp strong TFSI is to be recommended.

For those that would prefer to drive a diesel, start with the 2.0 litre 140 bhp TDI. This is slightly less capacity than your average car in this class, which is noticeable. The strongest diesel engine is the 3.0 litre six cylinder which in fact performs better than the strongest petrol engine! This diesel is slightly less lively, but still very powerful on the motorway. Irrespective of the chosen engine, the A4 is extraordinarily quiet.

Conclusion

Is the new Audi A4 the most sporty, modern and progressive car in its class? The answer is really dependent on the model. As with every Audi the price in the brochure is only the beginning.

Every A4 is roomier, quieter and more comfortable than average. Depending on the finish, the car can also be very safe and luxurious. With "Drive Select" the A4 is the sportiest car in its class. ■

Specifications

Audi A4 (2007 - 2015) 3.2 FSI Quattro

Size and weight

Length x width x height	470 x 183 x 143 cm
Wheelbase	281 cm
Kerb weight	1.580 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	1.900 kg
Fuel capacity	64 l
Luggage space	480/962 l
Tyre size	225/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	3197 cc
Cylinders / valves	6/4
Max power	265 PS @ 6500 rpm
Max torque	330 Nm @ 3000 rpm
Drive	four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	6.2 secs
Top speed	250 km/h
Average mileage	9.2 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	13.5 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	6.7 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	219 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 28,850
Price base model	Â£ 21,800