

Distinguished. Multiple flavors of luxury.

By Joe Sage



Lincoln MKZ, the luxury brand's midsize sedan, has a solid lineup with mostly easy choices. Four trims—Premiere, Select, Reserve and Black Label—run from \$35,170 to \$39,670 for the first three, then a big jump to \$47,830 for Black Label. All trims start with front-wheel-drive, and all offer all-wheel-drive, for \$1890 more on any.

There are three engines, and here things get more complex. There is a 245-hp 2.0L turbo four at any trim level. There is also a Hybrid model—with a 188-hp 2.0L Atkinson cycle four-cylinder—of each trim level except Black Label, and at the exact same price as the gasoline model. The Hybrids, basically indistinguishable visually, boost city mileage a whopping 20 points, from 21 to 41, (and highway about 7 points). Even Black Label starts with the turbo four, but there is a 350-hp 3.0L twin-turbo V6 available on all front-drive models except base Premiere. The V6 adds \$2750-4500, and fuel mileage drops 3-4 points. The V6 in AWD models has 400 hp. Top dog Black Label with V6 and AWD hits \$53,720.

Lincoln as a brand has to distinguish itself from its Ford semi-siblings; it has to distinguish itself from the competition; and it has to distinguish itself among an alphabet soup of Lincoln MK-something models ranging over two-fold in price.

You should have little trouble choosing the engine, trim and drivetrain combination that best suits your needs. The question is what motivates you to choose Lincoln. Premium and luxury labels seem almost interchangeable these days. With vehicles starting in the \$30s, it's hard to apply the luxury tag to the whole Lincoln lineup, though the new Continental stands its ground as luxury. Overall, Lincoln is certainly a high-end brand, an aspirational badge slotted above Ford itself.

The Lincoln MKZ is a premium midsize entry, certainly. And it's well worth a look within this highly competitive segment. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.0L turbo I-4
HP/TORQUE	245 hp / 275 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION / DRIVETRAIN	6-spd auto / AWD
BRAKES	FR: 17" vented disc; rotors 12.4x1.1 in
.....R:	17" solid disc; rotors 12.4x0.43 in
STEERING	electric power-assisted
SUSPENSION.....F:	MacPherson w/alum control arm, coils, stabilizer, continuously controlled damping
.....R:	advanced integral-link w/coils, gas shocks, stabilizer bar, continuously controlled damping
WHEELS	19" satin 7-spoke machined alum (opt)
LENGTH / WB / CARGO	193.9 in / 112.2 in / 15.4 cu.ft
TURNING CIRCLE	39.0 ft
WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY	3900 lb / 1000 lb
MPG	AWD 20/28/23 (city/hwy/comb)
.....(FWD):	21/31/24 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$41,560
SYNC3	included
EQUIPMENT GROUP 300A + LUXURY PACKAGE	2995
PANORAMIC ROOF	2395
MKZ TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE: adaptive LED headlamps, Revel Ultima 20-speaker audio	4400
MKZ CLIMATE PACKAGE: heated wheel, rear seats, rain-sense wipers, auto high beams, wiper deicer	695
MULTI-CONTOUR SEATS W/ACTIVE MOTION:	595
DESTINATION CHARGE:	925
TOTAL	\$53,565

