



Ford Fiesta

The many faces of the Fiesta

Review | A better product is a more successful product. That makes sense. But what's better for one customer, isn't necessarily better for another. That's why the all-new Ford Fiesta is available in several distinct flavours, each with their own character. Meet the many faces of the Fiesta.

Let's meet! The seventh generation of the Ford Fiesta is available in a basic version, as a sporty "ST-Line", an adventurous "Active" and a luxury "Vignale". For this test the two extremes have been tried: the ST-Line and Vignale.

The ST-Line (red car in the pictures) boasts sporty looks, based on the sports cars from Ford with side skirts, a black grille and bespoke bumpers. However, the ST-Line combines this with the same efficient engines as the other versions. The ST-Line is only available as a three-door, and that makes the package even more desirable.

The Vignale shown here (beige car in the photos) is a five-door and looks classy thanks to the unique grille, 18-inch rims, warm colours and many chrome accents.



Three-door ST-Line

Underneath, all versions of the Fiesta 2017 are (almost) equal. Compared to the previous generation, the new Fiesta is longer (+7 cm) and wider (+2 cm). Compared to the competition, the Fiesta is still of average size.

Therefore the space in the front is also average for a car in this segment. However, the experience is special. With the ST-Line it's all about sportiness. The

seats of the ST-Line are firm and offer extra lateral support. Black dominates, with some red accents for excitement.



The space in the rear of the Fiesta is fair. It's because of the soft backside of the front seats that adults in the rear have sufficient legroom. The headroom in the back is poor, especially if the car is fitted with the optional panoramic roof. The headrests in the rear are too low to contribute to safety.

Five-door Vignale

The five-door Vignale feels like a completely different car. Here it's all about luxury and therefore the car offers a wealthy feeling that is unique in this segment. While the ST-Line is modern and sleek, the Vignale is chic and inviting.



The upholstery of the seats and the dashboard has a quality and warmth that's unique for a compact car. The seats are as comfortable as they look (although they might have been a tad bigger). Merely being inside the Fiesta Vignale feels like a privilege, and that's a first for a car like this.

Trim levels

Despite the presentation, the biggest innovation for any Fiesta 2017 is in the electronics. Ford doesn't want to introduce new technologies on the top models, because only a small audience can afford those. Instead Ford chose the Fiesta to introduce a range of new technologies. That's why the Fiesta is now Ford's most advanced model!

While the previous Fiesta offered two active safety features, the new one offers seventeen. The car has sensors all around. They are used to assist the driver; day and night. While parking, manoeuvring, driving in city traffic and on the open road the electronics act like a second pair of eyes for the driver. During the test drive this all worked fine and never affected driving pleasure.



When it comes to luxury, the Fiesta boasts a brand new infotainment system. An 8-inch display sits on the dashboard like a crown jewel and offers high resolution graphics. The system responds quickly to user input and the setup is intuitive.

Optionally Ford offers a high-end audio system which has been developed with "B&O Play". With the right settings, the sound is crisp, rich and realistic.



Petrol

For this test drive with the top-notch Fiestas, the top-notch engine has been used. Fords well-know 1.0 litre three-cylinder "EcoBoost" engine now comes in a 140 PS / 180 Nm strong version. This doesn't just make the Fiesta quick, it also performs with so much ease that it's frugal (6 litres per 100 km) and somewhat overpowered.

It's the effortless performance that makes the Fiesta feel like a bigger car than it actually is. Ford wants to seduce customers from a higher segment to buy a Fiesta and this EcoBoost engine will certainly do the trick.



Diesel

The 1.5 litre diesel engine (120 PS) is so quiet and refined that the test driver shortly wondered if Ford supplied the correct car. The diesel isn't as spirited as the petrol engine. Instead the TDCi is a true mile muncher which covers long distances with great ease (fuel consumption during test drive: 4.3 litres per 100 km).

With the base model and the ST-Line the engine noise is audible. In this case it's also clearly noticeable that Ford uses a three-cylinder engine, with the typical three-cylinder noise. The Vignale and Titanium levels have a windscreen and wheel arches with extra sound insulation which makes them quieter.



Handling

The strong point of any Fiesta has always been its handling. Like no other, Ford combines comfort with being fun to drive, without the need for a pricey variable suspension or other gadgetry. The seventh generation has a very different character.

The new Fiesta is more introvert. Steering isn't too light, so the driver feels connected to the metal and this gives great confidence in the car. Roadholding is excellent, but the Fiesta only shows it when being provoked.



That is, with the luxury models. The ST-Line has lowered suspension (-10 mm), a more direct steering rack, stiffer torsion beams and tougher strings. This makes the car feel lightweight and dynamic; and in that way the Fiesta shows its many faces.

Conclusion

With the seventh generation of the Fiesta, Ford chose a new direction. The former fun-loving car now shows several different faces. Next to the base model there's a sporty version, an adventurous and a luxury model. Although the technical differences are limited to looks and fine tuning, the perceived differences are huge.

The sporty ST-Line is dynamic, playful and extravagant. The luxurious models are more introvert and please the driver with refinement,

peace and quiet. In all cases the Fiesta is best in class with smart electronics and active safety. ■



Specifications

Ford Fiesta 1.0 EcoBoost Vignale

Size and weight



Length x width x height	404 x 174 x 148 cm
Wheelbase	249 cm
weight	1.164 kg
Trailer	580 kg
Trailer - braked	1.000 kg
Fuel capacity	42 l
Luggage space	303/984 l
Tyre size	195/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	998 cc
Cylinders / valves	3/4
Max power	140 PS @ 6000 rpm
Max torque	180 Nm @ 1500 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9 secs
topspeed	202 km/h
Average mileage	4.5 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	5.8 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	3.8 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	102 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 20,295
Price base model	Â£ 13,305