

## 2010 FORD TAURUS LTD AWD



The 2010 Taurus has received a restyled body and new interior. However, except for the advent of a 3.5-litre EcoBoost V6 for the new SHO model, its platform and drive train are unchanged. In terms of size, the "new" Taurus is 2.9 cm longer, 4.3 cm wider and 2 cm lower. It is also heavier by around 130 kg. This front-wheel-drive sedan is offered in SE, SEL, Limited and SHO trim lines. All-wheel drive is available as an option on the SEL and is standard on the Limited and SHO.

### **Interior and trunk**

Both front and rear access would be improved if the doors opened wider. The front seats are very comfortable, and those with the massage function are particularly appreciated. Not enough room is provided for the driver's left leg, and the driving position is not very pleasant, even with the telescoping steering wheel and power pedal adjustment that are standard in the Limited and SHO models. The power pedals can be adjusted when the vehicle is in motion, which is not safe. Room for the passenger's right leg is limited, which means you have to position your legs to the left. Headroom is tight with the sunroof for tall individuals. Despite the imposing exterior, interior room is not all that impressive. Some people may feel a bit hemmed in, especially in the front, thanks to the big, intrusive dash and wide centre console.

In back, the bench seat is comfortable for two adults. Legroom is generous, but headroom is at a premium for tall people. The 60/40 split seatback folds but higher than the floor of the trunk.

The trunk is roomy, with a relatively large opening and a low lift-over height. However, the trunk lid has no handgrip, it hardly rises at all when it's unlocked, and it's heavy.

### **Convenience and safety features**

The interior is very nicely finished in good-quality materials. Ford has switched to using several environmentally friendly and recycled materials in many areas throughout the interior, such as soy-based polyurethane foam for the seat cushions. Road noise is insufficiently dampened. There are several storage compartments, but overall, their total capacity is unimpressive. The glove compartment is not lighted, a frequent, and unacceptable, omission in Ford products.

The controls and instruments are well laid out, except for the wiper control, which is on the tip of the turn-signal lever. You have to apply just the right amount of pressure to get the Mist function to work. If you don't, either nothing happens or most often the windshield washers go off. The washers are not very powerful and start only after the wipers have made a swipe of the windshield, which is the exact opposite of what should take place. The washer nozzles are placed under the edge of the hood and easily blocked by snow. The front door windows and outside mirrors very quickly get dirty.

The heating system is a bit slow and has to be set at 21°C or even 22°C to get the heat other systems provide when set at 20°C.

The "MyKey" feature allows parents, or fleet managers, to limit radio volume and maximum driving speed, mute the audio system until everyone buckles up, etc.

Safety features include dual front, side and side-curtain airbags; five head restraints; four-wheel disc brakes with ABS; and stability control. The rear head restraints are too low to protect tall people. Visibility is restricted by the wide roof pillars, particularly the rear ones, and by a high belt line that creates insufficient window height. Distances are hard to judge when backing up. The headlights lack intensity and distance, especially in the low-beam position.

In U.S. government crash tests, the Taurus obtained a five-out-of-five star rating for the protection of front occupants in a frontal impact and all occupants in a side impact. It rated four stars for rollover resistance. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety gave the Taurus a Good rating, its highest, for driver protection in an frontal offset collision, and for all-occupant protection in a side or rear impact.

## **Engine and transmission**

The 3.5L Duratec 35 V6 develops 263 horsepower and 249 pound-feet of torque, for relatively lively, well-felt acceleration and pickup. It is a well-suited engine that runs easily at all times. Ford must have tinkered with the power train, because our fuel consumption with the heavier 2010 version was one litre less than with the 2008 model, with the same 0-100 km/h acceleration times.

The six-speed automatic transmission generally shifts very smoothly. Gears are well spaced, and you can drive off in second. Once again with a Ford product, you have to unlock the lever to shift from Drive to Neutral, which is not what you want if you have to shift quickly to Neutral in an emergency situation.

The all-wheel-drive system directs torque to the rear wheels when it detects front-wheel slippage, and functions quite quickly.

## **On the road**

Revised this year, the four-wheel independent suspension has been tuned for a nicely firm, well-controlled ride that is very smooth on all types of pavement. There is no harsh reaction. Road holding is fully adequate for such a big car, with normal body lean in turns. Overall, the suspension has a sturdy feel, but in our test vehicle it was noisy on several bumps.

The power steering is a bit heavy at low speed and does not re-centre itself when you are driving very slowly. After that, it becomes better weighted. Steering is stable, precise and relatively fast, with a normal turning circle. It supplies a bit of road sensation. The brakes are powerful and resist well to fade.

## Inspection

An inspection at a CAA-Quebec technical inspection centre showed that the platform is sturdy but also that there is no rust proofing. Inside the engine compartment, the windshield washer fluid tank is too close to the radiator expansion tank, which could cause confusion. The fuel and brake lines have a plastic covering that could cause problems by allowing dirt and humidity to build up. The overhead camshafts are chain driven.

The U.S. magazine *Consumer Reports* expects reliability of the Taurus to be average.

## Conclusion

The new Taurus has been improved in many respects, particularly in terms of quality of materials, fit and finish. Moreover, its power train is more efficient than ever. However, limited visibility, and interior room in relation to exterior dimensions, are disappointing.

**PROS:** front-seat comfort, handling and ride, well-adapted engine, smooth transmission, large trunk, sturdy platform

**CONS:** visibility (especially  $\frac{3}{4}$ -rear), weak headlights, driving position, windshield wiper control, doors do not open wide, no hand grip on trunk

## 2010 FORD TAURUS

**Engine:** 24-valve, 3.5-litre V6; 24-valve, turbo, 3.5-litre V6

**Horsepower:** 263 hp at 6,250 rpm; 365 hp at 5,500 rpm

**Torque:** 249 lb-ft at 4,500 rpm; 350 lb-pi at 3,500 rpm

**Transmission:** 6-speed automatic

**Suspension:** fully independent

**Brakes:** 4-wheel disc

**Wheelbase:** 286.8 cm

**Length:** 515.4 cm

**Width:** 217.7 cm (with mirrors)

**Height:** 154,2 cm

**Weight:** 1,822 to 1,918 kg

**Tires:** P235/60R17; P235/55R18; P255/45R19; P245/45R20

**Towing capacity:** 454 kg

**Air bags:** dual front, two side and two curtain air bags

### Fuel consumption with all-wheel drive:

Transport Canada rating:

City: 12.3 L/100 km (23 mpg)

Highway: 7.9 L/100 km (36 mpg)

Test result: 12.5 L/100 (23 mpg)

Test temperature: -4°C to 8°C

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions:** 4,738 kg/20,000 km

**Fuel tank capacity:** 75 litres (AWD: 72 litres)

**Fuel requirement:** regular grade gasoline (V6 turbo: premium grade recommended)

**Acceleration:**

0-100 km/h: 7.9 seconds

60-100 km/h: 5.7 seconds

**Competition:** Buick LaCrosse and Lucerne, Chevrolet Impala, Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger, Toyota Avalon

**Warranty:**

- Full basic coverage: 3 years/60,000 km
- Powertrain: 5 years/100,000 km
- Surface corrosion: 3 years/60,000 km
- Perforation damage: 5 years/unlimited mileage
- Emissions control system: 3 years/60,000 km (full coverage);  
8 years/130,000 km (catalytic converter, electronic control module and onboard diagnostic device)

**Factory replacement parts:**

- Rear bumper: \$1,409
- Front brake disc: \$120
- Brake pads: \$160
- Muffler: \$840
- Front fender: \$349

**Price according to trim line:**

- SE: \$29,999
- SEL: \$32,299
- SEL AWD: \$34,799
- Limited: \$40,999
- SHO: \$48,199

**Main options:**

- Technology package: \$2,800 (SEL); \$3,500 (Limited)
- Sunroof: \$1,200 (SEL)
- Multi contour seats: \$600 (SEL)
- Navigation system: \$2,300 (Limited, SHO)
- SYNC and reverse sensing package: \$800 (SEL)

**Price as tested:** \$48,779

**Freight and preparation:** \$1,350

**Dealers:** Quebec: 112      Canada: 443