

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 5  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2024



Ford Ranger Raptor

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS



# Powerful identity

BY JOE SAGE

There's no question "right-sized" means different things to different buyers. And there's little question midsize has become right-sized for more pickup buyers than ever.

There's also no question what Raptor means to an off-roader. Meet the highly anticipated Ford Ranger Raptor, midsize cousin to their benchmark full-size dune-running F-Series Raptor, the Ranger bearing a Ford Performance-tuned 405-hp, 430 lb-ft 3.0-liter twin-turbo intercooled EcoBoost V6. Long suspension travel engineering includes a Watts

link rear suspension and class-exclusive 2.5-inch FOX Live Valve Internal Bypass shocks, coil-overs up front and piggyback reservoirs in the rear, to reduce heat buildup for all-day performance.

From some angles, Ranger Raptor seems almost as big as a full-size truck. Behind the wheel, inevitably in the company of various F-150s, Ranger's hood stands just about as high as the bigger trucks, and you sit just about as high as their drivers—stature, ride height and visibility rate high.

The F-150 Raptor currently starts at \$78,440, with 450 hp and estimated fuel mileage of 14 mpg city, 18 highway. Raptor R starts at \$111,550, with a 720-hp 5.2-liter supercharged, intercooled V8 (10 mpg city, 15 highway). Both have massive suspension, brake and structural upgrades, with 12 or

13.1-inch ground clearance.

Ranger Raptor specs and pricing in our sidebar show its comparatives—considerably less expensive at base level, approaching the bigger Raptor's base power while weighing over 500 pounds less. This amounts to a fistful of advantages with the Ranger Raptor for many buyers—and its simpler build variables may also be welcome.

We had a full range of drive time—routine errands in town, open mountain highways, gravel roads and full-blown off-road terrain.

Overall, we enjoyed everything about it. On the freeway, we had power and precision, plus its handy size, for lane-grabbing opportunities. Its power can easily exceed expectations. (We did encounter relatively gentle lane-keeping resistance,

which can be toned down.)

In a parking lot, its height and firmness could generate some rocking motions, a tradeoff for what it can do in the dirt. Glamis, our best world class dune-running, exceeds the mileage allowed during our week, but we did take it to a fine off-highway vehicle course in the lower mountains. This did not include rock-crawling or dune-running, but it did include rutted gravel roads at cruising speed and dirt trails and crawls through the roughest conditions, as well as climbs both slow and fast, and tight turnarounds. Traction and control are tops, out of the box—we popped it into 4H on the fly just for general reassurance at first, but surely of great value on the rougher terrain.

One detail we made several notes on was the shifter, an electronic affair we summed up as not always being responsive to our wants and needs. Long term familiarity will likely improve this.

Even as long-time full-size truck buyers, this Ranger catches our attention. It has just a 5-foot bed, but most of the bigger trucks are just 5.5 or 6 feet (and truth be told, we don't haul daily loads of 8-foot lumber these days, though we do carry a lot of boxes, and fewer trips are always preferable). One note about its size—you'll develop a healthy share of that full-size feeling, but as you spring into the driver's seat, if you're tall, you may discover the top of the door frame the hard way.

The most inescapable part of the Ranger Raptor is of course its identity. When shopping for a new Ford pickup, you're almost certain to have your own solid feel for Ranger versus F-Series before you even start. And whichever you choose, Raptor can be one of the sub-decisions you make based on fun, funding and fundamental purposes. But, being honest with yourself about your real purposes, you owe it to yourself to fully compare. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Michigan Assembly Plant, Wayne, Michigan
ENGINE	3.0L EcoBoost V6 twin-turbo, intercooled, DOHC 24v, port fuel & dir inj, twin indep var camshaft timing, compacted graphite iron block, alum heads
HP/TORQUE	405 hp / 430 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION	10-spd SelectShift auto
DRIVETRAIN	4x4, front locking diff, rear drive w electronic locking diff
TRANSFER CASE	2-spd w 4H, 4L, 4A modes
MAXIMUM CRAWL RATIO	67.88:1
SUSPENSION	F: forged alum dbl A-arm w 2.5-in Fox Live Valve shocks; R: Watts-link w trailing arms and Fox Live Valve shocks
STEERING	elec power asst rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.24 x1.33, 2.0-in twin-piston caliper; R: 12.12 x0.94, 2.12-in single-piston; (all) non-asbestos organic pads
WHEELS	17-in gray-paint, beadlock capable
TIRES	33-inch All-Terrain LT 285/70R17
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	210.9 / 128.7 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	41.0 / 38.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	43.7 / 38.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	10.7 in
APPR / DEP / BRKOVER	33.0 / 26.4 / 24.2°
TURNING CIRCLE	43.3 ft
BED LENGTH	59.6 in
BED WIDTH / AT WHEELHOUSE	62.4 / 48.2 in
MAX PAYLOAD	1411 lb
TOW CAPACITY	5510 lb
WEIGHT	5325 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.91 oct prem / 20.3 gal
MPG	16/18/17 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$55,365
EQUIPMENT GROUP 800A	
SECURICODE KEYLESS KEY PAD	95
WHEELS: 17-in gray, beadlock capable	1495
BEDLINER: Toughbed spray-in	495
DESTINATION CHARGE	1595
TOTAL	\$59,045

Prices have increased; see below.

## 2024 FORD RANGER LINEUP

	4X2	4X4
XL	\$32,720	\$36,365
XLT	36,160	39,645
Lariat	43,680	47,165
Raptor		55,620

## NEW POWER UPGRADE!

DEARBORN, MICHIGAN, AUGUST 29, 2024—Ford Performance Parts engineers add significant low-end torque and horsepower to the 3.0-liter EcoBoost engine in Ranger Raptor and Bronco Raptor—improved throttle response and an optimized shift schedule for a more powerful driving experience, via new software calibration. **Ranger Raptor Calibration** (for 2024) brings torque from 430 to 536 lb-ft, horsepower from 405 to 455. **Bronco Raptor Calibration** (for 2022-24) takes torque from 440 to 536 lb-ft, horsepower from 418 to 455. The calibration can be purchased online for \$825, to be installed at a local dealer. These calibrations are covered by the Ford Performance parts warranty. ■

