

Ford Mondeo



SCORECARD

Overtaking / pulling power

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Fuel economy

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Handling / steering

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Comfort / ease of control

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Interior space / practicality

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Accident / injury avoidance

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Costs in service

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Depreciation prospects

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LIKE THE SIERRA BEFORE IT, FORD'S family-sized stalwart soon established itself as a firm favourite with both fleet users and families alike. Its blend of space, refinement and sheer dynamic competence earned it rapturous acclaim straight out of the box. And since a styling fillip plus a host of detailed revisions a few years back, the latest versions run, ride and handle better than ever.

From the outset, the Mondeo's 1.6-, 1.8- and two-litre Zetec engines outshone their Sierra forerunners, serving up respectable pace, refinement and economy, irrespective of size. Estate, turbo-diesel and V6 versions (culminating in the latest ST200 executive express) added along the way, further highlight the line-up's balanced, comprehensive make-up.

Heralding Ford's return to design excellence after a protracted spell in the doldrums, the Mondeo's distinguished road manners, its fluid, sensitive steering and firm, but never harsh or soggy ride make it an enjoyable affair for keener drivers. Meanwhile, supportive seats, ample space and plenty of creature comforts (even on cheaper versions) keep passengers content on the trip, too.

As a fleet favourite, the Mondeo has tightly reined running costs written all over it, and no-one matches Ford's extensive dealer network or highly competitive parts prices. It's not as DIY-friendly as its predecessor, but it carries its miles well, provided it's serviced on schedule, though clutch renewal can prove both long-winded and quite pricey.

The biggest improvement of late has been under the bonnet. Previously, you had to choose between the comparatively lethargic 1.6 for smoothness or the coarser two-litre for pace, with the 1.8 falling somewhere between the two. Now, courtesy of recent power unit revisions, even the hearty two-litre proves impressively smooth and civilised. Fuel economy averaged out at 35mpg in our closely controlled tests – a quite respectable result, but significantly eclipsed by the notably abstemious Toyota Avensis, for example.

Despite the slanty-eyed facelift a while back, there are those who think that the Mondeo's looks remain spectacularly ordinary, but don't let its "one-on-every-street-corner" familiarity undermine its talented all-round appeal. It's a fine car to drive. As common as muck in some eyes, maybe, but as safe as houses to many others.

HOW THE MONDEO COMPARES	Engine cap/power (cc/bhp)	Revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	Fuel economy (mpg)	Brakes† best stop (m/kg)	Maximum legroom - front (cm)	Typical leg/kneeroom - rear (cm)	Steering turns/ (p) circle (m)	Overall length (cm)
FORD MONDEO 2.0 16v 4-DOOR	1988/130	2960	8.7	26.0/16.8	35	27½/18	110	102/76	2.8/11.4	456
Honda Accord 1.8i SE 4-door	1850/136	3380	10.2	26.2/18.9	32	26½/15	109	100/73	3.1/11.1	459
Nissan Primera 2.0 Sport+ CVT M6*	1998/140	2600	9.1	36.0/21.1§	32½	24/14	107	99/74	2.7/12.3	452
Peugeot 406 2.0 16v 4-door	1998/135	3210	10.5	27.2/17.6	32½	25½/36	111	99/74	3.2/11.0	456
Toyota Avensis 1.8 5-door	1762/108	3250	12.0	28.3/20.2	40½	26/18	108	99/77	3.0/11.0	449
Vauxhall Vectra 2.0 16v 5-door	1998/136	2850	9.9	27.9/19.8	36	24½/18	111	101/73	3.0/10.9	450
Volvo S40 2.0 4-door	1948/140	3150	10.0	26.7/18.1	33	25/23	113	99/75	2.9/10.5	448
*CVT auto with sequential 6-speed manual override				§in 6th/5th		†all with ABS		(p)all power-assisted		

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration time in seconds

mph	30	40	50	60	70
THROUGH THE GEARS		1.5	3.3	5.9	8.7
IN 5TH GEAR		6.2	12.6	19.0	26.0
IN 4TH GEAR		4.2	8.1	12.5	16.8

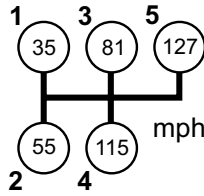
20 mph	30	40	50	60	70
5TH/4TH SPEED RANGES		12.7/8.5		12.8/8.3	
			12.6/8.1		13.4/8.7

Maximum speeds

REVS PER MINUTE	1st	4th	5th
2nd	6500*	6500	5370
3rd			

* for best acceleration

Gearing gives 23.6mph per 1000rpm in top gear = 2960rpm at 70mph



FUEL CONSUMPTION

Fuel grade: unleaded 95 octane petrol	
Type of use - air conditioning off*	mpg
In the city - heavy traffic	19
In the country - quiet driving	42
Typical mpg overall	35
Realistic tank range †	53 litres/410 miles

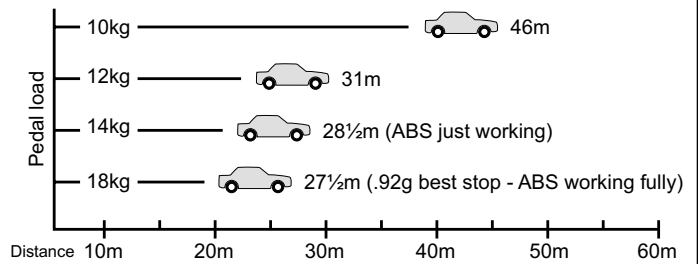
† based on fuel gauge/warning lamp and filling station experience - not nominal tank capacity

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

BRAKES

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

Dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with standard ABS)
(A good-to-average best stop is about 26m at 15-20kg pedal load)

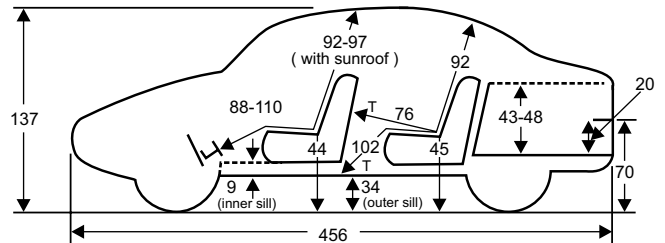


Fade test: pedal load required for a moderate (34m/.75g) stop:
12kg at start of test, 14kg at end of test (Ideal brakes show no change)

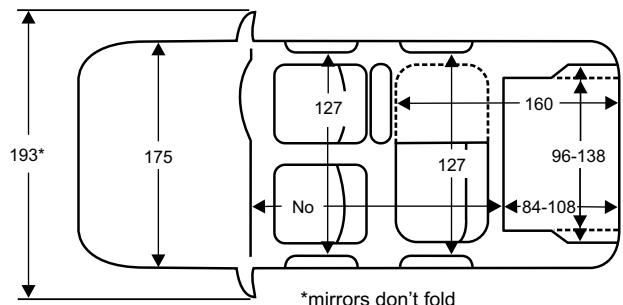
MEASUREMENTS

Centimetres

Four-door saloon



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



*mirrors don't fold

LIKES AND GRIPES

Air conditioning on all models ... but you can't demist the screen without using it

Good quality radio/CD with easy controls ... but most versions lack tape-playing facility

"Quickclear" front screen and heated washer jets a real boon on frosty mornings ... but the front and rear demist switches are too easily confused

Split-fold rear seatbacks with three-point, inertia-reel centre seatbelt ... but saloon's cushion is fixed, and lacks the hatchback's ultimate load-carrying versatility

Ford's family-sized champion keeps getting better ... but you still get only one year's warranty