

Mahindra XUV 700 AX7 L review: A promising contender in the SUV market

 By [Imran Salie](#)

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I recently tested Mahindra's XUV 700 in its top-of-the-range model, the AX7 L. The XUV 700 won an Indian Car of the Year Award and has ushered in a new logo and design for Mahindra. In South Africa the car has gained traction, amassing over 1,000 pre-orders before it went on sale in the country late last year. I enjoyed my week with the XUV 700 and I'm happy to report that the SUV is stacked with features for its price point.





What I didn't like about the Mahindra XUV700

To kick off the review, I'll get the negatives out of the way. The Mahindra XUV700 has pop-out door handles. The downside of having pop-out door handles in South Africa is that it lets people know when your car doors are unlocked, which is a big no. I am nitpicking here as many other cars also have pop-out door handles. I also find grabbing them a bit awkward because of its shape, it's not exactly designed for your hands and to me, it feels like it can break if you pull on it too hard.

The infotainment system is sometimes slow. After starting up the vehicle it sometimes takes a few seconds for the radio to switch on, it must be noted that this did not happen all the time and only maybe once or twice during my seven days with it. Then there's the quality of the blind spot cameras, which is a good safety feature to have, but it just needs to be of higher definition and preferably on the infotainment screen, not the driver's cockpit.

I also sometimes experienced an unsmooth transition from park to drive. When pressing on the accelerator pedal after selecting drive, the car jerks a bit. I figured it was due to the fact that the handbrake must be off before driving, whereas some cars do it automatically without feeling a jerk.

What I liked about the Mahindra XUV700

The height of the driver's seat is on point. It feels as if you are driving in a game car on a safari, high and in view of all your surroundings. Talking about seats, the leather seats are premium, look great, and are comfortable.

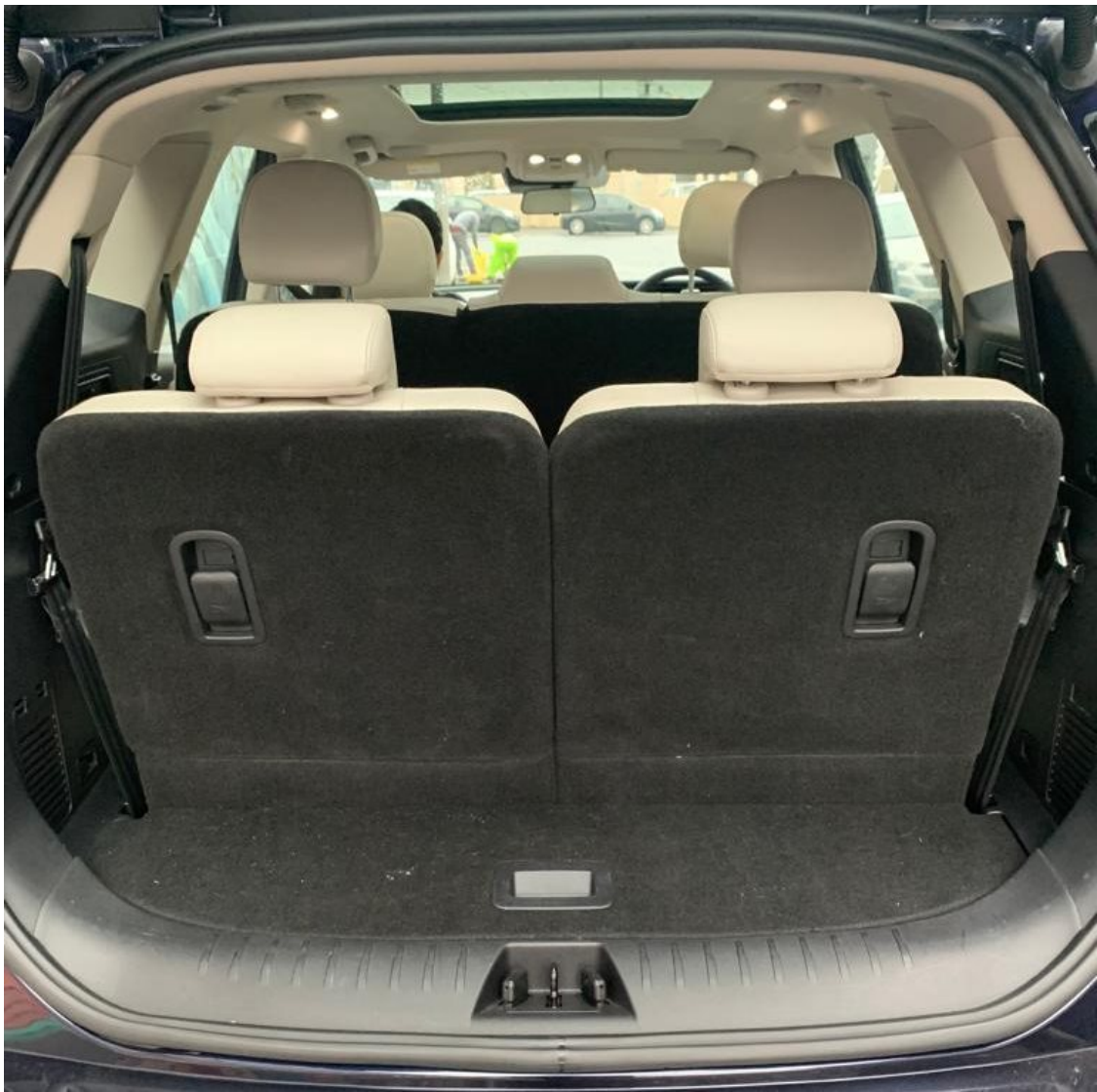
Then there's an aspect of space. While it's not the most spacious, there's still lots of room to freely for rear seat occupants and for the driver and front passenger. I must admit though that someone that is 1.9m in height might have their head touch the ceiling in the driver's seat. This also depends on the seating adjustment. The two seats at the back, which can be folded for more boot space, has enough leg room and headroom for the smaller bodies to not be cramped.

I like the interior and exterior design of the XUV700. The interior has a dual-tone look with white seats and black finishes. On the outside the design is constrained to a point where it's minimal but stylish, modern, and premium-looking. For example, the door handles sit flush against the body of the car, creating a nice clean look.









What it's like to drive

The first thing I noticed after hopping into the XUV 700 is the steering wheel, which felt a bit bigger than the usual size of a steering wheel, this certainly matches the game car feel I mentioned earlier.

With the large steering wheel in hand, it's easy to manoeuvre the XUV700 on narrow roads as the steering is light and balanced.

While it doesn't have a plethora of power, it fares well uphill and is capable of keeping up with traffic. The gearbox could be a bit more responsive to shifting.

Overall, the drive isn't quite refined as other manufacturers, but it still has a reasonably good drive quality.

Powering the Mahindra XUV700 is the 2.0 mStallion turbo-petrol engine, delivering 149kW 380Nm of torque. Mated to the engine is a six-speed automatic transmission.

Safety

- It has seven airbags, comprising of driver and passenger front airbags, curtains across all three rows, side airbags and a driver knee airbag
- Smart pilot assist, adaptive cruise control, automatic emergency braking, lane departure warning, lane keep assist and event traffic sign recognition as standard
- Stability control and safety alerts
- High beam assist
- Tyre pressure monitoring system
- Reverse camera
- Driver drowsiness detection system
- Stop-and-go driving function as part of its adaptive cruise control

Tech

- Mahindra Super screen with two high-definition 26cm digital screens for digital cluster and infotainment systems
- Customisable UI on the screens
- Apple CarPlay and Android Auto
- Interacts with smartphones through the large infotainment screen and voice commands
- Mahindra's Skyroof™ panoramic
- 12-speaker Sony system
- Wireless charging and fully automatic electronic door handles
- Blind view monitor system

Verdict

Mahindra's new Twin Peaks logo change is possibly a stroke of genius. That may be an over-exaggeration, but just think about how it cleverly represents the brand's new design language. Also, it piques interest. I've had several people come up to me and ask me what car am I driving. This proves that Mahindra cars can look stylish and expensive. I think it's exciting to know that the brand is headed in this direction. With the XUV 700, the brand can confidently say that it offers value for money.

Price

Mahindra XUV700 AX7 L – R559, 999

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