

Audi Q5

A much-anticipated debutante follows in the footsteps of the Q7 while charting its own course.

Audi North Scottsdale hosts introductory test drive event



Audi defines the new Q5's segment as luxury all-wheel-drive (AWD), gasoline-powered crossover vehicles. Within that segment, exclusive features include three-zone climate control, standard LED taillights, reclining and sliding rear seats and available Audi Drive Select. The Q5 claims to lead the segment in fuel economy, with EPA ratings of 18 mpg city and 20 mpg combined, along with 23 mpg highway mileage. All this comes at a base price of \$37,200. Audi is targeting luxury buyers who are considering the Lexus RX, BMW X3 and Mercedes-Benz GLK.

The Q5 is derived from the same platform first developed for the A4 model range. The versatility of that vehicle platform gives the Q5 the characteristics of a luxury performance automobile and the longest wheelbase in its class. Engineering and design of the Q5 also translated into shorter front and rear overhangs for better weight distribution and better stability. Audi also widened the vehicle platform to increase shoulder room inside the Q5 and to optimize the driver's seating position and view of the road.

The Q5 combines the dynamics of a sports sedan with highly variable interior and versatile options for leisure-time and family use. Strong and efficient engines, quattro permanent all-wheel drive and agile running gear have been brought together to create a technology package for both on- and off-road driving—dynamic, multifunctional and comfortable.

BODY AND INTERIOR

Three-zone climate control lets drivers and passengers select their own comfort levels. 40/20/40 rear seats recline and offer fore-aft adjustment for passenger comfort and for balancing cargo-carrying capabilities. The LED taillight cluster includes running lights, brake lights and turn signals. The Q5 offers standard hitch preparation for 4,400 pounds of towing capacity, which it also states is tops in its class. Roof rails with aluminum cross bars synchronize with the Audi ESP system to adapt handling accordingly.

Audi's reputation for interiors carries through in the Q5 with standard twelve-way power front seats, leather seating surfaces throughout, and genuine wood or brushed aluminum inlays. Available luxury touches on the Audi Q5 include a Bang & Olufsen sound system and Audi Drive Select, which allows drivers to choose among four performance/handling configurations. The Q5 will be the first Audi sold in the US with available MMI Navigation Plus, the third generation of Audi's MMI (Multi-Media Interface) system, which manages entertainment, communications and navigational information. MMI Navigation Plus offers a high-capacity hard disk with 40 GB of memory (including 10 GB for media storage), DVD drive and an automotive grade NVIDIA™ chip for graphics processing. The added processing power allows MMI Navigation plus to render 3D maps of the entire US, including branded points of interest and detailed images of buildings, while offering real-time traffic information. The system also features a new, larger screen (7" diagonal), a multilingual voice recognition system and improved joystick controls. When onboard navigation is added, many instrument panel controls are shifted to the MMI panel on the center console. A modular system of available components also includes Bluetooth telephone, and the system's hard disk can save music files in MP3 format.

The Q5 measures 15.19 feet long and 6.17 feet wide, and the body has been engineered to a low drag coefficient for an SUV of 0.33 Cd. Headlights can be outfitted with bi-xenon lamps and LED daytime running lights. Large wheels and well-defined arches dominate the side view. Audi says the aerodynamically slippery roofline aims for coupe-like styling, which is very noticeable in its big brother, the Q7. The tailgate is made of aluminum, as is the hood; the wraparound style of the rear end identifies this SUV as a relative of the Q7. At 9.22 feet, the wheelbase is the longest in its segment, pushing back to create a roomy interior that accommodates five people in ergonomically designed seats that can be set up in several configurations. The backs of the rear seats are angle-adjustable and easy to fold down with a remote release lever in the luggage compartment. This compartment also

KEEP RIGHT >>

Q5 Premier Night in Arizona

Audi North Scottsdale hosted some 200 people at its showroom in March, with hospitality provided by the Deseo Restaurant, private demonstration drives, and gift cards for each test driver for Deseo, at the Westin Kierland Resort and Spa.

Mark Reicks, General Manager of the dealership, said they were "thrilled and excited with this new entry into the Audi line up. With great performance, handling, and the best resolution Real Time Navigation system in the industry, we believe you will be seeing many of these on the road in the next few months."

The crowd was duly impressed by a display of boxes that seemed to surround an Audi Q5 on display. These dramatically represented up to 55 cubic feet of cargo space available when the back seats are folded down.

Event photos: Brad Burnham





features a second storage area under the floor, ultimately expanding from 19.07 to 55.09 cubic feet in volume. As an option, Audi offers the "rear bench seat plus," which slides 100 millimeters (3.94 inches) lengthwise to provide a load-through capability. The front passenger's seat can be outfitted with a folding backrest for transportation of long objects such as surfboards. Numerous practical storage compartments, cup and bottle holders and onboard power outlets are supplied. As an option, Audi offers a climate-controlled drink holder to keep drinks hot or cold. The storage package also features a storage fixture attachment point in the passenger-side footwell.

Safety equipment includes front seat belt force limiters and airbags working together. High- and ultra-high-strength steel components on much of the body reduce weight, improve crash safety, improve rigidity and control vibration. Driver-oriented ergonomics include a cockpit set high for an upright sitting position. Interior finishes include aluminum, exclusive woods, chrome, leather and Alcantara, plus several optional design packages. The Audi Q5 comes standard with an electromechanical parking brake and intelligent chip key. High-tech options include the Audi Parking System with rearview camera, Audi Side Assist to warn of hazards when changing lanes, advanced keyless access, a large panoramic glass sunroof with tilting function, the dynamic cornering light system known as Audi Adaptive Light, and an electric tailgate.

DRIVELINE AND CHASSIS

The Audi Q5 arrives in the US with one driveline combination: a fuel-efficient 3.2 FSI direct-injection six-cylinder engine, with 270 hp and 243 lb-ft of torque, fast-shifting Tiptronic transmission and quattro permanent all-wheel drive. In normal running conditions, the quattro transfer case distributes power to the front and rear axle in a 40:60 ratio for rear-focused driving characteristics. When needed, it can deliver up to 65 percent of the power to the front axle and a maximum of 85 percent to the rear axle.

A five-link front axle and trapezoidal-link rear axle are primarily aluminum. The steering box send steering impulse directly to the wheels, and large brakes ensure strong stops. The Q5 comes standard with 18-inch lightweight forged wheels; 20-inchers are optional. The Q5's Electronic Stabilization Program (ESP) has been heavily re-designed. In a neat trick, a sensor tells the ESP if a roof rack has been mounted, causing the Audi Q5's center of gravity to be shifted higher in keeping with a roof load of up to 220 pounds. If the rack is present, the ESP engages earlier in the handling limit. Without a roof load, ESP gives the driver the vehicle's full dynamic potential.

The Q5 has climbing capability of 31 degrees of incline; the overhang angle is 25 degrees thanks to the short front overhang. The ramp breakover angle, determined by the wheelbase, is 17.5 degrees. Ground clearance is 7.87 inches, with a fording depth of up to almost 20 inches of water.

VOTED BEST OFF-ROADER

Europe's "TOPautos 2009" are selected by more than 150 renowned independent motor journalists from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The new Audi Q5 ranks as top off-roader among the best new releases for model year 2009. With more than 150 motor journalists from daily newspapers, magazines and internet portals voting, TOPauto has the largest expert jury in Germany.

Q5 PRICING; HYBRID TO FOLLOW

The Audi Q5 is offered in three equipment levels. MSRP for the 2009 Audi Q5 Premium starts at \$37,200. Pricing for the Audi Q5 Premium Plus starts at \$41,500, and the Audi Q5 Prestige starts at \$48,200. Prices do not include a destination charge of \$825, taxes, title or dealer charges.

Audi says it will offer a hybrid version of the Q5 in 2010. Wolfgang Hatz, head of powertrain development for the Volkswagen group, says Audi needs a hybrid to compete with brands offered, or soon to be offered, by Lexus, BMW and Mercedes. He claims the greatest potential lies in diesel power, but says "We have to offer hybrids in order to show people that we are able to do them." ■

