

Lyons on Wheels

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2025 Subaru Forester

MSRP: \$29,695 (base) As Tested: \$41,390 (Limited)



The sixth generation of Subaru's Forester makes its debut for 2025. The lineup for the compact class stretches five trim levels wide – Base, Premium, Sport, Limited and Touring. The MSRP's range from \$29,695 to \$39,995. My Touring tester had an as-delivered price of \$41,390.

Size-wise, the latest Forester is little changed from the previous version (.6" longer, .5" narrower). The drivetrain largely carries over from the 2024 model, featuring a 2.5 litre 4-cylinder engine, linked to a Continuously Variable Transmission. The flat four makes 180 horsepower @ 5,800 rpm, and 178 lb.-ft. of torque @ 3,700

rpm. Peak torque arrives slightly sooner than previously (3,700 rpm vs. 4,400 rpm), so the motor feels a tad livelier off the line. The zero to sixty time is in the low to mid 8 second range, which is sufficient for all normal driving needs. Engine noise is noticeable at full throttle, but quiets nicely underway. My drive time included an extended run across the Mass Pike and back, and the Forester had no problems going with the flow in either lane. The EPA says that you can expect your fuel economy to be 25/32/28 in Sport and Touring models (+1 mpg for other trims), and I logged 29 mpg's in my week behind the wheel.

On all trim levels except Base, cargo capacity ranges from 27.5 – 69.1 cu.-ft., depending on how you configure the rear seats. That's a slight increase over last year (26.9-69.1). Lifter height in back is comfortably low. New this year is an available, hand's-free power rear liftgate. With your keys in your pocket, you can open the liftgate by sweeping your foot under the rear bumper. It's handy when approaching the vehicle with your arms full. On Touring models, seat heaters are found in both the front and rear (outboard)



Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.



positions. The back seats are big enough to hold adults comfortably, even with six footers in front. And speaking of the first row, center stage is an 11.6" touchscreen (7" on Base). The display is bright and overall ease of use is about average. Some of the menus are busy. The virtual buttons for HVAC controls are bunched at the bottom of the screen. Their size and location divert the driver's eyes away from the road a little longer than optimal. A wireless charging pad is optional on Base models and standard elsewhere. The connections for Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are wireless. An 11-speaker, 576 watt Harmon-Kardon premium sound system is standard on Touring, optional on Sport and Limited.

Forester is equipped with the latest version of Subaru's Driver Assist Technology. Standard All Wheel Drive pays driving dividends year 'round. Subaru says that the steering system has been upgraded for '25, and the chassis underpinning Forester is said to be about 10% stiffer this year. While Forester's handling doesn't feel sporty, it corners confidently, and ride quality is quite good. Added sound dampening contributes to an overall quiet cabin.

The latest Forester has the same personality as the previous version. It's a well executed compact SUV, with comfortable room for two rows of adults and their baggage. Noteworthy to Forester shoppers is the fact that the standard models will be joined by a hybrid powered version in mid-2025. The re-entry of hybrid power to Subaru's U.S. lineup is good news, bringing with it the prospect of improved fuel economy and performance.

A 40 year resident of the Capital District, Dan Lyons is the author of six automotive books, and photographer of more than 200 calendars.