

Brawn & Brain

Ian Lamming drives the new Ford Kuga

DESIGNERS are pushing their 'edgy' look across the range as Ford freshens some firm family favourites.

Kuga is the latest model to get the Edge look with the 2017 model, which boasts physical and brain power aplenty.

Many Ford customers loved the 4x4 Edge for its chunky look but for some it was a smidgen too large. Ford has sorted that by giving the smaller and equally capable Kuga the family visage.

New Kuga bristles with the latest technology, whether that is to connect to cyber space, make life easier or to stop you crashing. So expect devices that open the tailgate at the wave of a leg, that help get you into and out of tight parking spaces without the need to steer, or clag the brakes on if you have failed to react to a possible crash situation.

On the dynamics front 1.5 and 2.0 litre petrol and diesel motors have been refined to produce more power and consume less fuel and Kuga retains the intelligent all wheel drive to keep you moving no matter how tricky the road conditions become.

But it's the subtle, easy to miss, features that also help it stand out from the growing crowd.

The tactile materials ease their way into the subconscious leaving the feeling of high quality and wellbeing. The stalks for both wipers and indicators feature a hook on the end making it easier for the driver's pinkies to gain traction.

The new seats are more comfortable, the clutch and gearbox beautifully weighted. It's the small stuff that adds up to make Kuga such an accomplished drive.

Noise levels are also very low so the cabin ambiance is relaxed and untroubled. This,

coupled with the hi-set driving position, seems to slow the world down and even at the legal motorway limit Kuga feels unstressed and happy.

When straights become turns the all wheel drive comes into its own adding peerless grip despite the very best attempts of winter roads to upset matters. The chunky leather steering wheel passes on road conditions to the driver and the whole handling package is taut and controlled.

Kuga has always been an SUV of considerable depth and the countless refinements and imposing new look make it better still.



Fact File

- Ford Kuga 2.0 TDCi 150
- Engine: 2.0 turbo diesel
- Power: 150PS
- Top speed: 121mph
- 0-62mph: 10.1 secs
- Combined miles per gallon: 60.1
- Transmission: Six speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 122