

SPECIAL REPORT

# THE NEWEST KID ON THE SUV BLOCK

Inside: why the SEAT Ateca is set to make a significant impact in the highly competitive SUV sector



Produced by **FleetNews**

In association with



# Ateca to drive SEAT fleet sales to a record high

Aim of 3-4% market share will make it second-best seller behind the Leon

The Ateca SUV is a significant car for SEAT. From global chief executive Luca De Meo to UK head of fleet and business sales Peter McDonald, everyone at the company understands its importance to the brand.



*"The Leon is great – but we know the fleet marketplace requires a portfolio of products"*

Peter McDonald, SEAT

Until now, SEAT's line-up has covered just over half of the car market. By the end of 2017, with other launches in the pipeline, it will cover almost three-quarters.

Listen to De Meo, for example: "From a brand position, the Ateca will move us to the centre. People should expect emotion and warmth from SEAT."

SEAT expects the Ateca to drive its true fleet registrations to record levels as it moves into the third-largest – and fastest-growing – segment in the fleet sector for the first time. It has received hundreds of orders from fleet and retail customers, even before people could drive the car.

"Leon has been a key fleet model for SEAT – and the Leon is great – but we know that the fleet marketplace requires a portfolio of products" says McDonald.

"A fleet customer often doesn't want to deal with many different manufacturers, they want to work with a few, and have deep relationships. The Ateca will grow volume but also help us to win customers where they want breadth of range, so it is really important."

McDonald points to the heavy investment SEAT is making in new products, including a Leon refresh and a new Ibiza next year, the latter of which will also form the platform for a second, smaller SUV.

"It will be the most comprehensive line-up SEAT has had in terms of segments," he says.

SEAT has increased its fleet sales for the past three years and is up again in 2016 by 10%. Each time it has registered a new record and the Ateca will help to continue this growth into 2017.

SEAT is targeting a 3-4% share of the sector with the Ateca, which would make the SUV its second-best seller, behind the Leon. Conquests are expected from other marques and sectors, many of whom will be experiencing the brand for the first time.

McDonald says: "SUV is the fastest growing segment and third largest in fleet. As many fleet policies now allow SUVs to be an option, we see opportunities for drivers who used to drive B segment saloons potentially moving to the Ateca."

Buyers are expected to be divided 50-50 between fleet and retail. In fleet, they will typically be user-choosers, matching a similar profile to the retail customer – families with young children and people that have left home.

The Ateca gives them the option to choose a higher specification SUV over a lower specification, and smaller, premium hatch.

McDonald does not believe that the Ateca will take sales from the Leon, whose platform it shares. In fact, quite the opposite could be true.

"I don't see that the Ateca substitutes a lot for the Leon. I think the Ateca will actually help us attract more Leon customers because we can sell a bigger portfolio – we can now attract a larger number of major fleets who desire a range of products, appealing to a wider customer base," McDonald says.

"The Ateca is really important to us. It has really good RVs, sensible CO2 across the range, and good pricing so really good lease rates."

The Ateca fits neatly into the range with the sharp design cues from the Leon and Ibiza, including the trapezoidal grille, taut curves and full LED headlights.

"It's the halo effect," adds McDonald, "and it gives us the ability to communicate something new and exciting."



The Ateca is set to make a significant impact for SEAT

# Packed with latest technology

SEAT prioritises driver assistance, safety and enjoyment with the new Ateca

The new Ateca is loaded with technology to appeal to drivers and fleet decision makers alike. SEAT has made safety a priority alongside connectivity – which enables drivers to access their mobile apps – and convenience, which helps them to perform everyday driving tasks.

Its new SUV has received the full five stars for safety from Euro NCAP. The Ateca scores 93% for adult protection, 84% for child protection and 71% for pedestrian protection, making it one of the safest cars in its class.

"We have packed the car with technology, focusing on driver assistance, safety and enjoyment," says SEAT UK director Richard Harrison. "It ticks all of the boxes."

Among the safety highlights is rear cross traffic alert, which scans the road during reversing manoeuvres and stops the car automatically if other vehicles or obstacles are crossing behind. Complementing this is pedestrian protection, which detects crossing pedestrians and activates the brakes.

New safety features include adaptive cruise control with front assist, which keeps the car a set distance from the vehicle in front by accelerating or decelerating accordingly. If the distance reduces suddenly and the driver does not react, front assist will activate the brakes.

SEAT has also added pedestrian protection to the autonomous emergency braking (AEB) system which, as standard-fit across the range, was a key reason why the Ateca scored highly for pedestrian safety in the Euro NCAP test.

"This does its utmost to prevent a forward collision which helps employers with duty of care and also reduces accident costs for fleets," says Steve Mirfin, SEAT UK product manager. "Front-end collisions could be reduced by up to 40% as a result of AEB technology."

Motorway driving is made safer with the addition of lane assist, which alerts the driver if the car is drifting out of its lane unintentionally and gently steers the car back into line.

Meanwhile, blind spot detection uses LED warning lights to alert the driver if cars are approaching in their blind spot when changing lanes.

Not all the safety technology comes as standard. Mirfin explains: "It gives the end user the decision how far they want to go down that safety route."

He also points to new headlight technology, which not only switches from high beam to low beam settings automatically so as not to dazzle oncoming traffic, but distributes "a bright white light with a broad beam pattern, which uses less energy".

With user-choosers a major target, the Ateca has to engage the company car driver. SEAT has introduced a wealth of technology as it seeks to "be at the forefront" of connectivity systems, according to head of fleet Peter McDonald.

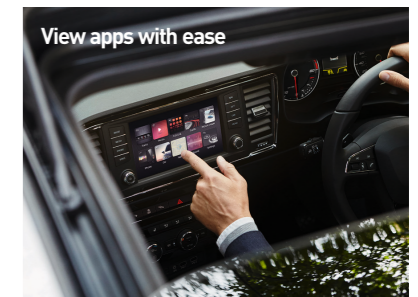
Drivers can connect their smartphones through SEAT Full Link for Apple CarPlay, Android Auto or Mirror Link, enabling them to use their mobile apps safely on the move via the eight-inch colour touchscreen. They can also charge their phones via the two USB ports or by placing it on top of a built-in wireless charging unit.



A 360-degree camera gives a bird's eye view for parking



The Ateca has a wireless charging system for smartphones



View apps with ease

**93%**  
Euro NCAP score for adult protection

**84%**  
The score for child protection

While inside the car, drivers can tailor the environment to their mood with ambient lighting. Eight colours are available and each can be set to a desired intensity.

Technology is also playing an important role in improving the convenience of driving the Ateca, making daily tasks much easier.

Mirfin describes using the technology to "make the everyday less mundane" for drivers and fleets.

Take keyless entry, for example, which unlocks the car as the driver approaches, or the electric tailgate which can be opened hands-free by putting a foot beneath the rear bumper to trigger a sensor.

A real delight feature is 'welcome light' which helps drivers find their Ateca in a busy carpark at night. Simply click unlock on the remote key and the LED headlights will illuminate. At the same time, a circle of light is projected on the ground from each door mirror with the silhouette of the SUV.

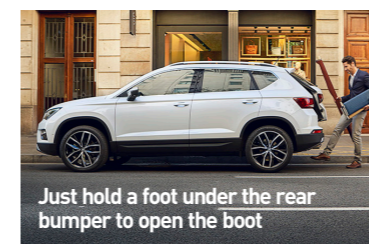
SEAT has made parking less stressful thanks to a 360-degree camera which gives the driver a bird's eye view of the car and its surroundings for safety manoeuvring.

Combined with park assist, which uses sensors to measure the distance between the rear of the car and obstacles, and can even take control of the steering, drivers will be able to squeeze their Ateca into the tightest of spaces.

While the Ateca is likely to spend the majority of its time on the road, SEAT has ensured that, as an SUV, the car is adept off-road as well.

Ground clearance of 187mm, 13mm more than the Leon, combines with hill descent control for controlled progress. The all-wheel drive models also have clever electronics that allow extra wheel spin if required and electronic differential lock.

Mirfin says: "It's primarily an urban SUV, but drivers will find the Ateca is very capable in off-road terrain."



Just hold a foot under the rear bumper to open the boot



The Ateca is also adept off-road

# Four-day test drive gives fleets and drivers the full experience

New programme targets new customers and could be rolled out to include Leon

One of the biggest challenges any brand faces when introducing a new model, particularly in a sector in which it hasn't operated previously, is 'bums on seats' – how to get drivers behind the wheel to experience the car for themselves.

SEAT believes it has a solution to this perennial problem with the introduction of a four-day test drive on the new Ateca. It will allow potential business customers more time to explore the car and understand its many key features.

"The four-day test drive programme is an opportunity to encourage new people to the brand," explains UK head of fleet and business sales Peter McDonald. "As part of the Ateca launch we want to get it to as many fleets as possible. If it works we will consider expanding it to the Leon."

It is already proving popular with company car drivers, he adds: "There are a lot of people that want to get behind the wheel."

The four-day initiative is also helping to open up fleet and driver eyes to the potential of petrol, according to Mark Penny, SEAT area fleet manager, especially the advantages of the smaller 1.0-litre and 1.4-litre engines.

"The demonstration fleet is important; it's about getting fleet decision makers and drivers to try the car," he says. "We don't tell the driver the size of the engine and they often then don't believe it after they have driven the car."

The test drive programme also helps fleets and drivers to understand how the car is positioned to meet their needs.



The chance to drive the SEAT Ateca over a four-day period can help drivers make their decision



Petrol has always been more popular for urban driving but it could have a greater role to play

## INSIDE THE ATECA

Fleet News had time behind the wheel of the SEAT Ateca at the press launch in July.

We said the car featured the very latest technology in terms of safety, fuel efficiency and convenience, and was capable of rivalling some of the most desirable user-chooser models in the SUV sector.

We tested the 2.0-litre diesels

on the event, equipped with four-wheel drive, in range-topping 'XCELLENCE' specification.

This model has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 129g/km and fuel economy of 55.4mpg on the combined cycle.

While we noted that styling is subjective, we described the Ateca as "purposeful and agile", noting that SEAT had done a great job of maintaining the main

cues that identify the brand, creating a vehicle with much more presence.

We put some of that agility to the test on a specially-created obstacle course, which could be completed safely only with the aid of four-wheel drive, hill descent control and the additional ground clearance which the Ateca has over the Leon X-PERIENCE

all-wheel drive estate car.

We also used some other technology to drive a short course completely blind (glass was covered with a vinyl wrap) using the 360-degree cameras available as an option in the Top View pack.

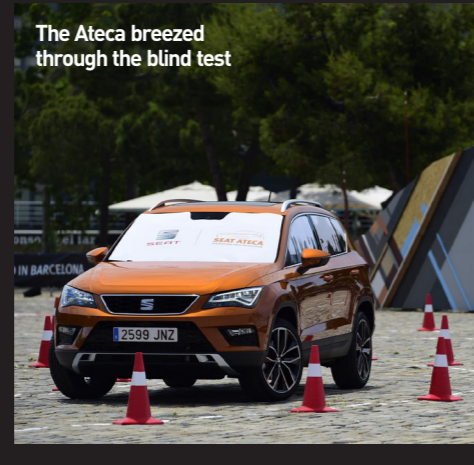
It involved reversing up to a trailer in the precise position needed to hitch it to the tow bar, using only a guide on the screen. Both were completed without any problems, showing the precision of this technology.

The interior fittings are up to the high-standard we now expect from SEAT, with perhaps fundamentally only the design alone separating it from what you would expect from a medium-sized Audi.

And the Ateca's off-road agility hasn't affected its on-road behaviour. It feels very nimble in all environments, and the 2.0-litre diesel engine is smooth, and has a reassuring turn of speed too.



The interior is up to the high standard we now expect



The Ateca breezed through the blind test

## Ateca sparks a debate on fuel

Petrol or diesel? SEAT believes both have a role to play on today's fleets

Petrol versus diesel: it's a debate that has been rumbling away for the past couple of years as fleets reassess their vehicle policies. But should the talking point be 'versus'? Or should the discussion centre on petrol and diesel as a mixed options policy?

SEAT believes the latter. And not just for smaller cars, doing low urban-based mileage, where petrol has historically been a considered choice. Its calculations show that the financial argument stacks up for large cars, like the new Ateca SUV.

The Ateca is available with two powerful, yet efficient, petrol engines, a 1.0-litre TSI and a 1.4-litre. SEAT recognises that the engine sizes will present an immediate hurdle: the common perception is small equals under-powered.

Mark Penny, SEAT area fleet manager, says a re-education of company car drivers is required to overcome this common misunderstanding. "Our 1.4-litre petrol has 150ps – that's more than adequate for the average driver," he says. "Even the 1.0-litre offers 115ps."

A little over 15 years ago, an output of 115ps would have graced many a 2.0-litre petrol engine. Engines have downsized, yet power has increased.

The argument for diesel often centres on the greater fuel efficiency and the higher residual value, which more than offset the higher P11D price, thereby resulting in a lower running cost.

Yet, according to Cap data, the 1.0-litre petrol has the highest residual values within the SEAT Ateca range, which means the running cost is also the lowest, at around 28p per mile over three years/60,000 miles, compared to a more typical 30-34ppm for the rest of the line-up.

"It's a no-nonsense model for the driver that wants transport rather than all the equipment," says Penny. "It is priced competitively (£17,935) and has the lowest BIK in the range. It's a blend of all these things that gives it such a strong residual value."

He has a number of corporate customers that have placed orders for the smaller petrol engine, primarily due to the cost savings.

However, while the 1.0-litre is currying favour with its headline residual values, the higher-powered 1.4-litre option is attracting the greatest fleet interest. The engine, already available in the Leon, Ibiza and Alhambra, features Active Cylinder Technology (ACT) which automatically closes two of

**150ps**

Power output of the Ateca 1.4 litre petrol engine

**28ppm**

Running cost of the 1.0 litre petrol model

**£852**

Difference in price between diesel and petrol engines over three years

**23%**

Proportion of petrol demonstration requests

**119g/km**

Emissions from the 1.0 litre petrol TSI

the four pistons at lower to medium rpm to maximise fuel efficiency. It works up to 80mph, regardless of gear.

The driver won't notice any difference, and the pistons are instantly reactivated if greater power is needed, but CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and fuel consumption will both fall by up to 10%. This could save up to half a litre of fuel per 62 miles depending on driving style, rising to 0.7 litres in urban traffic.

When pitched against the comparable diesel model, Penny says the petrol engine is £852 cheaper over three years/60,000 miles.

It has a lower P11D (£2,000 like-for-like) and a better residual value (three percentage points higher). It costs slightly more in fuel, but the service, maintenance and repair is £21 less than diesel and national insurance contributions are almost £300 lower.

"Altogether, it's a lower total cost of ownership on petrol but we have to get that message across to fleet decision makers," Penny says.

Drivers also save, despite CO<sub>2</sub> emissions being slightly higher. Take the 1.0-litre TSI: it starts at £17,935 and emits 119g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> for a benefit-in-kind of 20%. Despite the £20,120 1.6 TDI emitting just 113g/km, the 3% diesel supplement pushes up its BIK to 22%.

"Drivers can save £131 in the first year, rising to £139 in future years," says Penny.

He says drivers as well as fleets are keen to consider petrol. Across the SEAT model range, the proportion of petrol demonstration requests has risen from just under 20% last year to more than 23% in 2016.

"Drivers are finding it difficult to future-proof themselves on BIK, especially when company policies are four years in length," Penny says. "Petrol gives them the option to shed some of that uncertainty."

Overall, petrol accounts for almost half of Ateca sales, although in fleet, diesel still dominates. Here, petrol orders have already hit treble figures, and orders are still rising.

"I have corporate customers that have ordered petrol Ateca primarily because of the cost benefits. Others are influenced by local authority policies on congestion charging zones and low emission zones," Penny says.

"We see the Government's budget decision on the 3% diesel supplement as a strong indicator about what's coming, so fleet operators have to ask questions about their choices. And they are keen to listen about petrol."

# Making a stand in a tough market

Strong running costs and high specification give Ateca the edge in ultra-competitive SUV sector

**A**n important ingredient to the success of the new Ateca is maximising its residual value (RV) so the car remains an attractive proposition to leasing companies and their customers.

Richard Harrison, SEAT UK director, intends to achieve this by carefully balancing supply with demand. He certainly doesn't have to worry about the latter, after the Ateca enjoyed a record order take during the launch weekend.

"We have to do good business with the Ateca" Harrison says, talking in terms that will appeal to leasing companies and pricing guides.

He has a strong approach for the Ateca RV strategy, analysing where orders are coming from and lobbying the factory for more right-hand drive models to meet the demand.

Harrison adds: "It's a steady release. We will keep a tight control over lead times. It's an exciting challenge to have, and a turning point for the brand."

The Ateca has some of the highest residual values in the SUV sector, a measure of the confidence the pricing guides have in SEAT's strategy. It also has low service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs thanks to technology from the Leon which means the total cost of ownership is very competitive.

Steve Mirfin, SEAT product manager, says: "We have involved the key RV influencers in every aspect of the vehicle and developed the vehicle in conjunction with their feedback – it's paid dividends."

Overall residuals ratings from Cap are 52% across the range at three years/60,000 miles, peaking at 59% for some engine derivatives.

SMR costs have been minimised thanks to variable 20,000/ two-year servicing and a focus on ensuring parts can be replaced quickly and easily.

SEAT has a strong cost of ownership proposition with the Ateca. Nevertheless it is treading a well-worn path; the SUV sector is awash with rivals.

So how can it make its mark in one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK? Harrison says the company has done its homework on other SUVs on the market, picking and choosing the best elements and then adding its own dash of 'SEAT-ness'.

"As reaction from the press shows, we have done our research and it has paid off," he says.

"The car is packed with technology focusing on driver assistance, safety and enjoyment. It's a balance of affordability, performance, running cost and driver enjoyability. The Ateca makes us a seriously credible fleet player."

**RIGHT: 4Drive model has six driving modes: eco, normal, sport, individual, off-road and snow**



*The car is packed with technology focusing on driver assistance, safety and enjoyment. It's a balance of affordability, performance, running cost and driver enjoyability"*

*Richard Harrison, SEAT*

Four trim levels are available: S, SE, SE Technology and XCELLENCE. The entry S models include 16-inch alloy wheels, air-con, five-inch touchscreen infotainment, multi-function steering wheel and USB/SD card connectivity, while safety features include seven airbags, daytime running lights and driver drowsiness detection.

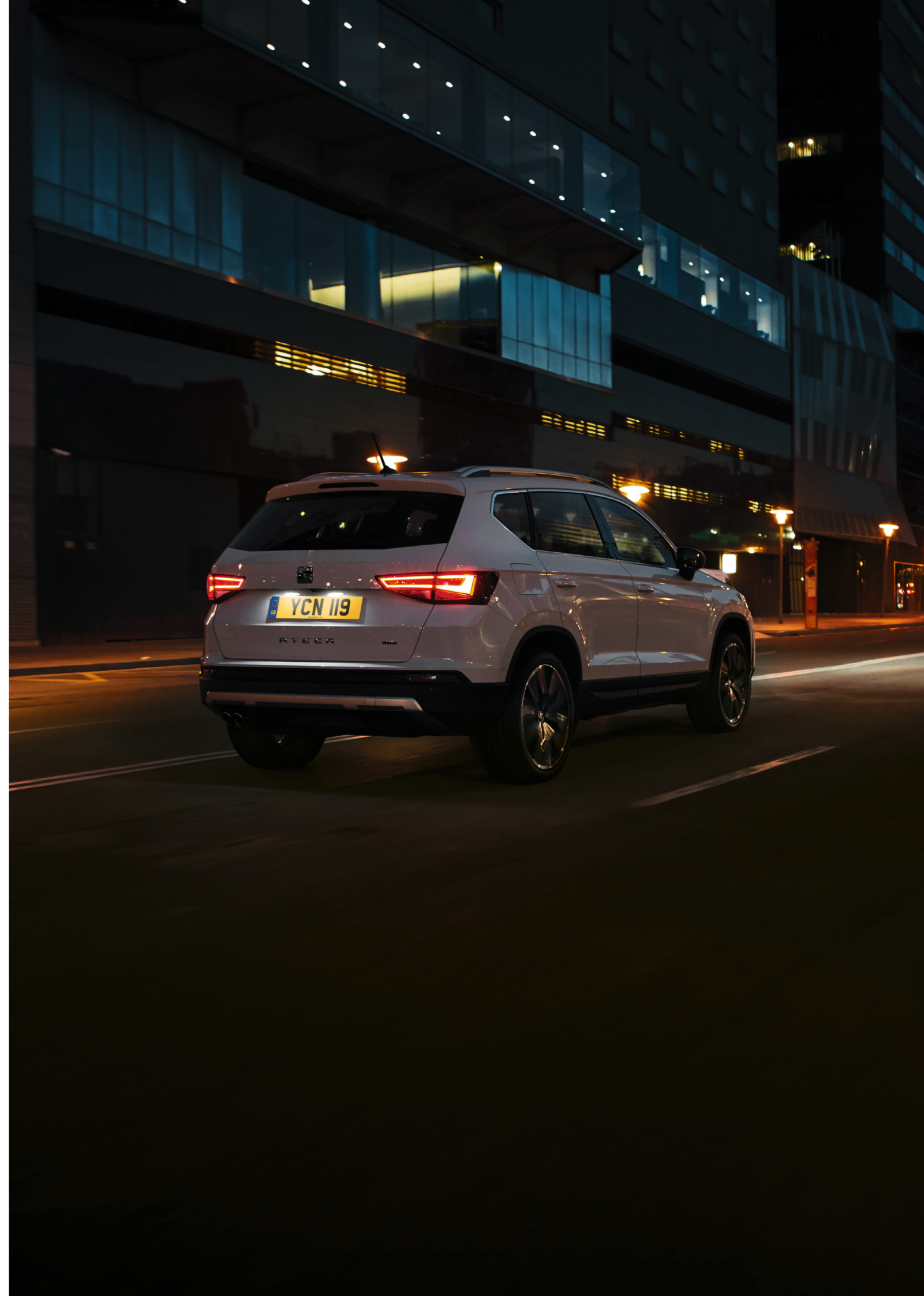
SE models have an upgraded eight-inch touchscreen display with Bluetooth integration and voice control, plus 17-inch alloys, LED rear lights, dual-zone climate control and rear parking sensors. SE also adds full-link system for smartphones, displaying and using apps through the touchscreen.

SE Technology is available only with the 1.0-litre petrol and 1.6-litre diesel. It adds LED headlights and sat-nav.

The range-topping XCELLENCE list of features is extensive: full leather interior and multi-coloured ambient lighting, 18-inch alloys, reversing camera, digital radio, rain-sensing wipers, keyless entry, automatic LED headlights and the Drive Profile system which enables drivers to choose between six driving modes: eco, normal, sport, individual, off-road and snow.

Two-thirds of initial orders are for the XCELLENCE trim, which blends latest safety technology with full connectivity.

The high level of initial demand reflects the work SEAT has done building credibility in the corporate sector with fleets, leasing companies and the pricing guides – work which started with Leon last year. In the first half of 2016, the Leon has also enjoyed record levels of demand and has changed the way fleets view the brand, according to Harrison.



## FUNCTIONAL TO HIGH-END: ENGINES AND TRIMS FOR EVERY DRIVER

Model	CO2 (g/km)	VED band	Insurance Group (30)	Recommended basic	Recommended OTR	P11D value	BIK 2016/17
Ateca S 1.0 TSi Ecomotive 115PS	119	C	8E	£14,945.83	£17,990.00	£17,935.00	20%
Ateca S 1.6 TDi Ecomotive 115PS	113	C	10E	£16,766.67	£20,175.00	£20,120.00	22%
Ateca SE 1.0 TSi Ecomotive 115PS	119	C	9E	£16,279.17	£19,590.00	£19,535.00	20%
Ateca SE 1.4 Eco TSi 150PS	122	D	13E	£17,466.67	£21,015.00	£20,960.00	21%
Ateca SE 1.6 TDi Ecomotive 115PS	113	C	11E	£18,204.17	£21,900.00	£21,845.00	22%
Ateca SE Technology 1.0 TSi Ecomotive 115PS	120	C	9E	£17,937.50	£21,580.00	£21,525.00	21%
Ateca SE Technology 1.6 TSi Ecomotive 115PS	114	C	11E	£19,862.50	£23,890.00	£23,835.00	22%
Ateca XCELLENCE 1.4 Eco TSi 150PS	123	D	14E	£19,875.00	£23,905.00	£23,850.00	21%
Ateca XCELLENCE 2.0 TDi 4Drive 150PS	129	D	16E	£22,808.33	£27,425.00	£27,370.00	25%
Ateca XCELLENCE 2.0 TDi DSG-auto 4Drive 190PS	135	E	21E	£24,837.50	£29,990.00	£29,805.00	27%

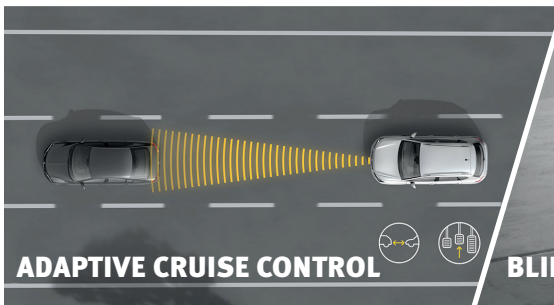


# THE NEW SEAT ATECA

## NOW WITH A 4-DAY BUSINESS TEST DRIVE



TECHNOLOGY TO ENJOY



ADAPTIVE CRUISE CONTROL



BLIND SPOT DETECTION



LANE ASSIST

/ CO2 FROM 113G/KM\*

/ BIK FROM: 20%

/ P11D FROM £17,935

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We want you to feel totally confident that the new SEAT Ateca is right for your business. That's why we offer an extended 4-day test drive. So you have time to explore every great feature and see how a new SEAT could be your biggest asset. Booking your Ateca 4-day test drive is easy. A SEAT Fleet representative will take your details over the phone. Lines are open 9-5 Mon-Fri. If your call is out of hours, please leave a message and we'll get right back to you. Then you just need to agree a suitable time slot for your vehicle to be delivered.

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Official fuel consumption for the SEAT Ateca range in mpg (litres per 100km); urban 44.8 (6.3) - 60.1 (4.7); extra-urban 57.6 (4.9) - 68.9 (4.1); combined 52.3 (5.4) - 65.7 (4.3). CO2 emissions 135- 113 g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

\*Provisional technical data, subject to final homologation. MPG's and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are preliminary and subject to confirmation. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained under standardised EU test conditions. This allows a direct comparison between different manufacturer models but may not represent the actual fuel consumption achieved in 'real world' driving conditions. More information is available on the SEAT website at [www.seat.co.uk](http://www.seat.co.uk) and at [www.dft.gov.uk/vca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vca). Model shown: Excellence 2lr 4 drive. 129g CO<sub>2</sub>. 25% BIK.