



Audi Q5 (2008 - 2017)

Object of Desire

Review | Admit it: you already decided. You want a large, tough car and Audi is your brand. The moment the Q5 was revealed, you felt that this is the car that suits you. But is it wise to base a decision for a new car on just looks and image alone? Autozine tested the Q5 especially for you.

To add to the suspense Audi isn't very modest when describing the Q5. In glossy books the car is shown in the most glamorous settings and described as: "the new reference in its class" and "a driving experience that knows no equal".

Anticipation

But between the lines of this boasting text there is an important message. The Q5 is not an indestructible and invincible off-roader but mainly a life style vehicle. The Q5 emphasises on design and sportiness.



That is confirmed by its looks: the Q5 is significantly lower and more streamlined than the average SUV. The Q5 is a cross between a large estate and a modest SUV. The lines are especially elegant, like only Audi can. It is understandable that people feel an urge to buy this car just by looking at the pictures.

More than with other cars the colour influences the looks. In black the Q5 looks large, dangerous and

"bad". In lighter colours the refined lines are brought out best. The test car in "Dakar Beige" has something adventurous.

Equipment

The moment your backside slides onto the driver's seat you feel superior and privileged. This is all made just beautifully! Normally Audi distinguishes itself by a clean and immaculate finish, but the Q5 goes up another notch.



To emphasise that the Q5 is not an entry level car, it can be fitted with all the equipment that is also available for the larger Audi-models. The test car is fitted with so many extras, that the price of the options alone would buy a decent city car. But, with all those extras the Q5 is luxury on wheels.

A highly recommendable option is the sublime sounding B&O sound system. The Q5 is equipped with the third generation of Audi's "Multi Media Interface" (MMI). It still has more buttons and is less easy to use than similar systems from other brands, but -for now- it has two unique options. The sat-nav does not only calculate the shortest or fastest route to a destination, but can also give the most economic route. When zooming in on the map, not only streets are shown but outlines of buildings appear in 3d!



Very handy are the parking camera and "Side Assist" (a warning will be shown when there's a vehicle in the blind spot of the mirrors). Forget about the heated/cooled cup holder: it hardly works.

The cabin of the this "compact" SUV is remarkably spacious, both in the front and the back. From an ergonomic point of view the Q5 doesn't have the slightest error or discomfort. The bench folds flat by just pulling a lever. From a perfect flat cargo floor to a power tailgate: Audi has thought of everything.

Driving

Surrounded by beautiful materials and high-tech electronics the Q5 gives the privileged feeling that makes owning a car like this so desirable. That feeling only gets stronger when driving the Q5. Although the driver doesn't sit up so high that he/she feels king of the road, the driving characteristics are good that the Q5 does give one a feeling of superiority.

Even the base engine, the 2.0 litre diesel, performs very well. Shortly after starting the testdrive the car was actually stopped at the side of the road to check the name plate on the back to make sure this really is just a 2.0 TDI. When put in cold hard numbers the performance of the basic engine isn't very impressive, but the Q5 feels very quick. Furthermore: the Q5 is very quiet and performs with ease. No matter how many revs the engine makes, there's always lots of power available. When really provoked even this basic

engine can get the Q5 into a spectacular four wheel drift!



A gear change indicator shows the most economic moment to choose the next gear. The six speed manual gearbox doesn't shift too lightly or too heavily, but just right. This may seem like a detail, but when something is used so often it significantly contributes to the good feeling a car gives.

Off road

The eager and lively character makes the 2.0 TDI less suitable for off-road driving. Also the direct and somewhat sudden reaction of the clutch makes it hard to maintain that delicate balance between slip and grip needed off-road. This is the only point where the Q5 really disappoints.

Audi also speaks highly of the Q5's off-road capabilities and fits the car with a Quattro four wheel drive system, ESP with an off-road modus and hill descent control. Because the wheels are placed on the extreme edges of the car, in theory it should be able to climb even the steepest mountain.



However, the poor ground clearance and motorway tyres limit the car. The Q5 got stuck during the first off-road tests. The front bumper hit the ground repeatedly and engine didn't make driving off-road any easier. The four wheel drive system should only be regarded as an extra safety feature for driving in extreme weather conditions.

Happy motoring

The Q5 feels more at home on tarmac. The steering is exact and pleasantly heavy. In contrast to many other SUVs this Audi doesn't feel colossal or heavy, but rather dynamic and athletic. The low roof line doesn't only make the car look sleek, but also gives it a lower centre of gravity thereby improving stability.

The Q5 turns short, quick corners as well as the A4 and doesn't tilt at all. Only when taking the car to extremes, there is body roll. But even then the car is very grippy and the tyres just won't let go. The Q5 offers a fantastic drive with standard suspension, the optional sports package makes the car even sharper but this severely affects comfort.

The dynamic character (and the knowledge that the Q5 behaves well when put to extremes) makes the Q5 great fun to drive. Seldomly an SUV has been tested with so much joy!



Conclusion

Perhaps a test of the Q5 wasn't strictly necessary. This is a car that is chosen based on its good looks and image. Thanks to the modest size this is an acceptable SUV. Thanks to the low roof line the Q5 has better aerodynamics and looks better than most competitors. The 2.0 TDI engine performs very well and has excellent fuel economy.

The Q5 doesn't just drive better than most other SUV's, but is also fitted with more modern electronics making the car more comfortable and safer. Just about all imaginable luxury is available. Normally an Audi is "just another good car, but better looking". The Q5 excels on all levels and is therefore a highly desirable object. ■



Specifications

Audi Q5 (2008 - 2017) 2.0 TDI

Size and weight



Length x width x height	463 x 188 x 165 cm
Wheelbase	281 cm
Kerb weight	1.730 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	2.000 kg
Fuel capacity	75 l
Luggage space	540/1560 l
Tyre size	235/65R17

Engine and performance



Capacity	1968 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	170 PS @ 4200 rpm
Max torque	350 Nm @ 1750 rpm
Drive	four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9.5 secs
Top speed	204 km/h
Average mileage	6.7 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	8.2 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.8 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	175 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 29,950
Price base model	Â£ 29,950