

The car, defined

BY
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Ford names so many of its vehicles with F-words and E-words, it's easy to lose track. It's easy to stay, uh, focused with this one. The compact Focus falls alphabetically between the subcompact Fiesta and midsize Fusion.

If cars did not exist and someone did a clean sheet design of just one in 2015, this might be what they'd come up with. It's solid, stylish, fun to drive, well outfitted, affordable to buy and economical to operate. The same could be said about others, but it's a feeling that stuck with us for our week with this personal-size Ford. This particular hatchback in SE trim will not leave you needing much else, though you do have options.

There's also a sedan. There are basic trim levels of S, SE and Titanium (ours is the middle one, the SE), as well as sporty ST and even sportier RS models. Most have the same 2-liter four-cylinder as this, although a few can be had with a one-liter EcoBoost three-cylinder. All weigh between 2907 and 2948 pounds. There are automatic or either 5- or 6-speed manual transmissions, varying by

body, engine and trim.

With almost 45 cubic feet behind the front seats (and four-door convenience), the Focus hatch will gobble up your chores all day long. We give the stylists high marks from the Fusion family face through the flow of lines from roof to rear, to the compound curvature of the taillights.

MyFord Touch remains cumbersome and distracting for many functions. A full-time user can adequately conquer its annoyances, but there is a SYNC 3 system on the way. It will not roll out on all models at the same time, so keep it out of your timing and decision processes for now—mostly.

The Ford Focus is a neat and tidy package with a mildly aggressive presence. Handling is nimble and tight. It appeals widely across age, budget or demographic lines. It's stylish enough to make you appreciate its lines, curves and creases on your own, while just simple and subtle enough to not shout out its popularity and ubiquity. ■



SPECIFICATIONS AS TESTED (2015)

ENGINE/TRANS/DRIVE	.....2.0L 4-cyl / 5sp man / FWD
POWER/TORQUE	.....160 hp / 146 lb-ft
TURNING CIRCLE	.....36.0 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....23.8 cf/2nd row, 44.8 cf/1st row
WEIGHT	.....2920 lb
MPG	.....26/36/30 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$18,960
EQUIPMENT GROUP 201A:	.....1995
BLUE CANDY METALLIC TINT CLEARCOAT:	.....395
MYFORD TOUCH PACKAGE:	.....1495
REVERSE SENSING SYSTEM:	.....255
DESTINATION CHARGE:	.....825
TOTAL	.....\$23,925

Tidy styling details in the Ford Focus deliver a nifty little piece of slightly curvaceous origami.

