

Spaceship With a Bed

Tundra TRD Pro Sounds Strange, Feels Thoroughly American

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

Toyota's biggest pickup sounds like a spaceship.

Push the throttle in the 2026 Tundra TRD Pro and the twin turbos announce themselves with an electronic-sounding whirr. It's silly in a truck this serious, but I loved it.

The Tundra feels enormous, solid and thoroughly American, and the powertrain whistles like it's preparing for liftoff.

Toyota's i-FORCE MAX system pairs a twin-turbocharged 3.4-liter V6 with an electric motor to make 437 horsepower and 583 pound-feet of torque. The power arrives quickly through a 10-speed automatic, making this 6,000-pound truck feel more eager than its size suggests.

My tester's \$2,999 TRD Performance Package added dual air intake boxes and a TRD cat-back exhaust. It was not a V8, but it didn't lack character.

The hybrid label does not mean economy-car mileage. With ratings of 18 mpg city and 20 highway, this system is tuned for muscle more than thrift.

I still miss the old V8.

Toyota's 5.7-liter engine was thirsty and simple, but it became legendary for durability. This twin-turbo hybrid is stronger, quicker and more interesting, yet it is still earning the long-term



The 2026 Toyota Tundra combines a towering grille, broad shoulders and squared-off bodywork to create a full-size pickup with unmistakable road presence.

trust the V8 already owned. A weeklong test can't settle that question.

Anyone who still thinks of Japanese pickups as smaller, gentler alternatives to Detroit trucks needs to see this one in a rearview mirror. The TRD Pro is nearly 19.5 feet long and more than 81 inches wide. Its huge grille, tall hood and wide stance make it imposing because it genuinely is.

It's assembled in San Antonio, built on a boxed-steel frame and rated to tow 11,175 pounds in TRD Pro form. Toyota has done its

homework.

The off-road hardware is serious, too. The TRD Pro gets a 1.1-inch front lift, FOX internal-bypass shocks, 33-inch all-terrain tires, protective underbody armor and a locking rear differential.

That makes climbing into the cab a minor athletic event, especially without power running boards. Once aboard, though, the Tundra is easier to live with than the hardware suggests. The ride is firm enough to remind you what it is, but it's not punishing around town.

Practicality is everywhere.

The CrewMax cabin has abundant passenger room and storage. The composite bed is designed to resist dents and rust, and the 14-inch touchscreen is large without eliminating useful physical controls.

Then there's the paint.

Toyota calls the bright blue color Wave Maker. I called it Obnoxious Highlighter. It attracted attention everywhere, which is either a benefit or a warning depending on your personality.

I wouldn't order it for my own truck, but I respect Toyota for continuing to give

the TRD Pro a bold color palette. A special truck should be allowed to look special.

The Tundra TRD Pro works because it never feels like Toyota is timidly copying the established American brands. It is huge, heavy, practical, capable and a little excessive on its own terms.

I still want to see how the new powertrain ages. For now, though, this Texas-built Toyota feels like one of the most American trucks on the road, with a spaceship soundtrack thrown in for fun.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2026 Toyota Tundra TRD Pro CrewMax 4x4 (\$72,565). Options: Wave Maker paint (\$695), bed mat (\$224), ball mount (\$89), mini tie-downs (\$45), spare tire lock (\$75), wheel locks (\$105), TRD Performance Package (\$2,999), rock rails (\$625). Price as tested (including \$2,095 destination charge): \$79,517

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 145.7 in.
Length: 233.6 in.
Width: 81.6 in.
Height: 78.0 in.
Engine: 3.4-liter twin-turbocharged hybrid V6 (437 hp, 583 lb.-ft.)
Transmission: 10-speed automatic
MPG: 18 city, 20 highway

RATINGS

Style: 9
Performance: 9
Price: 7
Handling: 7
Ride: 7
Comfort: 7
Quality: 8
Overall: 8

WHY BUY IT?

The Tundra TRD Pro is for buyers who want serious trail hardware, enormous road presence and everyday practicality in a Texas-built truck with a powertrain full of personality.



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Inside, the Tundra uses a broad dashboard, practical storage and generous passenger room to make its enormous cabin feel useful rather than merely imposing.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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