

Compact Adventure Specialist

Ford's Newest Bronco Sport Leads the Small Off-Road Pack

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

The 2025 Ford Bronco Sport Big Bend occupies a unique position in the compact SUV landscape.

It's the only entry that takes off-road capability seriously without requiring you to step up to a much larger, more expensive vehicle.

After a week with this \$36,460 trail-ready crossover, it's clear Ford has created something genuinely different in a segment dominated by mall-crawling appliances.

The Bronco Sport's mission becomes apparent the moment you see it. This isn't some softened crossover wearing rugged costume jewelry. The ground clearance, approach angles and protective cladding signal genuine outdoor intent.

The refreshed styling for 2025 sharpens the visual impact with revised fascias and new grille designs that enhance the family resemblance to its bigger sibling without looking like a cartoon miniature.

The 1.5-liter turbocharged three-cylinder engine deserves credit for punching above its displacement. With 180 horsepower and 200 pound-feet of torque, it provides adequate motivation for daily driving while returning respectable fuel economy.

What separates the



The Bronco Sport's refreshed styling and rugged proportions signal genuine off-road intent, distinguishing it from the purely pavement-focused compact SUV competition.

Bronco Sport from every other compact SUV is its genuine off-road capability. The standard all-wheel-drive system includes multiple terrain modes that actually make a difference on challenging surfaces.

The Black Diamond off-road package adds skid plates, all-terrain tires and upgraded suspension components that transform capability dramatically.

While it can't match the full-size Bronco's rock-crawling prowess, it handles fire roads, beach sand and moderate trails with confidence that would leave a Honda CR-V stranded.

The interior updates for

2025 bring welcome improvements. The 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster and 13.2-inch touchscreen provide contemporary functionality, while the upgraded SYNC 4 system responds quickly and integrates wireless smartphone connectivity seamlessly.

The wireless charging pad becoming standard equipment eliminates one more cable from daily life.

Interior space reveals the inevitable compromises of packaging off-road hardware in a compact footprint.

Front seat comfort proves adequate for long drives, but rear passengers will notice the tight quarters, especially

compared to more space-efficient rivals.

The driving experience balances on-road civility with off-road preparedness. Ride quality remains composed on pavement, though the higher ground clearance and chunkier tires create more road noise than typical crossovers.

Storage solutions show thoughtful attention to active lifestyle needs. The rear cargo area accommodates gear for outdoor adventures, and various interior cubbies provide practical organization for daily items.

The available "Bring Your Own Device Tray" rep-

resents the kind of practical innovation that shows Ford understands its target audience.

Pricing positions the Bronco Sport competitively within the compact SUV segment, though options add up quickly when pursuing maximum capability.

The Bronco Sport succeeds by offering something its competitors don't: genuine adventure capability in a compact, efficient package.

While it makes some compromises in interior space and material quality, it delivers on its core promise of taking you places other compact SUVs simply cannot reach.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2025 Ford Bronco Sport Big Bend 4x4 (\$29,995). Options: Premium paint (\$295), Black Diamond off-road package (\$2,570), convenience package (\$1,395), floor liners (\$185), Black Diamond graphic package (\$425). Price as tested (including \$1,595 destination charge): \$36,460

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 105.1 in.
Length: 173.1 in.
Width: 74.3 in.
Height: 70.4 in.
Engine: 1.5-liter turbocharged 3-cylinder (180 hp, 200 lbs. ft.)
Transmission: Eight-speed automatic
MPG: 25 city, 30 highway

RATINGS

Style: 7
Performance: 7
Price: 6
Handling: 6
Ride: 6
Comfort: 6
Quality: 6
Overall: 7

WHY BUY IT?

The Bronco Sport delivers authentic off-road capability in a compact package, offering adventure readiness that no other small SUV can match.



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The updated cabin features larger screens and improved technology while maintaining the practical, adventure-ready character that defines the Bronco name.

The Black Diamond off-road package adds skid plates, all-terrain tires and upgraded suspension components that transform capability dramatically. While it can’t match the full-size Bronco’s rock-crawling prowess, it handles fire roads, beach sand and moderate trails with confidence that would leave a Honda CR-V stranded. The interior updates for 2025 bring welcome improvements. The 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster and 13.2-inch touchscreen provide contemporary functionality, while the upgraded SYNC 4 system responds quickly and integrates wireless smartphone connectivity seamlessly. The wireless charging pad becoming standard equipment eliminates one more cable

from daily life. Interior space reveals the inevitable compromises of packaging off-road hardware in a compact footprint. Front seat comfort proves adequate for long drives, but rear passengers will notice the tight quarters, especially compared to more space-efficient rivals. The driving experience balances on-road civility with off-road preparedness. Ride quality remains composed on pavement, though the higher ground clearance and chunkier tires create more road noise than typical crossovers. Storage solutions show thoughtful attention to active lifestyle needs. The rear cargo area accommodates gear for outdoor adventures, and various interior cubbies provide practical organization for daily items. The available “Bring Your Own Device Tray” represents the kind of practical innovation that shows Ford understands its target audience. Pricing positions the Bronco Sport competitively within the compact SUV segment, though options add up quickly when pursuing maximum capability. The Bronco Sport succeeds by offering something its competitors don’t: genuine adventure capability in a compact, efficient package. While it makes some compromises in interior space and material quality, it delivers on its core promise of taking you places other compact SUVs simply cannot reach.

A CLOSER LOOK



AT A GLANCE

FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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