

Ford Mondeo

Featuring 1.8LX



What's new?

Last year's restyling and interior revisions now augmented by engine redesign to improve smoothness and refinement.

THE MONDEO WAS THE MODEL THAT signalled Ford's return to design excellence after a period in the doldrums. So many rivals in this class look alike, but the Mondeo's road manners distinguish it from several merely competent alternatives.

The fluidity of the sensitive steering, with no lost motion or waywardness over bumps, makes this an enjoyable drive for keener drivers - it relishes being hustled. It's firm but never harsh or soggy over poor

surfaces but ultimately, ride absorbency plays second fiddle to cornering prowess. No complaints from passengers, however, thanks to recently revised, well-shaped seats with ample stretching space. The driver's seat in the LX is blessed with adjustable thigh support and both reach- and rake-adjustable steering; unless you're very short or tall, the dearer versions' lumbar and height adjusters aren't missed.

There's an electrically heated windscreen and air conditioning on even the cheapest LX, but the ample door mirrors are manually adjusted and don't fold out of the way, either. Heating lacks "cool faces - warm feet" stratification and there are cold front footwell draughts at lower heat settings - although rear passengers do rather better. We dislike having the air conditioning coming on every time the dial is set to "screen" - we would prefer to decide.

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PERFORMANCE

Acceleration time in seconds

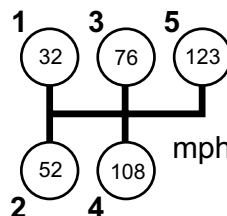
mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		1.7	3.6	6.4	9.3
IN 5TH GEAR		6.2	12.6	19.0	26.2
IN 4TH GEAR		4.2	8.2	12.6	17.0

20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		12.6/8.5		12.8/8.4	
			12.6/8.2		13.6/8.8

Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
		6250*		6250*	5325

* for best acceleration



FUEL CONSUMPTION

Fuel grade: unleaded Premium - 95 octane	
Type of use - air conditioning off*	mpg
In the city - heavy traffic	22
In the country - quiet driving	43
Typical mpg overall	36
Realistic tank range	53 litres/420 miles

(based on fuel gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience - not nominal tank capacity)

*with air conditioning switched on, consumption will increase by 2-4% in winter and 4-8% in summer.

FOR THE TECHNICAL

ENGINE

Type front-mounted transverse four-in-line with iron block and alloy head; five main bearings

Size 80.6 x 88.0mm = 1796cc

Power 115bhp at 5750rpm

Torque 116 lb ft at 3750rpm

Valves belt-driven twin overhead camshafts actuating four valves per cylinder via hydraulic tappets

Fuel/ignition electronic multi-point petrol injection integrated with programmed spark timing via coil and distributor. Exhaust catalyser and 61½ litre tank, with low-level warning lamp

TRANSMISSION

Type five-speed manual, front-wheel drive (four-speed automatic optional)

Mph per 1000rpm 23.1 in 5th; 17.3 in 4th

CHASSIS

Suspension front: independent damper/struts with integral coil springs. Rear: independent coil springs with vertical struts, twin transverse and single trailing links. Anti-roll bars and telescopic dampers all round

Steering rack and pinion with hydraulic power-assistance; 3 turns between full locks. Turning circles average 10.35m between kerbs with 15.3m circle for one turn of the wheel

Wheels 5½in steel with 185/65 R14H tyres (Michelin on test car). Full-size spare wheel

Brakes ventilated discs front, drums rear with vacuum servo. ABS optional extra

SAFETY AND SECURITY FEATURES

Assessed on their effectiveness and convenience (the more black blobs the better)

Seatbelts

front ●●●●○ rear ●●●●○

Door locking

central locking? ☒

remote control? ☒

auto window closure? ☒

deadlocks? ☒

Head restraints

front ●●●●○ rear ●●●●○

Interior

safety padding ●●●●○

driver's airbag? ☒

other airbags? ☐

side impact protection ●●●●○

Luggage

secure from interior/hidden from view ●●○○○

Alarm

engine immobilised? ☒

Fuel anti-spillage

●●●●○

☒ standard on test car ☐ factory fitted option ☒ not available

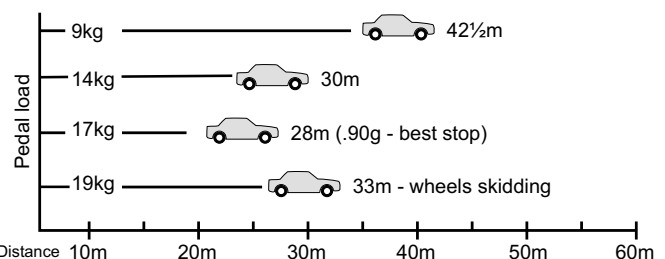
Euro NCAP crash test results - not available

BRAKES

Pedal feel ●●●●○ Behaviour in an emergency ●●●●○ Handbrake ●●○○○

Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (without ABS option)

(A good-to-average best stop is about 28m at 20-30kg pedal load)

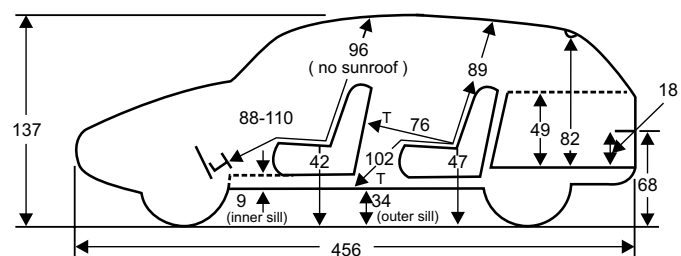


Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop:

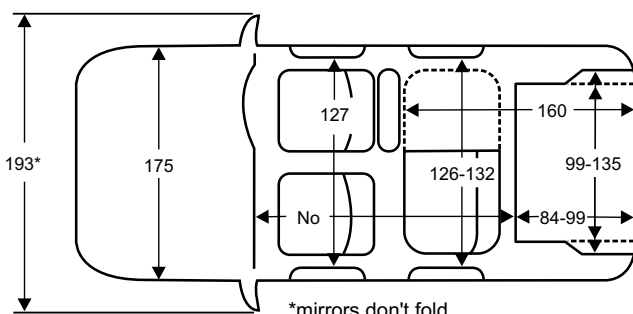
12kg at start of test, 14kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres



T: typical back seat space behind medium-sized front occupants



*mirrors don't fold

Like many of us that have been around a few years, the current Mondeo is better than ever; 1997 saw subtle revisions to improve seating, gearchange quality and security - the Mondeo's lock-up precautions are more hassle-free than most in everyday use.

However, the biggest improvement is under the bonnet; previously the 1.6 was acceptably smooth but lethargic, the two litre swift but coarse, with the 1.8 somewhere in between. Extensively redesigned for the Focus, this Mondeo 1.8's engine proved more melodic when revved, much less vibrant when driven slowly and

usefully quicker in acceleration through the gears. Fuel consumption seems unchanged, however, and is merely respectable. Of course, servicing costs and cheap spares are important Mondeo advantages, although you get only one year's warranty and over-supply hasn't helped resale values.

V

The completeness of the Mondeo 1.8 LX's features and fittings makes this cheapest version particularly attractive to buyers using their own cheque book - its

LIKES AND GRIPES

Standard air conditioning ... but it's on all the time on "defrost"

Easy-to-use radio ... but no cassette – only CD player

Front and rear heated screens ... but tailgate wiper has no delay function

Superb brake pedal feel in ordinary use ... but no ABS so servo-assistance too intrusive

