Ford Puma Gen-E Premium – Road Test

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Ford has taken a traditionally cautious approach towards its pure electric range and it’s reaping the benefits without disappointing familiar buyers and going out on a limb, writes Robin Roberts (WheelsWithinWales).

It has scaled back on its pure EV future and written off £14.5Billion investment as it refocuses on future models.

Broadly, it is going to fall in line with rivals who are now preparing to offer a range of petrol, mild and plug-in hybrids along with pure electric models in selected markets.

It wants to have the widest possible appeal to a very diverse customer base.

So, the highly successful stylish petrol Puma has been joined by a fully electric Gen-E derivative, which uses a modified platform from the ICE version.

The result is a model that has the positive handling now wrapped around an economical ev-powertrain in a compact SUV bodystyle, which is the UK's sales leading shape.



You can buy a standard Select or Premium trim grade. Our upper grade Premium Gen-E came with 18-inch alloy wheels, a powered tailgate, keyless entry and start, a premium Bang and Olufsen sound system and intelligent bright Matrix LED headlights.

The powertrain is fairly conservative with a real world 43 kWh battery and 168 PS electric motor driving the front wheels and a single speed transmission. It develops 290 Nm (214 lb.ft) and with a below average class weight of 1563 kg (3,446 lb) it is good for a sub 9 secs time to 62 mph and a useful 99 mph top speed where conditions allow.



However, pushing it that hard will rapidly drain the battery and over a series of recharges we recorded an average range showing of just over 200 miles. That's fair but not fantastic.

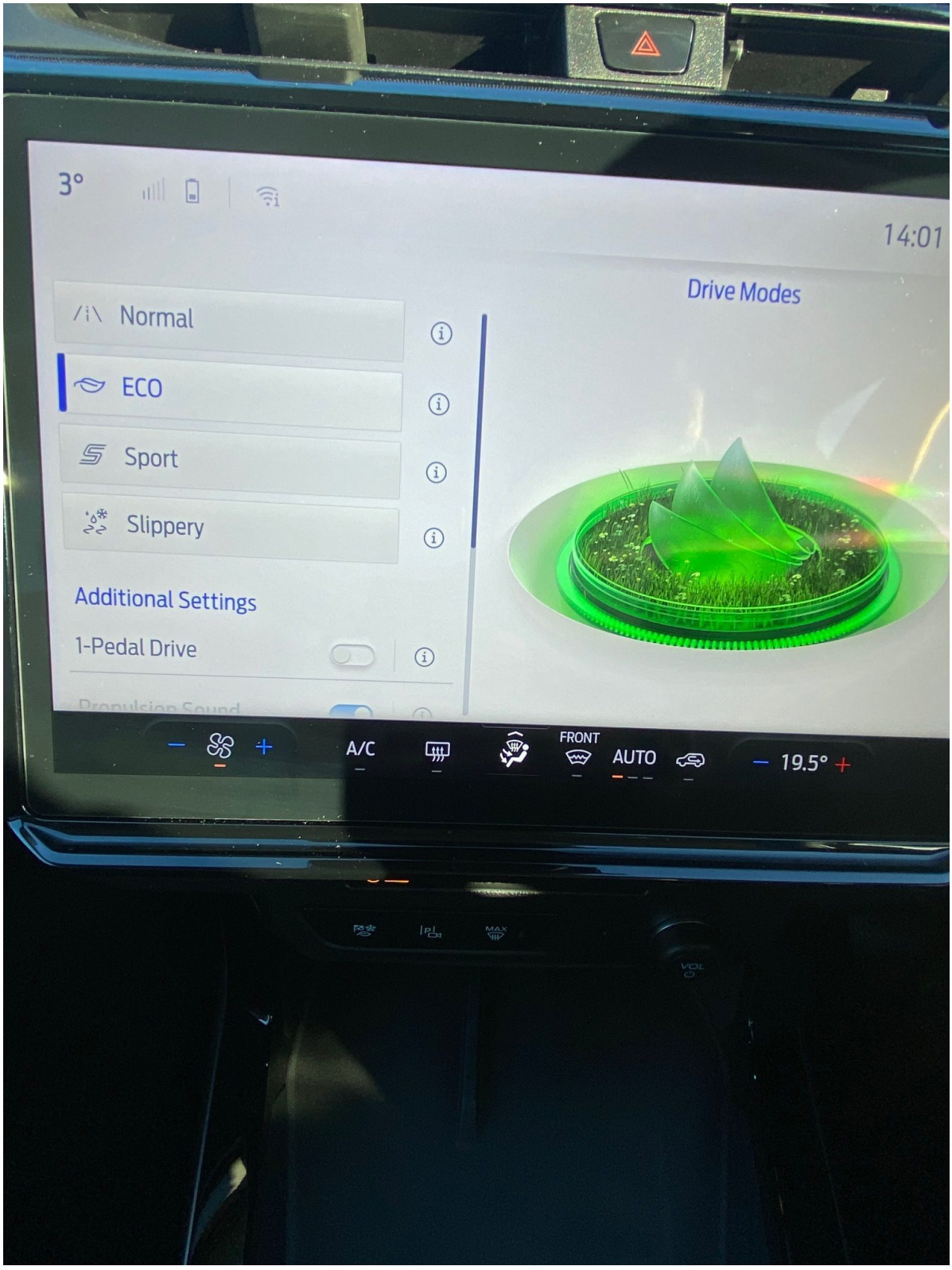
It means with a typical charge taking about 25 mins to over 7 hours, depending on flow rate, you have a good range for commuting but will need a few top ups on longer trips.

Ford engineers have done a very good job in making the Puma Gen-E feel as responsive yet taut handling as its petrol stablemate, but you have to put up with a firm and frequently noisy ride on the Premium’s 18-inch wheels and 55-aspect low profile tyres.

Steering was well weighted with good feedback to the driver, the brakes were reassuring every time and the parking brake securely held it on steeper hills.

Setting the system through the on-screen panels meant a single-pedal boosted retardation and regeneration and made for easy town traffic use.

There are four possible driving modes at a driver’s fingertips touch-panel and each made an immediate change to the car’s character and performance, which was very pleasing: Eco, Normal, Sport and Individual.


3°
14:01
Drive Modes
Normal
ECO
Sport
Slippery
Additional Settings
1-Pedal Drive
A/C
FRONT
AUTO
19.5°

Secondary switches were well laid out on the spokes but the combined stalk for indicators, front and rear wipers and washers was a busy bundle.

Essential dials infront of the driver were big, clear and quickly understood although their appearance changed with the chosen driving modes. The central 12-inch touchscreen was also nicely angled towards the driver and the menus could be quickly changed and were always clear.

Heating and ventilation was comprehensive, quick acting and quiet, backed up by powered windows.

Visibility was poor to the rear but clear to sides and infront with lots of glass area and bright headlights but slow reacting to automatically change. The reversing camera was a necessity.

Oddments space was good but not too generous in what is a family car, with a lot of small compartments throughout, but that contrasted with the massive boot, its underfloor box and quick folding back seats.


TOP TETHER
EA75 ZKR
Ford Motor Company
Ford
BRING ON TOMORROW

Access to the boot was through an electrically assisted fifth door and the cabin was also easy to climb into or out of with fairly wide opening doors.

Once inside, legroom could be tight in the back but headroom was clear and infront the room was good in all ways. Seats were nicely shaped and supporting with adequate adjustment settings on the front pair.

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The seats softened, but could not completely cope with, the firm suspension and pothole hating suspension.

The Ford stayed where you pointed it and never really went off-line with good responses to the steering, throttle and brakes.

VERDICT

The Ford Puma Gen-E was easy to live with, fairly economical to charge and generally enjoyable as a commuting car but long trips need extra thought.

For: Well equipped, smooth powertrain, good responses, average room with large bootspace.

Against: Average range and power, noisy and firm ride, lots of dark plastic interior finishes, rear visibility, average warranty.


PUMA
EA75 ZKR

Fact file: Ford Puma Gen-E Premium

Price: £29,995 (inc ev grant)

Mechanical: 168 PS electric motor, 43 kWh battery, single speed

Max speed: 99 mph

0 – 62 mph: 8.8 secs.

Range: 201 miles

Insurance group: 19

BiK: 3%, £10FY, £195SR

Warranty: 3 years/ 60k standard, 8 years/100k battery

Size: L 4.19 m (13.75 ft), W 1.93 m (6.33 ft), H 1.54 m (5.05 ft)

Kerb weight: 1,563 kg (3,446 lb)

Bootspace: 523 to 1283 litres (18.47 to 45.31 cu.ft) & 43 litres (1.52 cu.ft) ‘frunkspace’

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