



[www.autodatasolutions.com](http://www.autodatasolutions.com)

## 2010 Ford Fusion **All-new mid-size sedan offers world-class fuel mileage.**

### **Overview**

Save America; buy an American car. If you feel even the slightest inclination in that direction, your time may have come. The 2010 Ford Fusion, and in particular, the 2010 Ford Fusion Hybrid, delivers contemporary styling, a first-class driving experience, and world-class fuel mileage.

EPA ratings for the Ford Fusion Hybrid are a stupendous 41/36 mpg City/Highway. The Fusion gets eight more miles per gallon in city driving and two more on the highway than does the Toyota Camry Hybrid. In a mid-size sedan as roomy and competent as this one, that is exciting efficiency.

The best news is, you don't have to drive the Fusion Hybrid like you're in a funeral cortege to achieve 40-plus city mpg; these are real-world figures. During Los Angeles morning rush, we drove the Fusion Hybrid in heavy traffic from the Sunset Strip 10 miles west along hilly, snaking Sunset Boulevard to the beach, then south to Santa Monica Pier, all the while proceeding at a distinctly non-funereal pace. Without fuss, the Fusion delivered an impressive 41.5 mpg.

What's more, in city driving, a full tank takes the Hybrid an amazing 700 miles.

Besides the Hybrid, the 2010 Ford Fusion lineup offers a choice of three different engines: a 2.5-liter inline-4 of 175 hp, a 3.0-liter flex-fuel V6 of 240 hp, and a performance-tuned 3.5-liter V6 of 263 hp. The combined horsepower of the Hybrid's gas engine and electric motor is 191 hp, but the literally instantaneous torque of its forceful electric motor makes it feel like more.

Most of the new Fusion's dimensions are unchanged from the previous model, but mechanically and in styling, the 2010 model exhibits vastly more than a mere freshening of last year's model. The new exterior, nicely enhanced with chrome, has a muscular, crisp Euro panache that is, if anything, pleasingly Saab-like.

The various gas-engine 2010 Fusion models we drove are similarly comfortable, commodious, and in the case of the Sport model, excitingly agile. Offered in a range of trim levels, the new Fusion is a compelling mid-size car with agile handling and world-beating fuel thrift.

### **Model Lineup**

The 2010 Ford Fusion offers five variants: S, SE, Sport, SEL and Hybrid.

Fusion S (\$19,270) comes standard with cloth upholstery, tilt/telescoping steering wheel, power locks, instrument cluster with message center, keyless entry and trunk release, AM/FM/CD/MP3 with four speakers, remote decklid release, capless fuel filler, trip computer, cruise control, speed-sensitive wipers. It comes with the 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine, six-speed manual transmission, 16-inch wheels, body-color bumpers and door handles, tinted glass, black power mirrors. A six-speed automatic is optional.

Fusion SE (\$20,545) adds six-speaker audio, fog lamps, fold-flat passenger seat, body-color mirrors, six-way power driver seat, Sirius satellite radio, steering wheel audio and cruise controls, illuminated visor

mirrors, and 17-inch wheels. A six-speed select-shift automatic is optional. Also optional is a 3.0-liter V6 flex-fuel engine (\$2,490) and comes with six-speed automatic.

Fusion Sport (\$25,825) adds 3.5-liter V6 engine, sport-tuned suspension, six-speed select-shift automatic, 18-inch wheels, chrome trim, rear spoiler, dual exhausts, unique side rocker moldings and front fascia, SYNC communication system, auto-dimming rearview, eight-way power driver seat, unique interior trim and center console applique. All-wheel drive (\$1,850) is available.

Fusion SEL (\$23,975) comes with the 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine and upgrades with leather heated seats, dual-zone temperature control, SYNC communications system, halogen headlamps, auto-dimming rearview, heated outside mirrors, eight-way power driver seats, six-way power passenger seat, leather shifter, leather steering wheel, keyless entry pad, six-speed select-shift automatic and 17-inch wheels. A 3.0-liter V6 flex-fuel engine with six-speed automatic transmission is optional.

Fusion Hybrid (\$27,270) comes fitted with a 2.5-liter four-cylinder gas engine, Hybrid 275-volt sealed battery, permanent magnet-electric motor, regenerative braking system, LCD graphic instrument panel, reverse-sensing system, Hybrid badging, 17-inch wheels, E-CVT electronic constant-velocity automatic transmission.

Optional packages: Sun & SYNC Package with auto-dimming rearview mirror with microphone and compass, power moonroof, SYNC communication system; Driver's Vision Package with blind-spot information system, rearward camera in rearview mirror; Moon & Tune Package with moonroof, Sony audio with 12 speakers; Electronics Package with heated seats, six-way power passenger seat, ambient lighting, automatic headlights, blind-spot information system, dual-zone temp control, heated mirrors with puddle lamps, console rearview camera, keyless entry pad. Additional options: voice-activated navigation system (Sport, SEL, Hybrid), engine-block heater, reverse-sensing system.

Safety features that come standard on all Fusion models include dual front, side-impact, and side curtain airbags (with crash-severity sensing), seatbelt pretensioners, anti-lock brakes, and traction control, tire-pressure monitoring. Also available are a rearview camera, a reverse sensing system, and all-wheel drive.

## **Walkaround**

The 2010 Fusion uses the same platform as the 2009 model, but from there similarities cease.

The all-new front-end design, beginning with a bold, three-bar chrome grille and racecar-like chrome-trimmed intakes at the bottom of the nose, has a muscular confidence that makes you take a second, more interested, look. How long has it been since the mainstream American mid-size elicited that?

The Fusion's sinuousness is continued in the carefully raised modeling of the hood, implying that what lies beneath is something genuinely worthy. True enough. The Fusion is no dragster, but its performance is spirited, and its 7.0-second 0-to-60 time in the Sport model gives it the edge over the Honda Accord (7.4 seconds) and Toyota Camry (7.1 seconds).

Given the conservative looks of the Honda and Toyota, the Fusion's styling makes a statement all its own. Its well-formed flanks, accented by gleaming streaks of chrome, give the Fusion both a dynamically fresh appearance and excellent aerodynamic efficiency. Its coefficient of drag, aided by underbody airflow tuning, is an extremely low 0.32, helping achieve high fuel mileage.

Ford stylists were able to combine graceful styling with practicality in another way. The Fusion's high-bustled three-box design delivers a tall, capacious trunk volume of 11.8 cubic feet. It also delivers an easy lift-over height.

In style and stance, the new Ford has a sporting, fun-to-drive spirit not normally associated with either Japanese or American workaday mid-sizers. The Fusion, rather, has the cues of a finely conceived European sedan gone global.

## **Interior Features**

By necessity, our test Ford Fusion Hybrid was furnished with instrumentation not found in any gas-engine versions. The Hybrid's so-called EcoGuide information system flanks the center-mounted speedometer with two LCD panels, communicating what the powertrain is doing, how it's doing it, and how, in real time, you can optimize its fuel efficiency.

Pushing a couple of buttons, you select between four different formats. Learning the distinctions between Inform Mode, Enlighten Mode, Engage Mode, and Empower Mode takes a moment, but then, if you're driving a hybrid, you're likely to want the best from your system. And as annoying and intimidating as some digital systems can be, we found that within 10 minutes driving, thanks to the tutorial nature of the EcoGuide, we were already using the throttle pedal to effectively stretch our mileage. Think of EcoGuide as an automotive video game. It's actually fun.

But if you just want to get to work really fast, especially if your traffic-heavy, stop-and-go commute often takes place at less than 50 mph, the hybrid system's most efficient speed range, a Fusion Hybrid will deliver mileage you never dreamed possible.

Our test car was upholstered with handsome black leather. Black pebble-grain texture on the dash gave things a well-furnished glow. The center stack contained a straightforward nav system and Ford's SYNC, the comprehensive communication network that allows the driver to track storms, place hands-free calls, find a movie start time, locate the cheapest gas in your region, and more.

The driver's seat had good lateral support, decent lumbar support, and proper elevation at the cushion's front to inhibit submarining (slipping under the belts) in a head-on impact. A sturdy chrome-trimmed shifter provided a businesslike grip.

The steering wheel features cruise-control buttons on the left side of the hub, and audio and media controls on the right. (And these controls were far enough away from the steering function to avoid accidental radio-station changes, as they should be.) The switchgear was neither showy nor cheap, with a straightforward utility appropriate to this car.

The deluxe Sony audio in our test car provided gorgeous sound, and better still, was adjusted by knobs. We've found the most efficient way to tune a sound system is with a radial knob, particularly when underway and especially on a rough road.

The air conditioning, which on the Hybrid is run directly off the battery pack (providing no power-sapping belt drag on the engine), was cool, powerful, all you could ask.

Rear seating was conventional for this class, which is to say, so-so. The seat cushions were flat and minimally cushioned. The two outside seats had a hint of lateral support, while the passenger in the center rear would be well advised to negotiate an upgrade. Headroom was reasonably good in back, given the downward taper of the roofline, but leave the fedora in your Bentley.

The rear seat legroom measures 29.9 inches, a distinction, as few cars today break below that 30-inch mark. In other words, you'll want to avoid sitting back there.

## **Driving Impressions**

Driving the Fusion Hybrid is different from driving other Fusions. Its acceleration is right in the middle of adequate, as most hybrid buyers will want, but the EcoGuide instrumentation's ongoing tutorial informs the driver in real time of the mileage being achieved. As EcoGuide demonstrates, the secret of the Hybrid's excellent City mileage is that its electric motor powers the car in cruising mode up to 47 mph. If more power is summoned for acceleration or passing, only then does the gasoline engine instantly and nearly silently kick in, adding smooth forward motion.

We found that when a stoplight turns green, we could use the throttle pedal freely, accelerating to the speed of traffic around us. Then by letting off the pedal slightly at, say, 40 mph or so, the gasoline engine almost imperceptibly shuts down. We're running on clean, thrifty electric power. Practically the only indication of this is by watching Eco-Guide. The smoothness of these transfers between gasoline and electricity is the unmistakable result of world-class engineering.

Power delivery in the Fusion Hybrid is smooth and progressive, exhibiting none of the artificially sudden throttle response of its Asian competitors.

Similarly, the Fusion's handling and on-road dynamics are exemplary. Because its handling is alert and agile, more so in some respects than Accord's or Camry's, it will respond accurately to driver inputs in an emergency.

At the same time, its ride is smooth and pleasing.

Four-wheel disc brakes, made more effective with standard ABS, provide forceful, easily modulated stopping power.

## **Summary**

If you want to come to an accurate assessment of just how good Detroit products are, you need look no further than the 2010 Ford Fusion Hybrid. It is roomy and comfortable, a cutting-edge mid-sized family sedan with world-class efficiency and satisfying performance. Factoring in the \$3400 after-purchase federal tax credit because it's a hybrid, the price is right, too.

[Autodata Solutions](#), Inc. is an authorized distributor of [NewCarTestDrive Reviews](#).