





The area's most complete automotive resource and listings.

2,003 vehicles for sale inside plus more than 7,000 online at timesunion.com/cars

Automotive

timesunion.com/cars

Faster charging times for the Chevy Volt SEE INSIDE

TEST DRIVE

9.0, Take Two

2018 Audi A4 Sedan 2.0T quattro S tronic

DAN LYONS | text Special to the Times Union

his is year two of generation nine for the Audi A4. The compact luxury sedan returns for 2018 with a two-tier model lineup. Each level is available in Premium, Premium Plus and Prestige trim levels. Both ranges employ a turbocharged, 2.0L fourcylinder engine. While the base "Ultra" version has an

economy tune and front-wheel-drive, the other tier has a higher level of performance and includes Audi's quattro AWD system.

Prices for the former (FWD) models start at \$36,000 (Premium), \$39,200 (Premium Plus) and \$45,500 (Prestige). The latter price out at \$40,500

(Premium), \$43,700 (Premium Plus) and \$50,000 (Prestige). These quattro cars are offered with a choice of manual or automatic transmission at the same price. My tester was a Premium Plus model with quattro

2018 Audi A4 Sedan 2.0T quattro S tronic MSRP: \$40,500 · As tested: \$51,250

and the S tronic automatic transmission. With five option packages and a \$975 delivery charge, it had a bottom line price of \$51,250.

All new in 2017, A4 rolls into 2018 with minimal changes. Base, Premium models are now equipped with heated front seats, and gain some S line exterior trim. Mid-level Premium Plus adds blind spot monitoring with rear cross-traffic alert. Top-ranging Prestige versions now include upgraded advance safety technology, auto-high beams, and traffic-sign recognition.

Newly available on Premium Plus or Prestige trims is a collection of largely cosmetic items known as the Black Optic Plus package (\$1,450). For the exterior, this bundle includes gloss black, 18-inch Y-spoke wheels, red brake calipers, black mirror housings, side sill blades, and a rear deck spoiler. A flat bottom, three-spoke steering wheel, piano black trim inlays, red stitching and a leatherette covering for center console, and door arm rests make up the interior changes.

This generation of A4 brings with it a handsomely updated cabin with upgraded technology. One example on my car was the Navigation and Telematics package (\$3,000), which is highlighted by Audi's configurable virtual cockpit, and MMI Navigation with touch. I'm



THE 2018 AUDI A4 SEDAN is Audi's compact luxury sedan, now in the second year of its ninth generation. It competes in the same class as the BMW 3-Series and the Mercedes-Benz C-Class.

Part of the luxury car

of abundant power at

your disposal — even

if you don't use it.

experience is the luxury

embedded in the gear shifter, but the handle itself provides a flat space to rest your hand on, while working the rotary controller — one of the access points for the

revised MMI operating system. The virtual cockpit and upgraded main display screen are versatile and visually impressive. And the layout and logic of the updated, MMI interface generally makes sense. But the number of functions to access on a loaded luxury ride like this (and the locations/ operations of the controls), bring

with them a long learning curve (and a potential distraction factor). Redundant controls for many functions are found on the steering wheel and are preferable, for convenience and safety (keeping your eyes closer to

up a smorgasbord of goodies, including a high-end Bang & Olufsen sound system, model-specific 18-inch rims, an alarm system with motion sensor, eight-way

power seats and LED headlights.

Size is a function of class, and the A4's main competitors in the compact luxury sedan class are fairly close in cabin dimensions. The Audi's rear seat leg room numbers (35.7 inches) are a skosh better than the BMW 3-Series (35.1 inches) and the Mercedes-Benz C-Class (35.2 inches). It's possible to (snugly) fit

four six footers aboard. In terms of cargo capacity, the A4's 13 cubic feet matches the BMW exactly, and beats the 'Benz (12.6) by a bit. Rear seatback fold forward to a mostly flat load floor, to accommodate longer items.

Continued on page •••••••

