



Skoda Kodiaq SE L seven seater Executive – Road Test

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The latest Skoda Kodiaq SE L Executive AWD large SUV tried and tested by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

As motoring costs escalate one brand which has widened its appeal to meet mainstream customer needs is Skoda.



From being the one time cheap if not cheerful car range, Skoda now add a smile and ownership pride to their brand values, particularly for families who appreciate value for money.



With SUVs the mainstay of sales in Britain and Europe thanks to their versatility, the very capable Skoda Kodiaq does a fine job for a number of reasons and has won a number of awards.

In the latest model range there are five versions and nearly 20 models in the company's biggest model series with up to seven seats and vary only in trim and choice of 1.5 petrol or 2.0 diesel units. Both units produce 150 PS and come with automatic transmission and two or four-wheel-drive options.



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Our 1.5-litre petrol automatic AWD test model began at £37,345 but came with a sample of extras amounting to nearly £4,000 and included electrically folding tow bar, graphite grey metallic paint, adaptive cruise control, heated front and rear seats, virtual cockpit and park assist. Prices of the range go from about £34,500 to just over £48,000.

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Electrically folding tow bar.

First introduced in 2021 the Kodiaq has been updated to enhance on and off-road performance while reducing fuel consumption through improved aerodynamics. The SE and SE L trims feature aluminium-effect trims on the front and rear apron. The L denotes seven seats fitted, a first for the model and the inclusion of a powered tailgate.

A new spoiler design optimises the large SUV's aerodynamics and enables a drag coefficient from 0.31. The now significantly slimmer LED headlights are available with full-LED Matrix technology as an option - this is a first for the range.

The 1.5 litre petrol engine gave reasonable but not outstanding economy as it had to work hard when loaded and a kerb weight of 2.2 tonnes, but it was very smooth delivering what it had and matched with a seven speed automatic which could be used as a manual it was a good combination. Changes in either semi or fully automatic modes were seamless, quiet and quick.



The brakes really did a good job with just modest pedal pressure and quickly slowed the car without drama while the electric parking brake securely held it on our regular test slope.

Its engine had to be encouraged along with a firm throttle due to the vehicle's weight and it responded quickly as a result but most of the time under gentle pressure it was noticeably more economical on the instant fuel consumption readout and felt more relaxed. The Kodiak is a large vehicle and while it responded quickly to steering and brakes it also seemed less agile than some rivals with pronounced body roll on tighter turns. It stuck to the road however and never gave us cause for concern.

You could faintly hear how hard the suspension was working to really smooth out the surface bumps and lumps and even those sitting in the third row over the back wheels said



it was not hard or uncomfortable.

The seats do a very good job, being very supportive and had good front adjustment and were particularly generous in size. Access to the third row was not too tricky for youngsters but the legroom in the rearmost pair was not suitable for anyone over an older child. Second row seat room was excellent and in front it was truly spacious.

Access to front and middle seats was easy and we appreciated the high opening powered tailgate, low wide and long luggage bed with compartments beneath and the uniformly flat space created which could be reached through the rear side doors as well.

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Interior oddments spaces were very generous throughout as well and the driver should have no issues with the controls layout, dials positioning or clarity of their displays. Essential dials in front of the driver were big and clear, split by a selectable display covering instant and average readouts and the large infotainment panel was a touch display which was also very clear for all its functions. Heating and ventilation was comprehensive, clear and coped with the big cabin, backed up by powered windows, with heated seats and steering wheel for added luxury on our test car.

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Visibility was good to the front and sides, more restricted over the shoulder and when reversing so the optional camera really came in useful, with big wipers both ends and a voluminous wash when needed. The new headlights really open up a country road on a dark night with their width and range and even on dip setting clearly illuminated the verges either side.



VERDICT

The whole package is very well put together with excellent fit and finish even if there are not lot of bright highlights inside, but the Kodiaq test car felt refined and sophisticated with the option packs fitted.

It can more than hold its own against more expensive rivals and leave them behind in the race for value.

For: Extremely roomy, excellent ride, refined interior, economical, smooth engine and transmission.

Against: Average performance, some engine and road noise, ungenerous warranty.



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FAST FACTS

Skoda Kodiaq SE L Executive

Price: £41,340

Mechanical: 150 PS, four-cylinder 1.5L petrol engine, seven-speed automatic, AWD

Max Speed: 126 mph

0 - 62mph: 9.8 sec



Combined MPG: 39

Insurance Group: 17

CO2 emissions: 166 g/km

Tax costs: BiK 37%, VED £585FY, £520SRx5-years

Warranty: 3 years/ 60,000 miles

Size: L 4.70 m (15.42 ft), W 1.89 m (6.20 ft), H 1.69 m (5.54 ft)

Bootpace: 560 to 2,065 litres (19.78 to 72.92 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 2,246 kg (4,952 lb)