

Driving Impression: Hyundai Elantra 1.6 TGD I Elite DCT Sport

 By [Ané Theron](#)

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Do you remember what you were doing in 2012? Chad le Clos brought home the gold from the London Summer Olympics, and the Hyundai Elantra 1.8 GLS won the Wesbank SA Car of the Year competition. I remember finding the Elantra a little bland, much like the other Hyundai offerings. They were good, solid cars - but entertaining to drive? Hardly.

The outgoing Elantra sorely needed some power - the naturally aspirated 1.8-litre engine had long been discontinued, and the 2014 facelift left the Elantra with only a 1.6-litre powerplant, *sans* forced induction. With the latest Elantra, Hyundai had the good sense to add some more coals to the fire with their turbocharged 1.6TGD I-engine, currently on duty in the Hyundai Veloster Turbo.

Exactly how sporty is it?

Before we get to the kiloWatt, it's not just the numbers that make a car sporty. Suspension, steering, chassis - they all add to how smoothly you can fly around that corner. Hyundai went the whole hog with the new Elantra Sport.





They added a new multi-link suspension setup in the rear and lashings of high-tensile steel (manufactured by Hyundai itself) for a more rigid body. It has dropped a few kilos as well and is more aerodynamic than ever. Imagine an overweight guy in a bobsled - how he would corner? To be mean, you gotta be lean.

The 7-speed transmission in the Sport is of the dual-clutch variety, and there are some flappy paddles on the steering wheel for full-fun control.

As for the performance numbers: 150kW with 265Nm is almost unheard of in this price range. At R399,900, the big-name German and Japanese sedans should be shivering in their low-profile rubber. And then there's Hyundai's class-leading warranty and service plan*.

The Elantra Sport is taut like a tiger...and the difference could clearly be felt around the hair (-raising) pin bends of the Franschhoek Pass. The Sport's flat-bottomed sporty steering wheel with red accents also seems to offer a more engaging drive than many of its rivals - the Elantra's motor-driven power steering is quite direct and not too light.

Cabin comfort?



The SA-version of the Elantra Sport is issued with gorgeous leather seats in a deep mulberry red, where the other Elantras get black leather at no extra cost. It looks bright on the photos, but in reality, it's quite subdued.

The interior is both ergonomic and stylish. There's no screen sitting on top of the dash like you'd find in the German sedans - instead, it's a touch-enabled 8-inch screen, neatly integrated into the fascia. Every new Elantra also gets SatNav as standard, as well as Bluetooth / music streaming / USB & AUX ports and smartphone screen mirroring.

Electrically operated side mirrors and windows, cruise control and rear park assist are also standard features. The Elite variants have automatic air-con, rain sensing windscreen wipers, and a push-button to start the engine. Oh, and there's a CD player for those who haven't donated their Hits from the 90's to charity yet.

Safety is rated at five stars and there are six airbags and ISOFIX child seat anchorage points, as well as ABS with EBD. An impact sensing door unlocking system (standard on all models) will kick in to free inhabitants, in the worst-case scenario. Stability control is available in the range-topping 2.0-litre Elite and 1.6 TGD I Sport, and all Elantras have LED daytime running lamps.

ABOUT ANÉ THERON

Ané Theron started her career in motoring journalism at Rapport, and moved over to City Press after a few years, before settling into a full time career at AutoTrader SA. She's at her happiest driving along twisty coastal roads, or crawling across rugged terrain in a beefy 4x4, or driving through the desolate Karoo. And taking photos along the way, of course.

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