

DO THE MATH:

22/25

city/highway mpg

48.1"x59.1"

inside width/height

135

cubic feet of cargo volume

1,600

pound payload

\$21,475

base including destination



Ford aims to fill an unmet US commercial need with their new Transit Connect, an industry-exclusive vehicle specifically developed for small business owners. Low operating and ownership costs, a fuel-efficient 2.0-liter engine, 135 cubic feet of cargo space, a 1,600-pound payload capacity, available Ford Work Solutions™ technologies and various cargo management systems are all pluses.

Ford didn't have to start from scratch to bring this new truck to market—it was launched in Europe in 2003, where it was promptly named International Van of the Year. More than 600,000 have been sold since then, in 58 countries on four continents.

Power-assisted rack and pinion steering allows a 39-foot turning circle, assuring maneuverability when delivering goods in tight quarters. The vehicle is built on a dedicated front-wheel-drive commercial platform. For the US, the powertrain was upgraded to a Duratec 2.0-liter dual-overhead cam (DOHC) I-4 engine and four-speed automatic over-drive transaxle. Several design details, including the grille and interior, have been updated for its American debut.

Split rear cargo doors open at a standard 180 degrees, or an optional 255 degrees. Lift-over height is less than two feet when the Transit Connect is unloaded. The cargo area opens up to a maximum of 59.1 inches floor to ceiling; load width is 48.1 inches between

the wheel arches. Load length is 72.6, with dual sliding rear side doors.

Its cargo payload of 1,600 pounds is more than a full-size Dodge Ram 1500 standard-cab short-box pickup. A 15.1 gallon fuel tank provides a highway range of over 375 miles.

Bulkheads, racks, bins and other upfits can be mixed, matched and configured to suit many specific commercial applications and needs—a wide range of cargo management options similar to Ford E-Series vans.

Transit Connect is available as a cargo van with no windows in the sliding side doors combined with rear cargo door privacy glass. A panel van version is offered with no side or rear cargo area windows. It can be configured with side and rear door privacy glass for maximum driver visibility. A wagon version has a folding second-row bench seat, in either two- or three-passenger configurations.

An in-dash computer provides Internet access, productivity software and optional printing capabilities.

Transit Connect goes on sale in the US this summer. As part of Ford's plan to bring pure battery-powered vehicles, hybrids and plug-in hybrids to market, a battery electric-powered Transit Connect will be offered in 2010. The Transit Connect battery electric vehicle will be the initial offering in Ford's recently announced electrification initiatives and will offer a useful range close to 100 miles. ■

