

The Purist's Dream: 2019 Toyota 86 Blends Sports Car Fundamentals with 21st Century Performance, Comfort and Tech

July 23, 2018



In a competitive field overflowing with less-than-svelte sports cars, therein shines Toyota 86, a stylish 2+2 rear-wheel drive coupe adhering to the fundamentals of automotive athleticism: optimal power-to-weight stats, a cunning design, superb balance and feel. In 2019, 86 sheds none of its distinguished moxie, and gains an even sharper edge through its newest grade: the limited production, 86 TRD Special Edition.

Two existing grades – 86 and 86 GT – complete the 86 range, and offer a wide variety of standard amenities, including the choice of a six-speed automatic or manual transmission.

Pure Fun: TRD Special Edition

If *USDA Certified Organic* had a sportscar category, the 2019 86 TRD Special Edition would be its benchmark. It's the "purest of the pure" 86 ever offered in North America, which means it's the best-equipped version for tracing a favorite canyon road, or for clipping circuits' challenging apexes, time and time again. Essential to this cunning performance are its all-new SACHS dampers, 12.8-/12.4-in. front/rear Brembo brakes, and exclusive

18 x 7.5-in. alloy wheels wrapped in sticky Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tires (sized 215/40R18 85Y all around).

The SACHS dampers further sharpen the 86's steering response and refine vehicle stability. Extra-large four-piston front, two-piston rear Brembo brakes composedly cull speed at a moment's notice, and enrich the 86's well-balanced cornering prowess. Its Michelin Pilot Sport 4 summer tires turn up the grip factor while aiding steering reactivity and boosting tactility communicated through its small-diameter steering wheel.

Exclusively painted in Raven, and accented by a classic TRD tricolor graphic and TRD body kit (which include front bumper, side sills, rear bumper/diffuser, and spoiler), the TRD Special Edition looks the business. 86 TRD Special Edition also comes equipped with a standard TRD exhaust having brushed stainless steel tips.

Opening the doors reveals a new red and black-trimmed telescoping steering wheel with red contrast stitching; red and black sport bucket seats with side bolsters; Granlux suede-like covering atop the instrument cluster; "TRD" logo embroidered on passenger side instrument panel; red contrast stitching throughout; and red seatbelts.

Production will be limited to only 1,418 units. 86 TRD Special Edition models are only available with a six-speed manual transmission.

The Winning Formula

A proper sports car possesses a simple packaging profile. 86 offers all the essential standard exterior amenities: LED projector-beam headlights; color-keyed power mirrors; chrome-tipped dual exhaust; front fender-mounted vortex generators; and 17-in. twisted spoke alloy wheels. 86 GT adds more to the mix: LED fog lamps; an aerodynamic floor undercover; color-matched heated mirrors; and a matte-black rear wing with color-keyed end plates.

Inside 86 and 86 GT, passengers are greeted by sport bucket front seats, a steering wheel with integrated audio controls (plus, Multi-Information Display controls in 86 GT). Other amenities include dual-zone automatic climate control (on 86 GT); Granlux suede-like rear armrest cover; anti-theft system; and cruise control. Smart Key System on driver and passenger doors with Push Button Start, remote keyless entry system with lock, two-stage unlock, panic, and trunk release feature is standard on 86 GT and TRD Special Edition.

A highlight for performance purists is 86 GT and TRD Special Edition's 4.2-in. TFT Multi-Information Display (MID) with vehicle data screens, which features essential data like G-force meter and stopwatch, horsepower and torque curves, engine coolant and oil temperatures, and fuel consumption. An added touch: an "86" logo appears on the MID upon vehicle start-up.

Iconic Roots

You can't do much better for lineage than the legendary Toyota 2000 GT. 86 took design inspiration from the iconic sports car, which shows in its low roof height, flowing front fenders, and sleek profile. The rest is all 21st century with LED front headlamps, daylight running lights, turn signals, and tail lamps.

Also thoroughly modern is 86's athleticism. Its 2.0-liter boxer four-cylinder engine, fed by Toyota's D-4S Dual Injection System, delivers a healthy dose of 205 hp and 156 lb.-ft. of torque with the six-speed manual transmission (200 hp and 151 lb.-ft. of torque with the six-speed automatic).

It's no mistake that its engine's "square" dimensions (equal bore and stroke) are 86 mm. For ardent Toyota fans, though, '86' is homage to the AE86, the global name for the Toyota Corolla GT-S that sold in the U.S. in the

mid-1980s. It was an affordable, agile, rear-drive sports coupe with a high-revving 1.6-liter engine that earned a reputation for being a blast to drive. In Japan, it was known as “*hachi-roku*,” meaning 8-6. Today, many enthusiasts build them into drift machines. On the new model, ‘86’ logos have been incorporated into a badge on the front fender, as well as inside the headlamps.

Purist Sports Car Construction

86’s chassis is a specially developed rear-drive sports car platform using a sport-tuned independent MacPherson strut front suspension with strut tower bars and reinforced mounting brackets, plus, a sport-tuned independent multi-link rear suspension with reinforcement bracing. The electric power-assist steering is quick, with just 2.48 turns lock-to-lock, and with a tight 36.1-ft. turning circle. It’s also highly articulate, providing ideal road feel through the small-diameter, leather-wrapped wheel.

The 17 x 7-in. alloy wheels wear 215/45R17 summer performance or all-season tires. For track driving and autocross competition, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) can be put in Track mode or shut off completely. On both manual and automatic 86 models, Hill Start Assist Control (HAC) can help to prevent the car from rolling back on steep hills from a stop.

Boxer Bite: The Total Performance Picture

The 2.0-liter horizontally-opposed aluminum Boxer engine delivers 205 hp at 7,000 rpm and 156 lb.-ft. of peak torque at 6,400 rpm. (Automatic transmission version: 200 hp at 7,000 rpm and 151 lb.-ft. at 6,400 rpm.) The 86 mm x 86 mm bore and stroke dimensions make the engine a high revver, yet dual variable valve timing helps give it a broad torque curve. So, the 86 feels highly responsive in everyday driving.

Among the engine’s high-performance features used to extract just over 100 horsepower per liter of displacement is the Toyota-innovated D-4S Dual Injection system that combines direct-injection and port-injection technologies. The direct-injection system provides a cooling effect in the cylinders, which allows the engine to use a very high 12.5:1 compression ratio for maximum power. The port fuel injectors, meanwhile, come into play during light- and medium-load conditions to maximize combustion efficiency.

Without question, 86 is a thoroughly entertaining, well-balanced machine when the road gets curvy. But it also is an economical commuter when traffic builds, or when a nonchalant cruise is on the menu. The 86 range achieves an EPA-estimated 24 mpg city and 32 mpg highway when equipped with a six-speed automatic transmission and 21 mpg city and 28 mpg highway with the six-speed manual.

86’s extraordinary low weight benefits fuel economy and agility. At just under 2,800 lbs. (with six-speed manual transmission), 86 is among the lightest sports cars on the market. An ultra-low center of gravity and low 0.29 coefficient of drag (Cd) (0.27 Cd on 86 GT) complete the focus on pure performance and impressive fuel economy.

Six Speeds, Two Ways

86’s standard six-speed manual transmission is a purist’s dream. Its short-throw shifter and easy-effort clutch make shifting a joy. For added driver feel and overall durability, the transmission utilizes a triple-cone mesh synchromesh on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd gears, a ball-bearing-mounted shift linkage, and reverse gear lock-out protection.

The six-speed Electronically Controlled automatic with intelligence (ECT-i) is a compelling choice, too, with super-fast shifts, steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters, Sport Mode, and Dynamic Rev Management

technology, which “blips” the throttle on downshifts. A standard Torsen limited-slip differential helps maximize traction between the rear wheels while cornering.

Sports Car Cabin – With Plenty of Comfort

The purist sports car approach carries into the cabin, but with modern comforts that denote 86 as an excellent everyday vehicle. Intuitive controls help drivers keep their focus on driving. A large center-mounted tachometer, the focal point of the easy-to-read gauge panel, integrates a digital speedometer and features a programmable rev indicator. It’s flanked on the left by an analog speedometer, while fuel level and temperature gauges are positioned to the right of the tachometer.

On 86 GT, an ‘86’ logo is seen on the Granlux material covering the instrument panel surround. The same material adds a soft feel to the door trim. As 86 is a highly useful 2+2 coupe, its rear one-piece seatback folds to expand trunk space.

Big Audio Punch

Toyota 86 comes standard with Display Audio featuring a 7-in. touchscreen display. The eight-speaker Pioneer audio system includes Bluetooth for hands-free phone capability and music streaming, HD Radio, iPod connectivity, and AUX/USB inputs. It’s easy to reference song titles, album names, and artist names right on the head unit.

For on-the-go connectivity and on-board navigation, the optional 86 Display Audio with Navigation system features push-to-talk voice navigation and geo-located points of interest. Both audio systems come standard with Aha. Available on iTunes and Google Play, Aha provides access to 100,000 free audio stations. Drivers also can find local restaurants, coffee, hotels, and weather updates through location-based services like Yelp and TripAdvisor, along with popular social media applications, sports, news, and entertainment. A phonebook holds up to 2,500 contacts with four numbers each.

STAR Safety System

The 2019 Toyota 86 comes standard with the STAR Safety System which features an Anti-lock Brake System (ABS), Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD), Traction Control (TRAC), Brake Assist (BA), Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), and Smart Stop Technology (SST).

The supplemental restraint system includes driver and front passenger dual-stage advanced airbags, driver and front passenger outboard seat-mounted side airbags, and front and rear side curtain airbags. The rear seats can accommodate front-facing child seats with its standard Lower Anchors and Tethers for CHildren (LATCH) system.

Limited Warranty

Toyota’s 36-month/36,000 mile basic new-vehicle warranty applies to all components other than normal wear and maintenance items. Additional 60-month warranties cover the powertrain for 60,000 miles and corrosion with no mileage limitation.

Standard ToyotaCare is a complimentary plan covering normal factory-scheduled maintenance and 24-hour roadside assistance for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first.