

All-new Hyundai Tucson Sport is a Winner

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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It really is amazing what a few tweaks here and there can do for the looks and power of a vehicle. The recently launched Hyundai Tucson Sport is a typical example of this.

The Tucson range has been bolstered with a new sporty derivative with bold looks, added engine power and torque boost, and a deeper exhaust sound to claim its territory as the sportier version of this top-selling SUV. The power of the engine really got me going! You get wheel spins, not only on take-offs in first gear but also in second and even third gears. It's like a lion roaring to go.



Image by Evan-Lee Courie

Midlife upgrade

Aesthetically, the Hyundai i35, the Tucson's predecessor was very pleasing to the eye. But Hyundai Automotive South Africa have gone one better with the initial launch of the Tucson in 2017 and have now got another hit on their hands with the Hyundai Tucson Sport.

Stanley Anderson, sales and operations director at Hyundai Automotive SA, says, "After the midlife upgrade of the Tucson, the time was ripe to create another Sport derivative, with mainly the same treatment as before, but with the attractive looks that came with the upgrade to the Tucson. We have again fitted the Tucson with bespoke black rims and a body kit that gives it a very sporty look without being overbearing. Tucson customers have really taken to the Sport after our first 'experiment', so we could confidently repeat the exercise this time."

It takes two baby

The Hyundai Tucson Sport is available in two derivatives and I had the pleasure of driving both. The petrol version with a 1,6-litre turbocharged engine, and a diesel version with a 2-litre turbocharged engine.

The 1.6-litre petrol turbo delivers 150 kW at 5 500 r/min. and maximum torque of 300 Nm at 4,500rpm. Power is fed to the front wheels through an automatic 7-speed Dual Clutch Transmission (DCT), with the option of manual shift override.



Image by Evan-Lee Courie

The 2-litre turbodiesel also delivers 150 kW, but at lower engine revolutions of 4,000rpm. Torque delivery from the turbodiesel is an impressive 460 Nm in an engine speed range of 1,750 to 2,750rpm. This engine, also delivering power to the front wheels, is coupled with an 8-speed automatic transmission which also offers a manual shift option.

What's inside?

The Tucson Sport's interior is similar to the other derivatives in the range, sporting a dashboard with a floating 7-inch screen for its infotainment system that offers features such as linkage to Apple's CarPlay or the Android Auto application on smartphones. In the case of the Sport derivative, the top specification level was chosen, including features such as electric seat adjustment for the driver and passenger, dual climate control, rear air vents, rear parking assist cameras and a rear-view camera with a display on the infotainment screen, and a panoramic sunroof.



Image by Evan-Lee Courie

Touch Me!

The Tucson's upper dashboard features high-quality soft-touch material with a double stitching line for a high-quality feeling in the interior. The focal point of the centre console is the floating audio system screen, which has an ergonomic position to allow drivers to stay focused on the road. The infotainment system in the Tucson offers a satellite navigation function when used with one's Apple cell phone and CarPlay, or the Android Auto application.



Image by Evan-Lee Courie

With the addition of the Sport, the Tucson range in South Africa now consists of nine derivatives with a choice between three engines – a naturally aspirated 2-litre petrol engine; the turbocharged 1,6-litre petrol engine and the 2-litre

turbocharged diesel – and three specification levels. All derivatives are front-wheel driven.

Elitist

Elite, with top-of-the-range added standard features such as a panoramic sunroof, electric seat adjustment for the front passenger as well, a push-button to start the engine and keyless entry.

The Elite derivatives also include the Blind Spot Detection and Cross Traffic Alert safety features. Another standard feature is the extra USB port in the rear, delivering additional power to recharge the devices on-board if needed. Elite Sport, with the same features as the Elite derivative, as well as the bespoke rims, side skirts, front and rear spoilers and dual exhausts.

Safety features

Apart from the Blind Spot Detection and Cross Traffic Alert (in the Executive, Elite and Sport versions), the Tucson is equipped with passive safety features such as dual front and side airbags (driver and front passenger) and curtain airbags that offer protection for rear passengers as well in all derivatives. Isofix latching points for child safety seats are also fitted to all Tucson derivatives.

Pricing

- Tucson 1.6 TGD I Sport (Dual Clutch Transmission): R654,900
- Tucson R2.0 Sport Turbodiesel (automatic): R664,900

All prices include a 5 year/90,000 km service plan; 7-year/200,000km warranty; and Roadside Assistance for 7 years or 150,000km.

All service intervals are 15,000 km, with a mandatory initial 5,000km service for the Tucson 1.6 TGD I Elite and Sport derivatives

Verdict

I am still in awe of the very fast take off in both the manual and automatic versions. The SUV has been beefed up to give it that meaner look. The black rims suits the SUV to perfection. And then the exhaust noise has been upgraded to give it that growly sound that roars on take-off and in gear changes. Hyundai has got a winner here. Watch the order books filling up!

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