Ford Fiesta ST2 – Road Test

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Author: Robin Roberts

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HOT TO TROT – THE FORD FIESTA ST 2 3-DOOR...

By Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

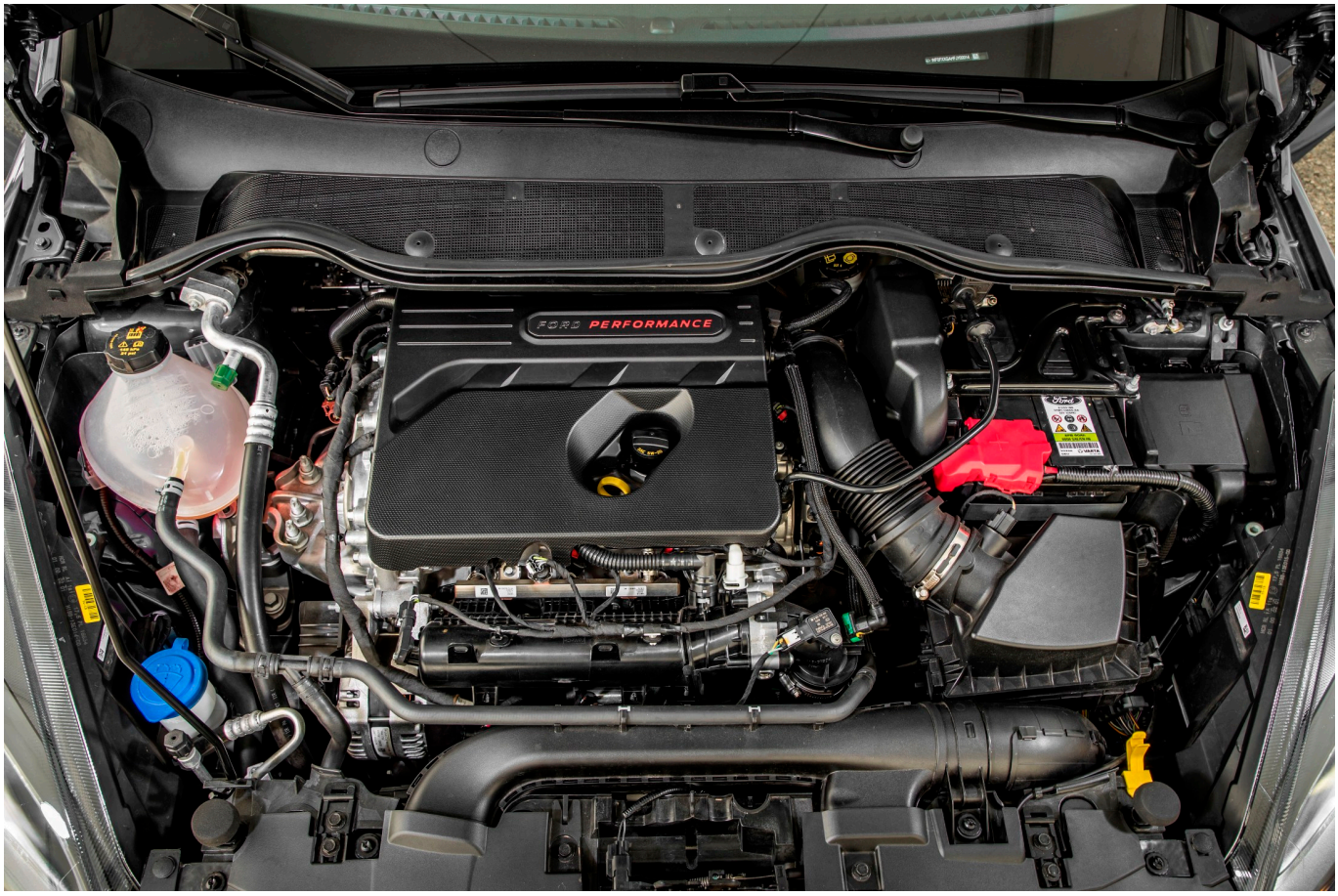
Fast Fords have been a mainstay of company sales and motorsport for decades and the newest Fiesta ST continues this remarkable tradition.

The baby Ford has consistently been Britain's best selling small car and its higher performance sporting stablemates have been eagerly snapped up by those who want fun on a financially frugal budget. Whether that's a second or third hand Fiesta, or the newest ST versions, you are guaranteed to enjoy the experience.

The new Fiesta ST is available with three or, for £450 more, five doors, in three trim levels but all sharing the same 200 hp 1.5 litre four cylinder turbo petrol engine, built in its Bridgend factory. We took a mid-range ST2 3-door version equipped with some interesting options including a £925 Quaife LSD (Limited Slip Differential) and 18-inch wheels, B&O premium sound and rear view camera.

It's probably worth having these options if you do a lot of driving, particularly on your own, but the one-inch larger wheels do pick up more road bumps etc.

The powertrain is little short of superb. It starts quickly, pulls very strongly and yet is flexible if you want a less strenuous drive and while it's quick through the gears and utterly composed at our legal maximum, which is half its possible top speed, it is also surprisingly economical thanks to some very clever engine management.



The official WLTP fuel tests produced a mean average of 40.4 mpg and on test we achieved 40.5 mpg overall, suggesting the new procedure is far more representative of real world roads.

But the Fiesta ST2 is not about eeking out the miles, rather it’s enjoying every one of them, and you will in this pocket rocket.

Its willingness, responsive nature, generally smooth delivery and sporty exhaust note combine to bring a smile to the face. Even in traffic when a gap appears you can simply floor the throttle in fifth or sixth and it will react without drama.

Push it through the gears with more determination and it really is a quick car, made all the better with the choice of driving modes at your fingertip for normal, sport and track use. The last is really for circuits when the normal driver assistance systems are turned off and it can be fully enjoyed in safety.



The optional larger wheels made the normal ride firm but combined with the LSD it gave the Fiesta ST a tenacious grip, particularly on tight lock or through sweeping curves. You know precisely where the wheels are pointing and how far you can push.

It’s not particularly light steering in town and the turning circle could be smaller, with better visibility as well where the reversing camera cannot see.

At speed the truly well balanced and powerful brakes haul you down without fuss or drama and the parking brake holds very well on steep slopes.



Secondary controls on the steering wheel spokes, the fascia and console work well with a logical layout and the instruments' pod infront of the driver is clean and clearly marked, well lit at night and did not suffer from annoying reflections.



The central infotainment screen is big, very clear and quick to change under a fingertip and it’s worth saying the B&O system is crisp and fills the cabin with sound.

Heating and ventilation is by separate rotary switches and push-buttons and works very well, quietly, completely and constantly maintaining whatever is desired. You have powered windows to play with but no sunroof.

Oddments provision is ok but not exceptional for a family car. In the back are panel and seat pockets, as well as a window shelf while those in the front must put items in door bins, console trays or a cubby box and glovebox. They are plentiful but not roomy.

It’s the same story in the boot with a modest space when the off-set split back seats are used and they quickly fold almost flat to triple space.



Now getting into the rear seats with only two side doors demands some dexterity and preferably young years and frequent passenger carriers might mull over a five-door instead. Whichever you go for, once in the back seats they are comfortable and hold you well. Legroom might be tight for taller users but its fine for young adults or children.

The heated Recaro front seats do a fine job of supporting occupants under the legs or around the ribs and adjustment is excellent.

Ride quality is firm as stated before but it’s not bone-shakingly bad. You just learn to look further ahead and avoid the worst bits if you possibly can.

Road rumbles remain ever present, the potholes and tarmac speed bumps vary the note a bit but the engine is usually quiet until you accelerate and then the wonderful exhaust note comes into earshot.

VERDICT

That exhaust note, that responsiveness, combine to create a sporting hatchback which is probably the best of the bunch so far.

For: Good spread of power and plenty of performance, sharp steering, gearchange and brakes; excellent grip and handling with remarkable economy potential, well-equipped.

Against: Firm ride in normal mode, rear seat access difficult for some, no spare wheel just tyre inflation kit, small boot, some blindspots, ungenerous warranty.



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

Ford Fiesta ST2 3-door.

Price: £20,695 (as tested £23,320).

Engine/transmission: 200 hp, Three cylinder, 1497cc turbo-petrol, six speed manual.

Performance: 144 mph, 0–62 mph 6.5 seconds.

Fuel consumption: Combined cycle 40.5 mpg.

Emissions and taxation: CO2 emissions: 136 g/km, VED First Year road tax £210 then £145 Standard rate, BiK company car tax 31%.

Insurance Group: 28E.

Warranty: Three years/ 60,000 miles.

Sizes: L 4.07 m (13.35 ft), W 1.79 m (5.87 ft), H 1.47 m (4.82 ft), Boot space: 310 to 1,093 litres (10.95 to 38.60 cu.ft), three doors/four seats.