

Ford EcoSport Ambiente 1.5 now available in automatic

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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The Ford EcoSport Ambiente 1.5, a best selling compact SUV for four years, is now available in automatic. Early indications are that the EcoSport Ambiente 1.5 Auto is being well-received by consumers in this segment. It is both popular and an affordable petrol derivative.

The launch of the automatic version is further complimented by specification upgrades on the Trend and Titanium models that enhances driving safety and comfort, which are always welcome.

Doreen Mashinini, general manager of marketing at Ford Motor Company SA says the compact SUV category grew substantially with the maiden launch of the EcoSport in 2013 and the model has dominated this class ever since. She added “The introduction of a six-speed automatic transmission for the EcoSport 1.5 Ambiente represents another trend setting move for this successful model, which now also offers the best value for money automatic in the entry level compact utility segment”.



Three cylinders

The 91Kw 1.5 litre three-cylinder petrol derivative is paired with the smooth-shifting six speed automatic gearbox. This vehicle is ideally suited for active individuals and families where the convenience of an automatic makes it perfect for busy city driving whilst also delivering comfortable and hassle-free open road cruising. The gearbox shifts very quickly into lower gears, reaching the sixth gear at about 120kmph. Smooth driving on open roads but also equally agile on less than perfect roads or when bundu bashing. The ground clearance is 206mm so wading through small rivers and streams proved no hassle at all.

Pre-Collision Assist

This is a very handy feature and one that makes you feel safe behind the wheel. The EcoSport Ambiente has benefited from the inclusion of Ford's Collision Mitigation System. Basically, this is a pre-collision assist feature that alerts the driver of a potential collision with the vehicle ahead. This pre-charges the brakes and if necessary, applies maximum braking pressure once the driver presses the brake pedal.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Safety

The safety bells and whistles are all here in the Ambiente 1.5 Auto. ABS brakes, Electronic Stability Control and Roll Stability Control comes standard. The Roll Stability Control adjusts the engine torque and braking to help drivers maintain control. The one feature that I always find handy is the Hill Launch Assist that makes pulling off on steep inclines a breeze. For added safety for front and back passengers, there are six airbags.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Verdict

I spent a week with the Ford EcoSport Ambiente 1.5 Auto, driving it on open roads as well as off-road. Reaching top speeds is easy so I had to constantly look at the speedometer to stay inside of 120 kmph. This three-cylinder engine delivered enough power when needed for overtaking. Fuel consumption was low at 7.0 litres per 100km. The multimedia functionality incorporates Ford's SYNC with Bluetooth and voice-control. The two USB ports are very handy and ideally placed at the bottom of the console. The 4.2inch screen, whilst not touch-type, was easy to operate. Value for money all round when you look at the price...

- EcoSport 1.5 Ambiente 5MT: R288,300
- EcoSport 1.5 TDCI Ambiente 5MT: R298,800
- EcoSport 1.5 Ambiente 6AT: R306,700
- EcoSport 1.0 EcoBoost Trend 6MT: R329,000
- EcoSport 1.0 EcoBoost Trend 6AT: R344,100
- EcoSport 1.0 EcoBoost Titanium 6MT: R367,900
- EcoSport 1.0 EcoBoost Titanium 6AT: R381,700

All EcoSport models come standard with Ford Protect which includes a 4-year/60,000km service plan, 3-year unlimited distance roadside assistance and a 4-year/120,000km comprehensive warranty. This is complimented by a 5-year unlimited distance corrosion warranty. Service intervals are every 15,000kms.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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