New Audi Q2 – Road Test

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Author: Keith Ward

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Keith Ward assesses Audi's latest Q2 SUV.

[illegible] recently announced [illegible] to lengthen the queue of "Q" models from Audi [illegible] increasingly popular [illegible] space. SUV-style, Audi reckon as many as half their best-ever [illegible] will be SUVs.

Already on offer are the Q2, Q3, Q5 and Q7. Now we are promised a big, top-end Q8 next year (2018) followed by a compact Q4 in 2019. They slot into an ambitious 24-billion-euro development plan by the premium brand of the VW Group.

Here we are looking at the newest in line, the Q2. Where does it fit in the Audi range? Well, it's taller and wider but shorter than the big-selling A3; in length it fits between the in turn

shorter A1 Sportback and the Q3. It looks good, with subtle “polygonal” angles and hollows along the flanks of its neat body (big repair bills?)

It offers a high seating position but a relatively low roof profile, with that slightly squashed-down look of a Range Rover Evoque. Seating is comfortable for four average adults, a squeeze with three in the back.

As a novel and distinguishing feature, the “blade” or broad C-pillar between the rear doors and rear window can be ordered (no extra cost) in a range of colours in contrast to the rest of the body. Another option allows you to mood-change the background colour of the dash.

Competitors for the Q2? The Nissan Juke, Renault Captur and MINI Countryman are similar in size but start much cheaper – by as much as £7,000-odd. For Q2 prices you could step up a whole size to a SEAT Ateca or Nissan Qashqai.

However, Audi pitch the Q2 as a “premium” brand (against such as the more expensive BMW X1 or Mercedes GLA) pointing to its top-class kit – either standard or optional. Also its cheap-to-run advanced technology and a retained high value after three years or 60,000 miles, keeping as much as 44 per cent of its price new.

A 12-strong range priced from £20,700 to £36,200 perms four levels of trim with a choice of four engines – two each petrol and diesel.

The petrols are a 1.0 litre 116 PS three-cylinder and a 150 PS 1.4 litre operating on two or four cylinders, as we drove. To come later this year (2017) is a sporty 190 PS 2.0 litre. Transmissions are either 6-speed manual or 7-speed automatic (ours). Diesels are either a 1.6 litre 116 PS or a 2.0 litre 150 PS with quattro 4WD or automatic.

Standard SE trim runs to manual air-con, dynamic suspension, progressive steering, automatic emergency braking ≠ sensitive to vehicles and pedestrians, and a seven-inch MMI screen to serve a smartphone interface supporting Apple and Android systems.



Two steps up, our S-line came with hugging front sports seats in part-leather, bigger 18-inch alloys, MMI navigation, light and rain sensors, cruise control, LED lights all round with dynamic rear indicators, stainless steel pedals and lots of “S” badges and logos to emphasise your status to the neighbours. As mentioned, you also unusually get to choose a contrasting colour for the broad C-pillar blades aft of the rear side windows.

A sports suspension in combination with a fair performance was pleasing to a sporty driver but, in combination with the bigger 18-inch wheels brought complaints of an unpleasantly hard ride from rear seat passengers.

A host of extra-cost options and packs, some more welcome than others, included active lane assist, adaptive cruise control, privacy glass, power-operated boot lid and special sport

steering wheel, and helped to boost the showroom price of £27,515 to a heady £34,635.

The CoD (cylinder on demand) engine switches itself cleverly and seamlessly between four and two cylinders to boost efficiency. You would never know but for a tell-tale announcement on the instrument binnacle. It doubtless contributed to an mpg figure of 40-plus, taking in during the week a stirring flip around the Lake District to show off it (and the car) to an esteemed foreign visitor.

The Q2 looks good outside and in. The well-designed dash is similar to an A3's. The boot when extended is larger than that of the A3 Sportback. On a platform shared with the admired A3 it handles confidently, holding a line well and steering with effortless grace.

VERDICT

Want one? Join the Q.



Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Audi Q2 1.4 TFSI 150 PS S-line S-tronic; Compact SUV; five doors; five seats.

Size: Length 4,191 mm (13.75 ft); width 1,794 mm (5.89 ft); height 1,508 mm (4.95 ft); kerb weight 1,280 kg (2,892 lb).

Boot Volume: 405 to 1,050 litres (14.30 to 37.08 lb); length 760 to 1,360 mm (2.49 to 4.46 cu.ft); width 980 mm (3.22 ft); sill height 740 mm (2.42 ft).

Engine: Petrol; 1,395cc; turbo; four or two cylinders; seven speed automatic; stop-start.

Power: 150 PS @ 5,000–6,000 rpm; max torque 250 Nm (184 lb.ft) @ 1,500–3,500 rpm.

Pace: 131 mph; 0–62 in 8.5 secs.

MPG: On test 43.7; official Combined 52.3; tank 50 litres (11.00 gallons).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 123 g/km; tax band G; VED £160 then £140; benefit-in-kind 21%.

Tyres: 215/50 on 18-inch alloys.

Insurance Group: 20E.

Warranty: 36 months/60,000 miles.

PRICE: £27,515; as tested, with options £34,635.

Q2 price range: £20,700 to £36,200.

Rivals: Nissan Juke, Nissan Qashqai, Renault Captur, MINI Countryman, Mercedes GLA, BMW X1, SEAT Ateca.