

# Ride 'em by Joe Sage

About 20 years after the first Model T, along came World War II, and with it a variety of heavy-duty vehicles that, through evolution, are still in popular use today. And about twenty years after WWII, along came a new entry to join those enduring vehicles—the first Ford Bronco.

Ford has a number of major trends and active evolutions afoot. The new 2021 Ford Bronco—or, more accurately, Bronco family—is the embodiment of several of these. One is a move away from passenger cars to trucks and SUVs. Another is the development of powerful equity in several “icon” badges. A third is creation of “families” among their product lineups, notably among the icons. (There is also a push for alternative powertrains as part of the mis-

sion, as is the case industrywide.)

These factors are already being newly applied in the Mustang brand, unquestionably one of their icons. Yes, the 56-years-running Mustang pony car remains (one of two “cars” not getting the ax, the other being the Ford GT supercar). But adding the new Mustang Mach-E accomplishes the other two pillars—it’s considered an SUV (or crossover), and it creates a Mustang family. This cements all three pillars (plus alternative powertrains).

Next up: Ford Bronco, an icon that wasn’t even in the lineup as the new plan arrived, though (famously) well along in its planning stages. “Icon” is an overused word at times, and “highly anticipated” an overworked phrase, but the new Bronco is clearly both. And why not—it goes back as far as 1965

(Mustang to 1964-1/2). Plus, being all new (or revived), Bronco was ripe for the family approach without bending definitions, coming out of the chute as a family of three: Ford Bronco 2-Door, Ford Bronco 4-Door and Ford Bronco Sport.

In delivering a 21st century Bronco, Ford dives into two competitive realms. First is a small pool of dead-serious off-roaders—domestic, European and Asian—you can count on one hand. Ford has a new Bronco (or two)—the 2-Door and 4-Door—to tackle these head-on. The other is a dive into the current ocean of crossovers and SUVs primarily used for general everyday driving. And Ford has a new Bronco for this, too—the Bronco Sport.

Ford calls upon the Bronco’s own past, which broadly broke into two phases: the small Bronco from 1965 to 1977, which had evoked the old International Harvester Scout; and the larger, F-Series-based Bronco from

1978 to 1996, which had seen the vehicle jump into closer competition with big Chevy Blazer. The newest Bronco family—both the tougher off-roader and the less burly Sport—falls in line with the smaller original, which is also in line with the competition in the current SUV-crossover marketplace. (None of this seems to preclude the possibility of a new wish-list item for many fans, a modern F-Series-based big Bronco down the road.)

Every model in the new Bronco and Bronco Sport family, in every trim level, is 4x4 only.

## Bronco 2-Door / 4-Door

The Bronco 2-Door and 4-Door are, together, the core defining products in the new Bronco brand, the 2-Door picking right up where the first Bronco range left off in 1977—a classic 4x4 rock-hugging, river-crossing, hill-climbing, tight and tall-bodied vehicle set atop beefy off-road suspension and big rubber.

The classic-echoing Bronco 2-Door is likely to define the new vehicles’ core image (it drew the most gotta-have-that-one respons-

## BRONCO 2-DOOR AND 4-DOOR (prelim)

ENGINES:

<b>STANDARD</b> .....	2.3L EcoBoost turbo 4-cyl
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	270 hp / 310 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	Getrag 7-spd (6+crawl) man (OPTIONAL) 10-spd automatic
<b>OPTIONAL</b> .....	2.7 EcoBoost twin-turbo V6
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	310 hp / 400 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	10-spd automatic
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	4x4
<b>TRANSFER CASE</b> .....	(STANDARD) part-time selectable engage, electr shift-on-fly, 2.72:2 low ratio; (OPTIONAL) advanced w auto on-demand 4H engage, 2-spd electromechanical transfer, 3.06:1 low ratio
<b>FINAL RATIO</b> .....	vary by model & shift: 3.73:1 to 4.70:1
<b>CRAWL RATIO</b> .....	auto w electr shift-on-fly: 57.19:1 advanced w electromech transfer case: 67.8:1 manual w electr shift-on-fly: 79.92:1 manual w electromech transfer case: 94.75:1
<b>CHASSIS / SUSPENSION</b> .....	H.O.S.S. System
<b>F:</b> .....	indep twin alloy A-arms & coil-over springs; (avail Bilstein position sensitive dampers);
<b>R:</b> .....	solid five-link rear axle w coil-over springs; (avail Bilstein position sensitive dampers);
<b>WHEELS / TIRES</b> .....	16", 17", 18" by model / tires vary

es from our social media posts), but if Bronco follows suit to the rest of the industry and marketplace, which it almost surely will, the 4-Door will top it in sales.

Other than their doors, length, turning cir-

## BRONCO SPORT (prelim)

ENGINES:

<b>STANDARD</b> .....	1.5L EcoBoost turbo 3-cyl
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	(prelim) 181 hp / 190 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	8-spd automatic
<b>OPTIONAL</b> .....	2.0L EcoBoost turbo-4cyl
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	245 hp / 275 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	8-spd SelectShift auto w oil cooler & manual mode w paddle shifters
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	4x4
<b>FINAL RATIO</b> .....	3.81
<b>CRAWL RATIO</b> .....	18:1
<b>CHASSIS / SUSPENSION</b> .....	H.O.S.S. System
<b>F:</b> .....	indep MacPherson strut-type w coils, stblzr bar, twin-tube hydraulic gas-pressurized shocks;
<b>R:</b> .....	indep dbl lateral link semi-trailing arms w coils, stblzr bar & monotube hydraulic gas-pressurized shocks; isolated steel subframe w cast knuckle; (avail w F hydraulic rebound stops; R unique knuckle;
<b>WHEELS / TIRES</b> .....	17", 18" by model / tires vary

cle and a few other attributes that are door-count-dependent, such as breakover angle (see our specification charts above and on the final page), the Bronco 2-Door and 4-Door are fundamentally the same. Some may find other decision points critical, such as a

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2021 Ford Bronco 2-Door

slightly higher tow capacity on the 4-Door. Both have two rows of seating, but the 4-Door seats five, versus four for the 2-Door, negligible for many buyers, critical for others.

To bring the new Bronco from concept to your driveway, both the 2-Door and 4-Door (marketed under a Built Wild™ theme) have undergone the same extreme durability testing. Both offer your choice of the same two engines—a smaller 2.3L EcoBoost (which offers a manual transmission as well as a 10-speed automatic) or a 2.7L EcoBoost (10-speed automatic only). And yes, that manual transmission availability on the 2-Door will be the one and only critical decision point for many buyers.

Trim levels follow the same pattern for both the 2-Door and 4-Door, with the same basic brawn but varying wheel and tire sizes (which can affect your tough-duty uses, but which can potentially be interchanged variously, anyway).

Put it all together, and the choice between 2-Door and 4-Door for most buyers will indeed come down to counting those doors (and maybe seats).

Features include quick-release stowable roof panels and doors on select versions. One widely

noted bragging point is that the engineers worked hard to keep the side mirrors on the body when doors are removed, which will definitely turn the heads of some competitive buyers.

Tech is plentiful of course, from G.O.A.T. Modes (a subtle way of planting Greatest Of All Time in your mind, but said to stand for Go Over Any Type of Terrain) including the basics plus Slippery and Sand, Baja, Mud/Ruts and Rock Crawl—seven in all—along with specifically Bronco-flavored features including digital trail mapping for planning, recording and sharing your routes and details via an all-in-one app.

For suspension, transfer case and other fundamental specs, see sidebars. (Here you'll find another notable acronym—the H.O.S.S. System, standing for High-Performance Off-Road Stability Suspension.)

In addition to seven trim levels (including a limited-run max-off-road First Edition) and five packages (including sure-to-be-popular Sasquatch), the new Bronco launches with more than 200 factory-backed aftermarket accessories available for added capability, personalization and style.

### Ford Bronco Sport

Bronco Sport's shared name and styling bring a persona to the more conventional SUV market that comes with bragging points that can take you beyond typical bland soccer duty. Had this vehicle arrived in the years following the launch of the core Bronco, die-hard off-roading fans might have felt it detracted from the brand. Arriving together lets Bronco Sport fulfill its role without debate—broadening the Bronco brand into a family.

Those bragging points include above-average off-roading for the more mainstream segment, in line with its Bronco badge—substantial ground clearance, approach and departure angles, significant crawl ratio, decent water fording, undercarriage obstacle protection, trail technologies, and an advanced 4x4 system with twin-clutch rear-drive unit and differential lock.

Bronco Sport's safari-style roof delivers class-leading headroom and a cargo area tall enough for two mountain bikes. More than 100 factory-backed and aftermarket accessories can tackle your outdoor gear: kayaks, surfboards, skis and camping equipment.

The new Ford Bronco lineup has a spirit and build to steer a large chunk of SUV mindset away from station-wagon-equivalents and back to trucks for the first time in many years, opening the category up to a whole range of buyers who may have ignored or avoided it.

It's unusual for a brand to be gone this long—a quarter century, long enough that even the newest of prior-generation Broncos now qualify for antique or collector plates in most states—and yet it clearly was never forgotten. ■

### MODELS AND TRIMS

#### 2021 Ford Bronco 2-Door & 4-Door Trims

<b>Base</b>	2-DOOR	.....Starts at \$29,995
	4-DOOR	.....Starts at \$34,695
<b>Big Bend</b>	.....Upgrades to off-roading, comfort, tech	
<b>Black Diamond</b>	.....HD off-road & washout interior	
<b>Outer Banks</b>	.....Leather, tech & style upgrades	
<b>Wildtrak</b>	.....Desert runner w Sasquatch pkg, Baja mode	
<b>Badlands</b>	.....Maximum off-road model	
<b>First Edition</b>	.....Badlands-based limited run of 3500x	
<b>+ Packages: Standard, Mid, High, Lux, Sasquatch</b>		

#### 2021 Ford Bronco Sport Trims

<b>Base</b>	.....Starts at \$28,155
<b>Big Bend</b>	.....Adventure-ready upgrade
<b>Outer Banks</b>	.....Leather, tech & style upgrades
<b>Badlands</b>	.....Maximum off-road model
<b>First Edition</b>	.....Badlands-based limited run of 2000x

### BRONCO 2-DOOR & 4-DOOR (prelim)

<b>LENGTH / WHEELBASE</b>	
2-DOOR	.....173.7 / 100.4 in
4-DOOR	.....189.4 / 116.1 in
<b>HEIGHT / WIDTH</b>	
2-DOOR	.....71.9-75.2 / 75.9-79.3 in
4-DOOR	.....72.9-75.3 / 75.9-79.3 in
<b>TRACK</b> .....(varies by model, same F/R) 65.0-66.9 in	
<b>GROUND CLEARANCE</b>	
2-DOOR	.....base 8.4 / 35" tires 11.6 in
4-DOOR	.....base 8.3 / 35" tires 11.5 in
<b>APPR / BRKVR / DEPART</b>	
2-DOOR	.....base 35.5 / 21.1 / 29.8° w 35" tires 43.2 / 29.0 / 37.2°
4-DOOR	.....base 35.5 / 20.0 / 29.7° w 35" tires 43.2 / 26.3 / 37.0°
<b>MAX WATER FORDING</b> (based on Sasquatch pkg).....33.5 in	
<b>RAMP TRAVEL INDEX</b> (Badlands only)	
2-DOOR	.....560 / w 35" 700
4-DOOR	.....500 / w 35" 620
<b>PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY</b>	
2-DOOR	.....1170 / 3500 lb
4-DOOR	.....1370 / 3500 lb

### BRONCO SPORT (prelim)

<b>LENGTH / WHEELBASE</b> .....172.7 / 105.1 in	
<b>HEIGHT / WIDTH</b> .....**70.2 / (incl mirrors) 82.2 in	
<b>TRACK</b> .....(F/R) 63.4 / 62.8 in	
<b>GROUND CLEARANCE**</b> .....7.8-8.8 in	
<b>APPR / BRKVR / DEPART**</b> .....21.7 / 18.2 / 30.4°	
<b>MAX WATER FORDING**</b> .....17.7 in	
**Bronco Sport Badlands and First Edition: +1.2" height, +1" ground clearance, 30.4/20.4/33.1 appr/brkvr/depart, 23.6" max water ford	
<b>MAX WHEEL SUSP TRAVEL</b> .....(F/R) 7.4 / 8.1 in	
<b>PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY</b> .....1000 lb / 2000-2200 lb	

**BRONCO OFF-ROADEO:** The Bronco team will be supporting owners' and enthusiasts' off-road skill goals with new Off-Roadeo outdoor adventure playgrounds—created for all skill levels and designed to build confidence and inspire Bronco owners to get out in the wild for years to come. Bronco Off-Roadeos start opening next year, with four US locations already in development.

**BRONCO NATION:** Bronco owners and fans, off-roaders and general outdoor enthusiasts should also check out Bronco Nation, a passionate, knowledgeable, adventure-driven independent off-road community, online at thebronconation.com.

2021 Ford Bronco 4-Door

2021 Ford Bronco Sport

