

# TRUCKS 2022



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# Small Pickups Roar Back

For years now, the three best-selling vehicles in America have been behemoths: Ford's F-150, Chevy's Silverado and the Ram 1500, in that order.

As their popularity grew, mid-sized trucks also started to get larger, with pickups like the Toyota Tacoma growing to the length of '70s-era F-Series models. Even the size of the driver's compartments themselves expanded: The single-cab era seemed to give way forever to crew cabs for the whole family.

But something interesting is happening, as truck makers look toward continued expansion in market share: Smaller trucks are making a comeback. The trend arguably grew out of continued interest in smaller crossovers after sedans and minivans sales began to fade.

Suddenly, some of the automotive industry's biggest players are returning to the time when Chevrolet S-10s and the Subaru Baja were all the rage.

There are plenty of modern twists, of course, beginning with the Hyundai Santa Cruz. Drawing some comparisons to Honda's earlier Ridgeline, this new vehicle includes a four-door cab (perfect for hauling the little ones around), a weather-proof bed and a crossover-type ride. The Ford Maverick is a little less outdoors-y, as it's built on the same hard-working platform as the Bronco Sport and features a more powerful

250-horsepower four-cylinder engine.

Both solve a problem that faces an increasingly urban-living population: It's tough to get those gigantic super trucks around town. If you regularly tow a large boat, or need more power for a camper, a smaller truck isn't ideal — or sometimes even possible. But for the rest, a more compact pickup allows plenty of utility for smaller hauls or camping trips — and you can actually fit it into a parking spot at the store.

The Maverick and Santa Cruz are the buzziest of these new smaller concepts, but hardly the only ones. Ford's Ranger Tremor and Chevrolet's Colorado ZR-2, for instance, are geared for the off-road crowd that once turned instinctively to the Jeep Wrangler.

The mid-size Chevy model is easier to maneuver than their half-ton Silverado 1500, yet still boasts a maximum 7,700 pounds tow rating. The Ranger likewise steps down from the F-150's V-6 or V-8 options, but includes a 2.3 liter turbocharged four cylinder for smaller jobs.

Elsewhere, the Gladiator is Jeep's first truck since 1986. Nissan has redesigned the Frontier for the first time in 16 years, and Honda is updating the Ridgeline, too.



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# The New Ford Maverick

Ford will leap into the emerging small-truck trend with this nimble four-cylinder model that boasts impressive gas mileage thanks to a standard hybrid powertrain.

The smaller size makes maneuvering easier, but the new Maverick also includes lots of storage space and enough room in the cab for five people to ride comfortably.

Its bargain-basement cost will also likely appeal to former owners of small cars, which Ford has long since discontinued.

A unibody-based truck, the Maverick gets up to 40 miles per gallon from a 2.5 liter Atkinson-cycle engine that Ford has augmented with a 94-kilowatt electric motor. The result is more than 190 horsepower and 155 pound-feet of torque — all from the entry-level model. Towing capacity is up to 2,000 pounds, enough for a small watercraft.

If you're looking for a more potent engine, the Maverick also comes with an optional two-liter EcoBoost four-cylinder that ramps up to 250 horsepower and 277 pound-feet of torque. Add the tow package, and your Maverick doubles in capacity. That's plenty for larger campers up to around 23-feet long, but less power than other mid-



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size models like the Chevy Colorado, Jeep Gladiator or even its cousin in the Ford line of trucks, the Ranger.

The eight-speed automatic transmission powers a standard front-wheel drive set up, though all-wheel drive is available. Other features of note include a Flexbed system with a range of cargo and

organization options, 10 anchor points in the bed, a multi-position tailgate, and power options include two 110-volt outlets. The four-and-a-half foot cargo box outpaces the Santa Cruz by half a foot.

In some ways, this truck's overall look will remind buyers of the early '90s-era F-150,

with its boxy shape and rectangular grille. Inside, however, the Maverick is dotted with clever features — including an eight-inch touchscreen system comes standard. Onboard wifi hotspots do, too.

The stripped-down XL version of the Maverick is probably optimal for most as a work

truck, while the XLT level adds aluminum wheels, cruise, power exterior mirrors and other features. The Lariat option upgrades to the 250 horsepower all-wheel drive engine, and boasts ActiveX upholstery and dual-zone climate control. It's also the only model with ambient interior lighting.



# Chevy's New Silverado ZR2

The all-new half-ton ZR2 transforms Chevrolet's full-size Silverado light-duty pickup into an off-road beast, rumbling out with a monster 420-horsepower V-8.

Arriving years after Chevrolet's last Silverado redesign in 2019, the ZR2 also boasts a highly advanced suspension system, 33-inch off-road Goodyear Wrangler Territory tires and the new Super Cruise technology. The ZR2's 6.2-liter engine also claims 460 pound-feet of torque, running through an automatic 10-speed transmission. Its max payload capacity sits at 1,440 pounds, with a tow rating of 8,900 pounds.

But this Silverado is designed both for off-road and daily on-road capability. Rear and front e-lockers increase traction, and a lifted suspension featuring 40-mm Multimatic spool-valve dampers — inspired by Baja race trucks and Formula 1 cars — smooths the way on both city streets and rough trails.

These shock absorbers have never previously been included on the Silverado, which will now become the company's premier rock jumper. Terrain mode also allows for one-pedal crawling. That's how the truck earned Chevy's hearty ZR2 moniker, which previously appeared on smaller off-road-focused SUVs and trucks.

The Silverado ZR2 can't match Dodge's Ram 1500 TRX or Ford's F-150 Raptor when it

comes to sheer power. Inside the cab, however, is a different story. That's where this Silverado's biggest transformation might have taken place, as the truck features a completely redesigned dashboard and a cool self-driving option.

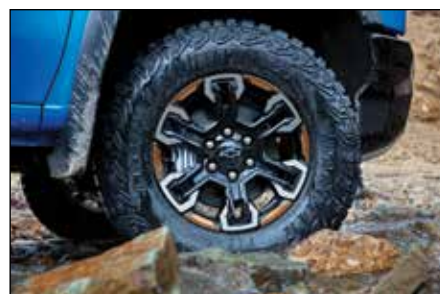
Super Cruise, which will also debut on 2022's GMC Sierra 1500, can automatically change lanes when you use the turn signal — and even maneuver to avoid slower traffic. The technology doesn't work while towing, however, since rear sensors must have a clear view of those around you.

Elsewhere, the ZR2 features a 12.3-inch cluster of digital gauges, and a 13.4-inch touchscreen display — nearly one-and-a-half inches larger than the Ram 1500 or the F-150. The ZR2 also has two-tone leather upholstery, and wood trim on the console and glove boxes. Those deluxe features compare favorably with the higher-end Ram 1500 Limited and F-150 Platinum editions.

Elsewhere, the ZR2's front end includes a modified grille, while the back end's MultiFlex tailgate design mimics that found on the current GMC Sierra, as well. Integrated exterior steps make it easier to access the truck's deep,



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spacious bed. There are even new paint options, including dark ash, sand dune, and glacier blue metallic.





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# The New Toyota Tundra

The redesigned Tundra has been upgraded with an iForce Max powertrain, cutting-edge interior features, new drive modes and a revamped suspension.

These sweeping changes make it clear that Toyota is serious about becoming a presence in the ultra-competitive North American market. The Tundra was refreshed in 2014, but otherwise has gone largely unchanged since debuting in 2007.

Unlike its more popular domestic rivals, the Tundra doesn't have a V-8 option. Instead, it comes in three different V-6 configurations.

A non-hybrid engine is the base model, with 348 horsepower alongside 405 pound-feet of torque. The

mid-level twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 engine rates at 389 horsepower and 479 pound-feet.

The hybrid features a transmission-integrated electric motor, which allows EV driving at low speeds while generating 437 horsepower and 583 pound-feet of torque. It comes standard with an impressive suite of driver assists, and can still tow up to six tons.

The new Tundra employs internal-bypass shocks, and rear coil springs — bringing it in line with the

Ford F-150 Raptor and Ram 1500 TRX, which both feature similar suspension. This replaces the Tundra's previous rear leaf springs, which can sag or break. (Toyota has humorously noted that the new truck is “turning over a new leaf.”)

For the more adventurous, Tundra comes in TRD Off-Road and TRD Sport packages. Off-Road features include upgraded suspension, different wheels and skid plates. TRD Sport includes 20-inch wheels and lowered suspension. Elsewhere, the TRD Pro package features exclusive dampers, a lifted suspension and a set of special 18-inch wheels for its all-terrain tires.

A crew cab is now offered, and the new Tundra boasts a longer 6.5-foot bed, as well. There are a remarkable

seven different grille options — from the simple (TRD Pro keeps the expected Toyota wordmark) to the extravagant (Platinum models are tricked out with chrome).

Inside, the new Tundra becomes the first Toyota to house the Toyota Audio Multimedia system. Engineered by Connected Technologies of Texas, this upgraded tech boasts five times the processing power of the outgoing version.

An eight-inch touchscreen comes standard; there's an optional 14-inch version. Both feature better resolution and touch functionality, including the pinch-and-zoom action associated with tablets. The new Human Machine Interface promises better interaction for drivers, as well.



# Going Electric

The electric craze has reached full-size trucks, as the nation's largest automakers develop modified versions of their traditional half-ton pickups.

The trend began, of course, on a much smaller scale. Battery and plug in-powered cars were followed by crossovers, but many assumed that those batteries simply couldn't provide the power needed to run larger trucks.

Technology has finally caught up, as Ford's new electric truck boasts an impressive towing capacity of 10,000 pounds. Turns out the sheer size of these pickups makes it far easier to install larger batteries, as well as a torque-enhancing motors inside the powertrain.

The Rivian R1T was the first electric truck to enter production, though Tesla's Cybertruck drew more headlines. The trend really takes hold now with the arrival of the F-150 Lightning in spring 2022. Attaching the F-150 name to electric trucks is a game changer, since this has been the best-selling pickup for more than four decades.

Not everybody is jumping in with both feet. (For instance, Toyota isn't going all electric, instead only offering a hybrid option for the Tundra.) But Ford opened the flood gates in



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The Ultium platform is the foundation of GM's EV strategy. It includes the battery cells, modules and pack, plus drive units containing electric motors and integrated power electronics. It underpins GM's EV architecture and was developed with a common set of components, providing energy for nearly every segment on the road. Certain vehicles built from the platform will offer battery energy storage options from 50 to more than 200 kWh and driving range of up to 450 miles on a full charge.

America: The Chevrolet Silverado EV was set for an early 2022 reveal, with sales to begin in 2023. The electric Ram 1500 is due in 2024. The GMC Hummer EV is also hitting the streets.

Among imports, Hyundai's all-electric Santa Cruz joins Ford's F-150 Lightning as one of 2022's most-talked-about green vehicles. The Santa Cruz is a twist on the old crossover formula, with a similar unibody design. There's no full-size towing option, but its single crew-cab option and short-bed body could appeal to city dwellers who are hauling anything more than kids, groceries and the

occasional piece of furniture.

The Lightning has a range of up to 350 miles, according to Ford, and cool features like the "frunk" — a front trunk for extra storage where the old combustion engine once sat. The pricing is also remarkably low: The Hummer EV costs almost three times as much.

Together, these new electric options could help establish a foundation for wave of smaller pickups, further greening every-day households and small-business fleets everywhere. They also provide a far more budget-conscious option than those being developed by Tesla and Rivian. Tesla's



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Cybertruck, boasting a projected range of 500 miles, is due in late 2022 or early 2023. The luxury R1T has its own set of

groundbreaking features, but with a suggested list price of almost twice that of the Ford F-150 Lightning.



# The New Ford F-150 Lightning

Switching out the F-150's brawny combustion engines with batteries and internal electric motors was a bold move: Ford wasn't going to be able to scrimp on power in an effort to go green — and the electric version would also have to remain affordable.

The 2022 all-electric Lightning scores on both fronts, starting with its best-ever instant torque among earlier editions of the F-150. It also has a suggested retail price some \$25,000 less than the groundbreaking Rivian R1T electric truck — even with the promise of occasional tax incentives for buying electric.

The Lightning isn't replacing gas-powered F-150s, only extending the line with a green version that includes a SuperCrew four-door cab and a five-and-a-half foot bed. There's also a splash of new tech (including the largest display screen in this segment), new rear independent suspension, a convenient front trunk, and a sturdy new steel frame.

Built at a new high-tech plant in the Rouge complex at



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Dearborn, Michigan, the F-150 Lightning is packed with 563 horsepower and can go 0 to 60 in roughly 4.5 seconds. To put that in perspective, MotorTrend tested the previous F-150 Raptor model at a best-ever 5.2 seconds.

In-board motors help power the truck, which features standard 4x4 to take advantage of the Lightning's low center of gravity. The result is an impressive 775 pound-feet of torque. A military-grade body of aluminum alloy surrounds everything.

There's a payload maximum of 2,000 pounds in the

standard Lightning, but Ford promises 10,000 pounds in towing capacity with the XLT and Lariat edition, including the Max Trailer Tow package and an extended-range battery.

A sprawling 15.5-inch touch screen links to Ford's intuitive new SYNC 4A interface, which debuts on the Platinum and Lariat editions of the Lightning. Features include voice control, cloud-connected navigation, and wireless access to an array of apps.

The front trunk, located where the engine would have been in a typical F-150, is



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large enough for a pair of golf-club bags and promises a 400-pound payload. The floor is drainable, so the "frunk" can

also be used as an ice chest. There are outlets in the cab and bed, and a power source in the front trunk, as well.



# The New GMC Hummer EV

The Hummer EV is the first all-electric truck General Motors has ever built, rebooting a brand that disappeared more than a decade ago.

They'll add an SUV option later, but for now the goal appears to be to take on the Tesla Cybertruck with a powerful upscale product aimed at luxury buyers.

This reboot debuts with a six-figure price tag, but also an eye-popping 1,000 horsepower, up to 11,500 pound-feet of torque and a 0-to-60 speed of three seconds flat, according to GMC. They're also saying the Hummer EV can go up to 326 miles on one charge.

Hummers were known as boxy SUVs before, but this new update is constructed as a crew-cab pickup with a five-foot-long bed. There are three on-board electric motors to power the Hummer's standard 4x4 drive. It's all powered by the company's new modular Ultium battery pack. All of it sits on the all-new electric BT1 platform, a heavily modified version of the axles, steering mechanisms and suspensions that underpin GM's full-size pickups and SUVs.

GMC contracted with Epic Games, known for the wildly popular Fortnite, to create the interface graphics for the truck's 13.4-inch display. A



large digital instrument panel measures more than 12 inches. The initial edition of the Hummer EV also comes standard with Super Cruise, General Motor's answer to Tesla's self-driving Autopilot feature.

Other tech for enhancing your off-road experience includes rear-wheel steering,

which allows the truck to move forward diagonally in a kind of crab walk. Optional adaptive ride control suspension is also available. The EV will adjust height on demand, giving the truck sweeping new versatility. There are also removable roof panels, bringing back a T-top design that's similar to General Motors-

made sports cars of the 1970s and '80s.

GMC says the new Hummer's fast-charging capability allows the vehicle to extend its range by 100 miles in only 10 minutes. There is also an adapter for those times when DC stations aren't nearby, so the truck can power up at home or on the

typical municipal charging terminal.

Edition 1, listing at more than \$110,000, arrived first. The slightly less expensive Hummer EV3X is set to launch in fall 2022, followed by the less-powerful (but also much cheaper) EV2X and EV2 models in 2023 and 2024, respectively.