

Bigger Than Life

Toyota's Full-Size SUV Embraces Excess With Confidence

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

The first thing I noticed after a week with the 2026 Toyota Sequoia was how much space it occupied in my head even when I was not driving it.

This isn't an SUV that fades into the background of daily life. It announces itself every time you fire it up, every time you thread it through a parking lot, and every time you climb down from the driver's seat feeling like you just captained something industrial.

More than any vehicle I've driven recently, this one actually earns its name. Sequoia feels massive in a way that borders on cartoonish.

It is tall, wide, heavy and unapologetically brawny. There are moments when it feels more like a domestic truck than some domestic trucks do, which shouldn't come as a surprise for a Toyota built in San Antonio. This thing has presence, and lots of it.

On the road, the hybrid powertrain is the star of the show. Toyota's twin-turbo V6 paired with the electric assist delivers effortless shove at any speed. Merging is a non-event, and passing requires little thought.

Towing feels like exactly what this SUV was built to do. With a rating up to 9,520 pounds, the Sequoia backs



The 2026 Sequoia's towering stance and squared-off styling emphasize its full-size proportions.

up its look with real capability. The optional power tow mirrors and load-leveling air suspension on this tester made it feel ready for serious work, not just suburban posturing.

The way the powertrain delivers that muscle is what impressed me most. It is smooth, quiet and always on call. There is no drama, just a steady wave of torque that makes the Sequoia feel surprisingly quick for something this big.

Still, the fuel economy numbers tell the truth. This is a hybrid that prioritizes

power over thrift, and if you are expecting miracle mileage, you will be disappointed. I also cannot help but wonder how these turbo engines will age compared to the old naturally aspirated V8s Toyota used to build its reputation on. Time will tell, but the concern is real.

Ride quality is pure body-on-frame SUV. On smooth highways it settles down nicely, but over broken pavement it can jiggle and fidget.

Inside, the Capstone trim makes a strong case

for itself. The materials feel richer than before, and the cabin finally leans into luxury rather than just size. The big screens are easy to use, and Toyota's safety systems fade into the background the way good ones should.

Power-folding third-row seats being standard is a welcome update for 2026, even if the packaging still limits cargo space.

That packaging remains the Sequoia's biggest compromise. Despite its exterior bulk, the third row and cargo area are tighter

than rivals. The hybrid battery raises the load floor, making it harder to haul tall items.

After a week, though, I kept coming back to how much I liked living with it.

The Sequoia feels honest about what it is. It is big, bold, powerful and slightly excessive, and it does not apologize for any of that.

If I were shopping for a full-size SUV today, this would be my pick, flaws and all. The Sequoia leans into its identity, and that confidence goes a long way.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2026 Toyota Sequoia 4WD Capstone Hybrid (\$84,435). Options: Power tow mirrors (\$290), load leveling air suspension (\$1,045), premium paint (\$475), tow tech package (\$850), roof cross bars (\$365), ball mount (\$87), wheel locks (\$105). Price as tested (including \$2,095 destination charge): \$89,747

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 122 in.
Length: 208.1 in.
Width: 79.6 in.
Height: 74.5 in.
Power: Twin-turbo 3.4-liter V6 (437 hp, 583 lbs. ft.)
Transmission: 10-speed automatic
MPG: 19 city, 22 highway

RATINGS

Style: 9
Performance: 10
Price: 4
Handling: 5
Ride: 9
Comfort: 9
Quality: 9
Overall: 8

WHY BUY IT?

The latest Sequoia is for buyers who want maximum power, serious towing capability and a commanding presence without sacrificing modern tech and comfort.

CARGAZING



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The Capstone cabin blends premium materials with rugged truck-based design.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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