

SEAT Leon FR+



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I test drove the latest SEAT Leon recently - and the 2.0 DSI FR+ DSG auto demo model certainly got my new year off to a flying start.

Harnessing 208 horses the motor is capable of 145 mph and will sprint from 0-62 in 6.9 seconds. It feels every bit as fast as the figures suggest and the gear-change paddles on the steering wheel help with that 'boy-racer' thrill you sometimes need after a bad day at work.

Throw the FR+ around corners – and it sticks to the road; dab the accelerator on the straight and you are pushed back in your seat as the car gets down on its haunches for a gratifying sprint. But drive the car sensibly and it behaves like any normal hatchback. It's just handy to know that if you need a bit of 'oomph' to quickly overtake that irritating lorry then it's there for you. The car has it all really – as long as you're not expecting a large seven seat multi-purpose-vehicle. Try the SEAT Alhambra if you are!

Inside, the driver's seat is supportive and the steering wheel adjusts for a satisfying grip. The dials are clear and all the knobs and switches feel logically set out. Visibility is good and, in the rear, my children sat happily in their child-seats, which were fitted securely into the ISOFIX anchoring system. My wife found the front passenger area spacious and cossetting, although on the one occasion when she travelled in the rear, she commented that legroom was a little limited. And when it came

to loading, the decent-sized boot was large enough for a buggy and copious amounts of filled-to-the-brim supermarket shopping bags.

As a family man, I found the car reassuring to be in. It doesn't have a five-star Euro NCAP score, but it has an impressive enough four-star (Occupant and Child) result. The car feels well-made and there are driver and front passenger airbags as well as side and curtain airbags. The SEAT Leon is also equipped with traction control gadgetry to help keep it on the road and anti-lock brakes to ensure it scrubs off speed safely. The FR+ has 225/40 tyres on big 18 inch alloys, Bi-xenon headlights to help you see (and be seen) just that bit better and it has useful front parking sensors too.

The SEAT Leon FR+ with the 6-speed DSG auto gearbox will set you back £23,100 on the road. Not the cheapest model, but nearly £3000 less than the top-of-the-range 155 mph Cupra R – and almost as exciting to drive.



Pros 'N' Cons

- ✓ Sporty
- ✓ Fun to drive
- ✓ Well built
- ✓ Comfortable
- ✗ Rear legroom

Fast Facts

- Max speed: 145 mph
- 0-62 mph: 6.9 secs
- Combined mpg: 37.7
- Engine: 1984 cc 4 cylinder 16v petrol
- Max. power (bhp): 208 at 5000 rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 207 at 1700 rpm
- CO2: 174 g/km

Price: £23,100 on the road