

Lyons on Wheels

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2025 Lexus NX 350 F Sport

MSRP: \$42,140 (NX 250) As Tested: \$58,010 (F Sport Handling AWD)



This week's drive is in the Lexus NX 350 F Sport. The NX is offered with four, available powertrain options, including two gas engines (NX250 and NX350), a hybrid (NX350h) and a plug-in hybrid (NX350h+). Wearing a coat of Copper Crest paint (\$595), and equipped with the F Sport Handling Luxury Package, standard, All Wheel Drive, and a handful of other options, my NX 350 tester had a sticker price of \$58,010.

Base, NX 250 models are fitted with a 203 horsepower, 2.5 litre four cylinder engine. The 350 is powered by a 2.4L turbo four. It makes 275 horsepower and 317 lb.-ft. of torque. I've seen posted 0-60 times for this model in the mid to high six second range. On the street, it feels sufficiently quick to handle any high demand situations, such as passing or on ramp merges. The EPA estimates the fuel economy at 21/28/24, and I logged 22 mpg's after a week behind the wheel. (Those seeking higher mpg's will want to consider the two, hybrid models). The suspension is tuned towards comfort rather than sport, and that's not a bad thing. The NX corners capably and rides nicely; well suited for the role of an upscale, daily driver. Standard All Wheel Drive adds confidence to winter travel.

Sliding inside the cabin, the 14-inch touchscreen display dominates the dashboard view in the F Sport. The display is bright and in easy reach of the driver, though the home layout is busy with virtual buttons, which slows the process of finding/making system adjustments. And one, seasonal gripe: the screen buttons don't accept input from a



Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.



winter-gloved hand. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity are standard, with a wireless connection. The Mark Levinson surround sound system (17 speakers, 1,800 watts) adds \$1,020 to the bottom line, and requires the purchase of the F Sport Handling Package (\$2,865). The shifter and door handles are electronic rather than mechanical, and the feel takes a little getting used to. As of this year, a pair of USB-C ports are now standard, and a wireless, smartphone charging pad is available on all trims (\$75). Also newly standard is intuitive parking assist with automatic braking, and rain-sensing wipers. Other favorites from the option sheet included a panoramic glass roof (\$1,600), a bird's-eye view monitor (\$800), and a digital rearview mirror (toggles between analog and digital modes, to give the driver a wider rear view, that removes obstructions). The latter is included as part of the F Sport Handling Luxury Package, and is also available on other trim levels as a stand alone (\$200). The roofline makes for some rear $\frac{3}{4}$ blind spots. Driver's lean on the mirror-based blind spot monitoring system and the aforementioned, panoramic view monitor for assistance.

Front seating is comfortable and adjustable to fit all forms. Rear seat room is just sufficient to fit a pair of six footers behind same size front passengers. Cargo capacity ranges from 22.7 – 46.9 cubic feet, depending on how the seats are arranged. The seatbacks fold to a nearly flat load floor. Lifterover height in back for loading is comfortably low, and a power rear hatch with kick sensor is newly standard in NX for 2025, making it easier to unload, when returning to your car, arms full.

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