

# More rugged and sportier. The new Ford EcoSport Active

By  Naresh Maharaj

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Ford's highly successful EcoSport range has been bolstered with the addition of a new special edition model - the EcoSport Active. As one of the most popular vehicles in the rapidly growing mini sport utility vehicle (SUV) segment, the introduction of the EcoSport Active adds a greater dose of distinctive style and a more rugged appearance to the local EcoSport line-up.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

The media were invited to put the EcoSport Active through its paces. I decided to test the distinctive-looking vehicle as I headed out on the open road to Hartbeespoort Dam but took the urban jungle route back to Sandton. This gave me the opportunity to drive the EcoSport on all sorts of road terrain. No complaints. So what are the quick take-outs from the latest ninth edition of the EcoSport:

- Distinctive and unique styling enhancements emphasise its sporty character, with black finishes contrasting with four attractive paint colours and striking 17-inch gloss black alloy wheels
- Versatile and spacious cabin gains more upmarket edge, with model-specific partial leather seats
- Impressive list of safety features, and inclusion of FordPass Connect, make the EcoSport Active a compelling choice in the rapidly growing mini SUV segment

The EcoSport was first introduced in Mzansi in 2013 and sold 75,000 units of the popular mini SUV to date. Whilst the new colours are all great to look at, the Magnetic Grey does it for me. It's a colour that is popular amongst those who prefer one vehicle for both workdays and weekend sporty lifestyle.

"We had remarkable success with the special edition EcoSport Ambiente Black and had to extend this programme based on customer demand last year," says Doreen Mashinini, general manager, marketing at Ford South Africa. "This once

again reinforces consumer interest in vehicles that offer something unique and different from the norm, a brief that the EcoSport Active fulfils perfectly.”

## Eye-catching

The dark finishes extend to black mirror caps and roof rails, along with dark-tinted privacy glass for the rear windows. The roof is painted black, providing a bold contrast to the four available paint colours: Frozen White and three distinctive metallic options comprising eye-catching Luxe Yellow, Solar Silver and Magnetic dark grey.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

An ‘Active’ badge on the front fenders asserts this model’s special edition status, which is carried through to the cabin and features prominently on the leather seats, which replace the cloth seats used in the standard Trend models.

As with the EcoSport Trend, the spacious and versatile interior is adorned with a high level of specification, including a leather-trimmed multi-function steering wheel with cruise control, electric windows all-round, air-conditioning and an eight-inch colour touchscreen infotainment system with built-in Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

## FordPass Connect: It’s smart

The EcoSport Active is equipped with the innovative FordPass Connect system, which includes an embedded modem that allows you to connect with the car and control a number of vehicle functions from your smartphone via the FordPass app.

While providing useful information such as fuel level and vehicle health alerts, the owner can also remotely lock, unlock and even remotely start the car (automatic models only) to cool or heat the cabin. Through FordPass, owners can effortlessly call up the vehicle's service and warranty information, find the nearest Ford dealer, and even make service bookings.

In the event of an emergency, owners can contact Ford Roadside Assistance directly from the app.

## Powertrain

The EcoSport Active is powered by Ford's multiple award-winning 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine which delivers exceptional performance and fuel efficiency. It produces an impressive 92kW of power and 170Nm of torque. The three-cylinder engine is paired with a smooth-shifting and responsive six-speed automatic gearbox that guarantees responsive acceleration matched to refined long-distance cruising.

A top-notch safety specification on the EcoSport Active mirrors, and includes seven airbags (dual front, side, curtain and a driver's knee airbag), along with ABS brakes with Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Emergency Brake Assist (EBA) and Hill Launch Assist (HLA).

## Price

The EcoSport Active 1.0 EcoBoost Automatic is priced at R393,700. Included as standard is Ford Protect comprising a four-year/120,000km warranty, four-year/unlimited distance Roadside Assistance and five-year/unlimited distance corrosion warranty. The recommended service interval is 15,000km or annually, whichever occurs first.

Customers have the option of purchasing service or maintenance plans up to eight years or 135,000km. The warranty can be extended up to seven years or 200,000km, while the Roadside Assistance can be extended for an additional one or two years.

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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