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Ford Fiesta three door – Short Road Test

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Ford Fiesta Titanium 125hp 1.0 3-door

Test-driven by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

It's seventh heaven for the Ford Fiesta. Britain's best selling car retained the familiar name and trim levels when the seventh generation arrived in showrooms last year but underneath there were some significant and worthwhile changes.

The new models are physically bigger than the previous series, it has more interior room particularly in three-door style, and it sits on a carefully-tuned suspension which produces a better ride. Prices start from £13,165 on-the-road.

The wide range of three and five-door models in five trim levels with five petrol engines and two diesels, two manual and an automatic transmission mean there really is something for



everyone in the new Fiesta range. It's a familiar name and trim but there are some nice surprises like the new six-speed manual gearbox and a much roomier interior, particularly in the three-door, while engineers have also achieved a better ride/handling balance as well.



The engines are updated and there is also for the first time in the Fiesta the availability of a six-speed manual box along with a conventional six-speed auto transmission which supersedes the dual clutch unit which had some issues and was costlier. It gets the latest Ford infotainment and communications system which seamlessly integrates with a mobile phone and a choice of large display screens on the fascia, depending on trim.



Our 125 hp triple cylinder turbo-petrol engine was an instant starter and with the stop&start ignition system it was ideal for city driving as well as long-legged economy, reflected in our overall fuel consumption.

It pulled well from rest up to moderate speed but you really had to make use of the slick changing gearbox with its light progressive clutch if you wanted to cover ground when overtaking, for instance. The acceleration is not rapid but reasonable.

On the other hand it is a quiet engine and gearbox unless you edge towards the upper rev limit when it becomes much noisier and this can happen more frequently if the car is loaded with people - and then the performance tails off along with the economy.

There is a little road noise but generally it's quiet and wind noise is also very low.

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Secondary controls were well placed, operated smoothly and the instruments were fairly big and clear at all times, with an easy-to-read digital variable display in front of the driver.

Heating and ventilation operation was straightforward and all worked well with good control, output and direction settings, backed up by powered front windows.

Oddments room was reasonable but not exceptional in a family car in the front and very poor in the back, but the bootspace was useful even with the back seat in use - and it quickly expanded when they were gradually dropped.

Access was a little tight into the rear seats with its single side doors but once settled the room was good and headroom was very good throughout.

For the driver and passenger the adjustment was useful on the seats and visibility was clear all round, making it ideal for driving school use. Wipers and lights were effective.



The new Fiesta really has moved on in terms of ride quality and it seems like a much bigger car than it is. You can hear the suspension dismissing potholes and tarmac ridges but only the worst are felt inside.

Roadholding inspired a feeling of safety with its grip, character and easy handling nature and the forthcoming ST versions will be eagerly awaited.

VERDICT

My first impression of the new Ford Fiesta last year left me smiling and a recent longer acquaintance has reinforced the idea that this is the best version so far and will undoubtedly keep the model at the top of UK sales charts which it did again in 2017.

The latest Ford Fiesta has raised the game in a highly competitive sector of a tough market.

For: Smooth powertrain, quiet, economical, low taxes, comfortable ride, UK's best selling range.

Against: Acceleration, interior trim, option prices, restrictive rear seat access.



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Mini Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Ford Fiesta Titanium 125 hp 1.0 three door.

Price: £17,095 (£17,745 for 5-door version).

Engine/transmission: 125 hp, three cylinder, 999cc, turbo-petrol, six speed manual.

Performance: 121 mph, 0-62 mph 9.9 seconds.



Fuel consumption: Combined Cycle 65.7 mpg (46.7 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 emissions 98 g/km, VED road tax £120 First Year then £140 Standard rate onwards, BiK company car tax rating 18%.

Insurance Group: 12E.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4.04 m (13.25 ft), W 1.74 m (5.71 ft), H 1.48 m (4.86 ft), boot/load space 292 to 1,093 litres (10.31 to 38.60 cu.ft).