

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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all gain no pain

BY JOE SAGE

This is the off-road pickup you might end up with if you spent enough time and money modifying a stock truck, but you'd make a few compromises. The Ram team has already done it for you, every bit engineered within spec, affordably and without compromise. On your own, you'd likely trade fuel mileage for power, towing for aggressive stance, or highway ride for rough duty. Ram Rebel is an amazing off-road truck, but what's remained especially impressive to us is that it trades off no such things, adding huge capability without compromising one iota of original specs.

Even as a 5.7 HEMI 4x4, its multi-displacement system deactivates four cylinders for fuel economy, but in Ram's implementation keeps that beautiful V8 rumble, via an additional set of baffled mufflers.

One rap of the knuckles on Rebel's cool two-scoop hood confirms its aluminum construction, one more way—along with aluminum wheels and some suspension parts—that Ram has delivered a rough-duty truck weighing no more than some compact crossovers.

Rebel is also available with a 305-hp 3.6L Pentastar V6. The V8's MDS puts it close to V6 efficiency, with maximum off-road or tow utility.

The Rebel tows within 20 pounds of a regular Ram 1500. It sits atop 33-inch tires, yet suspension adjusts over a 3.5-inch range for entry/exit (2.5 inches lower) or off-road use (an inch higher).

We've driven Ram Rebel in Texas Truck Rodeo competition, Mudfest competition, and through the most challenging sand-mud-dirt-rut-climb conditions in the hills outside Phoenix. Off-road, Rebel rates a 10. Around town, a 10. Full sports car freeway or two-line driving, maybe a nine, but it has such ample power and presence that earn bonus points in aggressive traffic, bringing it back up to a 10.

The only thing we haven't done yet is long-distance touring, but it's hard to imagine any downsides. The cabin is comfortable and as fully equipped as any modern pickup. ■

2016 RAM 1500 REBEL CREW 4X4

ENGINE	5.7L V8 HEMI® MDS VVT
DRIVETRAIN	4x4
HORSEPOWER/TORQUE	395 hp / 410 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	Torqueflite 8-spd auto
REAR AXLE	optional high-ratio 3:92
MPG	14/21/17 city/hwy/comb
SEATING	five (2/3)
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	229.0 in / 140.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE (F/R AXLE)	9.3/8.8 in
APPR/DEP/BRK (OFF-RD MODE)	25.3/23.0/25.4°
TURNING CIRCLE	39.8 ft
WEIGHT	4330 lb
TOWING	10,130 lb

BASE PRICE	\$45,100
LUXURY GROUP: Upgraded mirrors and visors; LED bed lighting, overhead console	660
PROTECTION GROUP (SKID PLATES)	150
REAR CAMERA & PARK ASSIST GROUP	595
8-SPEED AUTOMATIC	500
ANTI-SPIN REAR AXLE	370
5.7L V8 HEMI®	1150
7" REBEL RECONFIG INSTRUMENT CLUSTER	175
UCONNECT® 8.4 NAV	1105
RAM BOX SYSTEM	1295
TRAILER BRAKE CONTROL	280
SPRAY-IN BEDLINER	475
DESTINATION CHARGE	1195
TOTAL	\$41,685

