

The Toyota Prius G Proves Hybrids Can Handle

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TORRANCE, Calif., (November 1, 2016)—Performance may not be the first word you associate with the Toyota Prius . . . until now. The Toyota Prius Extreme, revealed at Toyota’s **2016 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show** booth, is built to do exactly that . . . perform.

In the nearly two decades since the first generation of the Prius made its debut in the United States, the world's top-selling hybrid car has established a long-standing reputation for fuel efficiency and reliability, setting the standard for hybrid excellence.

Toyota brought in builder Gordon Ting of Beyond Marketing to challenge the notion that a hybrid vehicle can't also be a performance car. Taking inspiration from the Japanese Prius GT300, Ting built the Prius Extreme to hold its own on the racetrack.

During testing at Willow Springs International Raceway in Southern California, the small but mighty Prius G pulled 0.99 g on the skid pad, placing the Prius G in the company of performance sport cars that cost tens of thousands of dollars more.

With more fine-tuning, the team is absolutely confident the build will pull the full 1 g in the next round of tests. "This extreme build highlights something we are baking in our production models. We know the Prius can do much more than simply serve as a highly regarded and reliable everyday hybrid car," said Claudia A. Rodriguez, Prius Product and Marketing Manager at Toyota Motor Sales. "Racetracks have historically been home to sports, muscle and performance cars. Hybrid cars would have been laughed off the track, until the Prius G. In fact, the Prius G actually out-handled the BMW 528i sedan in independent testing. The Prius G is a game changer in so many ways, not only for Prius but for the hybrid vehicle category as a whole."

While this may sound like an odd pursuit, the fourth-generation 2017 Prius has made huge strides in terms of torsional rigidity, a lower coefficient of gravity and more agile handling. "It's an experiment in some ways," Ting explains. Performance aftermarket parts for the Prius are few and far between, so the team's biggest challenge has been developing a race-inspired Prius by making modifications to aftermarket parts meant for traditional performance vehicles. "The Prius G is unexpected, and that thrills me," expressed Ting. "I like building out the reputation of the car and showing that it can do a lot more with minimal changes."

The Prius G—along with the 2000 Prius, the 2017 stock representative and numerous other Toyota specialty vehicles—can be found in the Toyota display booth (#24800) in Central Hall and on the Patio Annex of the Las Vegas Convention Center, November 1-4, 2016.