

2006 Fusion Exterior/Interior

FUSION DESIGN BRINGS BOLD, AMERICAN STYLE TO THE CONSERVATIVE, MIDSIZE SEDAN SEGMENT

- Inspired by the Ford 427 concept
- Three-bar grille represents the new face of Ford vehicles
- Eight interior combinations available, including black leather with oatmeal stitching

Ford Fusion's design story begins with the Ford 427 concept car – a runaway hit with recent auto show crowds. Fusion incorporates several design cues from the Ford 427 concept, including its front-end appearance with bold three-bar grille and multi-element projector-beam headlamps. Fusion's charcoal-black leather interior with contrasting oatmeal-colored seat stitching was also inspired by the concept car.

Designed to be an affordable new mid-size sedan, Fusion delivers its desirable, upscale design through attention to detail and proper proportions. Its broad stance is delivered by tucking in all four corners of the body and placing the wheels at the extremes – giving the appearance of wheels pushed out to the corners.

Aggressive 17-inch split-five-spoke aluminum rims with wide, P225/50R17 tires are available, filling the wheel wells at the side and further establishing a solid stance for the car. Stylish 16-inch wheels wearing P205/60R16 tires are standard.

LONG AND STRONG PROFILE

Fusion is a three-box design with an athletic, box-on-wedge character created by a long, downward sweeping hood, as well as a high, short rear deck and shear tail topped by a horizontal greenhouse.

Its 107.4-inch wheelbase – relatively long for a mid-size car – is emphasized by subtle character lines created to catch light in a way that stretches the length of the car to the eye. Four key design elements help create this effect:

The first is a chamfered shelfline at the rocker-panel level, extending from wheel arch to wheel arch. It draws the eye down, giving the body a strong foundation and a horizontal reference point that sets up the rest of the car's lines.

Second, a character line begins subtly at the leading edge of the fender and extends just above the wheel arches, giving a gradual upward lift to the body side. At the taillight, the character line kicks up aggressively and disappears into the rear deck.

Third, Fusion's high beltline runs parallel to the character line. Its upward front-to-rear sweep is emphasized with a chrome trim piece running along the greenhouse.

Finally, the roofline runs parallel to the lower shelfline. This maintains Fusion's comfortable interior package, but its relationship to level ground, combined with the upswept character and beltlines, creates an impression that the roofline is plunging downward at the rear.

The rear fascia is sculpted with artful simplicity. Its bumper face is nearly flush to the taillight plane. Dual tail pipes – chrome-tipped on the SEL model with the 3.0-liter V-6 engine – emerge just below

the fascia.

"IN YOUR FACE" FRONT END

The 427 concept's menacingly bold front end was defined by its trapezoidal headlamps and aggressive three-bar, billet-aluminum grille. Fusion picks up on the theme.

These elements communicate an upscale car, and the overall design exaggerates its width.

The lower fascia features two additional chromed bars and available inset bright-rimmed projector-beam fog lamps.

Fusion's front bumper is flush with the grille. Designers were able to practically eliminate the "shelf" that defines a typical front bumper by using high-tech, energy absorbing materials for the fascia, grille and bumper beams.

Digital design and engineering also dramatically reduced the gap between the trailing edge of the hood and the base of the windshield. Minimizing this space, which conceals the windshield wipers, significantly cuts wind noise and aerodynamic drag while maintaining the car's crisp appearance.

SHAPES REFINED FOR QUIET AND AERODYNAMICS

Form meets function in Fusion's side-view mirrors, which are aerodynamically tuned to deflect air downward, thereby thwarting wind noise and reducing rain spray on the side glass.

In the wind tunnel, the Fusion's shape defies the air as well as it does the conventional wisdom of the mid-size family sedan. Equipped with Ford's global in-line four-cylinder engine – featuring an underbelly aero shield – Fusion's drag coefficient is an impressive 0.328.

The new Ford Fusion makes a design statement with its wide choice of three interior themes, including one that emulates that of the 427 concept car – the contrasting bright work and charcoal-black leather seats with thick, oatmeal-colored stitching.

"In the past, the tan interior was the same as the gray interior, only it was tan," says Barb Whalen, color and materials manager for mid- and large-size cars. "These days, there is a lot more choice. Some people want wood grain trim, some don't. Everyone wants his or her own personality and own car. With Fusion, we can provide that."

THREE ENVIRONMENTS AND MANY FEATURES AVAILABLE

Fusion offers three interior environments depending on the trim level:

- Charcoal Black
- Medium Light Stone and Charcoal Black
- Dark Stone and Camel

In all, there are eight seat/color interior trim options available on the new Fusion, and four distinct looks on the instrument panel. Colors on the seats include Medium Light Stone, Camel and Charcoal Black. Instrument panel options include Grained (S series), Carbon Fiber applique look (SE), and Wood Trim or Piano Black looks (SEL).

The gauges reinforce the car's athletic intentions. They are round, easy to read and analog with satin-finished bezels. On all models, the door panels and the dashboard are finished with soft-touch composite skins rather than hard surfaces.

The steering wheel with integrated cruise-control switches is standard on all trim levels as are power door locks with remote keyless entry, power mirrors and power windows with a one-touch-down function for the driver.

On all models, a variety of high-end features are available, including height-adjustable driver's seat, tilt-and-telescope steering wheel, heated seats with six-way power adjustments for the driver and a six-disc in-dash CD player that also reads MP3-encoded audio discs.

PEOPLE AND CARGO CAPABLE

Inside, engineers set out to maximize the spaciousness of Ford's all-new CD3 architecture for all occupants to challenge the class leaders in key interior dimensions such as front shoulder room, rear-seat legroom and trunk space. The spacious feel of the cabin was achieved by stretching the width of the base architecture by 30 millimeters and the wheelbase by 55 millimeters, resulting in more than three feet of rear-passenger legroom.

Fusion designers also worked hard to ensure passengers can slip into the back seat with ease. In a packaging exercise, the designers even donned size 14 shoes to confirm that someone with that foot size could enter and exit without brushing the B-pillar scuff plate or the back of the front seat. Their goal was achieved by pushing the rear door as far back toward the C-pillar as possible. It's this kind of attention to detail that contributes to the overall package ingenuity of the Fusion, including such standard ergonomic niceties as a height-adjustable driver's seat and a tilt-and-telescope steering wheel.

PACKAGE INGENUITY

Standard ergonomic features include an easy-to-reach dash-top storage bin and center console with a clamshell lid over two storage compartments – readily accessible from either of the front seats. The front doors feature map pockets, as do the front seatbacks.

The Fusion's large 15.8-cubic-foot trunk boasts a flat load floor and a low lift-over height. The decklid has compact hinge mechanisms that won't impinge on trunk volume or crush cargo. The rear seats feature standard 60/40-split backs that individually fold flat with a convenient spring assist, giving pass-through access to the trunk and affording cavernous storage space.

ATTENTION TO NVH

Ford's engineers were tireless when it came to stifling noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) in the 2006 Fusion. For example, computerized airflow analysis helped the team optimize climate-control

ductwork to maximize efficiency while minimizing turbulence and noise. The extensive use of sound insulation in key areas and sound-damping mastic under the floor also contribute to a quiet environment. The fit and finish of the interior was refined with the use of computer-aided engineering. Every interior component was constructed digitally in three dimensions to ensure precise, uniform tolerances in critical shut lines. The result is a precise-looking finish and an interior that's easier to assemble, with reduced potential for squeaks and rattles.