

Audi Q5 is the new pace-setter

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

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The second generation of Audi's best-selling Q5 has been given a generous helping of refinement and sporty looks which will further strengthen this popular people-hauler's grip on a highly competitive segment of the market.



The rejuvenated Q5 now brags with a considerably bolder front end, dominated by a large black and silver grille and air intakes, topped by a sloping bonnet, slit-eyed headlights, and bulging heel arches.

The liberal use of aluminium and steel has also helped it to shed about 90kg in mass which makes it even more sure-footed.

The fresh touches combine attractively to give the Q5 a crouching, lower and wider appearance which will further broaden its appeal.



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The Q5 range is made up of two turbo models (a diesel and petrol) both linked to a seven-speed automatic transmission, and a flagship three-litre V6 turbo petrol with eight-speed transmission.

The living quarters have been considerably smartened up and now also include a large screen in front of the driver who has the option of viewing the traditional layout or changing it to show a satnav selected road map.

Super-slick seven-speed



I recently spent time with the entry-level diesel Quattro and was particularly impressed with its super-slick seven-speed dual clutch transmission and the comfortable, spacious, and well-insulated interior. I also liked its flexible 4/7seating, ample luggage space, and the convenient push-button boot lid.

The two-litre kicks out 140kw and 400Nm which is good for a 0-100km/h sprint in 7.9 seconds and a top speed of 218km/h. Audi claims a fuel consumption of 5.9 l/100km.

The steering takes a while to get used to and this, coupled with the sheer size of the Q5, makes for tricky parking in tight parking bays but fortunately, the electronic parking assistants are there to help.



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Audi has further improved its quattro drive system to adjust according to road conditions and the driver's drive-style, without being intrusive. It automatically cuts power to the back wheels when it senses it is no longer necessary and automatically distributes power to all four wheels when the terrain warrants it.

Almost too classy for rock-rabbit activities

Having said that, the Q5 is almost too classy for rock-rabbit activities and I would be hesitant to take it to where the going deteriorates beyond a rough gravel road.



The Q5 diesel Quattro model I tested was richly enhanced with optional extras including the electrically opening and closing luggage compartment lid, MMI Navigation Plus, Audi smartphone interface, trailer towing hitch and more, which pushes up its recommended selling price of R748,000 to R887,930. A five-year/100,000km maintenance plan is included in the purchase price.

The new Q5 steps into the ring against weighty competitors such as the Range Rover Evoque, Jaguar F-Pace, BMW X3, Volvo XC60 and Mercedes-Benz GLC but until their new models roll into local showrooms I reckon this Audi is in many ways the new pace-setter in this class.

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com, where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@africa.com

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