

'The Year of More' for the 2017 Highlander with More Power, More Safety, and More Model Choices

September 27, 2016

Image not found or type unknown



More power *and* fuel economy? That's the name of the game for the 2017 Highlander thanks to its new 3.5-liter V6 D-4S Injection engine and Direct Shift – 8AT 8-speed automatic transmission. Taking full advantage of this revised powertrain is a new-for-2017 SE grade that brings a premium, sporty personality to the lineup. Not to be outshined by its gas-sipping siblings, the Highlander Hybrid adds two additional entry-level grades – LE and XLE – to its popular range. All Highlander models receive revised front and rear styling and enhanced interior convenience and comfort. Long story short, it's great to be a Highlander buyer for 2017.

The Highlander is among numerous Toyotas having the innovative and highly advanced Toyota Safety Sense™ P driver-assist technology as standard. Using millimeter-wave radar and a monocular camera sensor to detect a preceding pedestrian, a preceding vehicle, and visible lane markers in the surrounding area, TSS-P can help the driver identify obstacles and automatically apply braking if necessary to help mitigate or avoid collisions in certain conditions. TSS-P includes the Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection function; Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist function; Dynamic Radar Cruise Control and Automatic High Beams.

In the spring of 2016, Toyota committed to making automatic emergency braking standard on nearly all models by the end of 2017 (2018 Model Year). This decision will place Toyota four years ahead of the model-year 2022 industry target announced by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) – before any other full-line automaker.

Performance Infusion

The Highlander V6 has steadily made strides in performance over its lifespan, but for 2017, the powertrain upgrade is perhaps the most dramatic. The new 3.5-liter D-4S Injection V6 pushes output to 295 horsepower and 263 lb.-ft. of torque, which represent increases of 25 hp and 15 lb.-ft., respectively, over the 2016 Highlander V6. The new V6 also becomes the base engine for the Highlander Hybrid and features Dual VVT-i.

Making best use of the engine's upgraded performance and efficiency, the V6 Highlander now employs a new Direct Shift – 8AT 8-speed automatic transmission. The eight ratios, compared to six in the 2016 V6 model, benefit the Highlander's acceleration and passing abilities. Both the engine and transmission incorporate new advances in friction reduction, while the transmission delivers a more direct driving feel and higher level of efficiency by expanding the torque converter lock-up range. Fuel economy for all-wheel drive models improves to an EPA-estimated 20 mpg city/27 mpg highway, versus 18/24 for the 2016 model.

Highlander V6 models (excluding LE) get another new feature: Stop and Start Engine System (S&S). This new system allows the engine to shut off when the vehicle comes to a complete stop, and then restarts when the driver's foot lifts from the brake pedal. S&S is designed to reduce emissions, help reduce fuel consumption, and provide a quieter in-cabin experience for passengers when the vehicle is at a complete stop.

The LE front-wheel drive model's standard 185-horsepower, 184 pound-feet of torque 2.7-liter four-cylinder engine uses Variable-Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i) to produce a thick torque curve. It's teamed with a six-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission. The combination yields an EPA-estimated fuel economy rating of 20 mpg city/24 mpg highway.

All Highlander V6 models come standard with a towing package that allows for a maximum towing capacity of up to 5,000 pounds. The package includes a heavy-duty radiator with engine oil cooler, 200-watt fan coupling, supplemental transmission oil cooler and 150-amp alternator.

The View from Above – and Behind, and All Around

The Highlander's sleek and strong design ensures ample visibility for the driver – a trait that is augmented on all models with a standard back-up camera. On the XLE grade and above, the Highlander receives a standard Blind Spot Monitor with Rear Cross Traffic Alert (BSM w/RCTA).

Taking visibility and safety to new heights, the 2017 Highlander Limited Platinum grades arrive with a standard-issue Bird's Eye View Camera with Perimeter Scan.

This Toyota technology employs four cameras that are mounted on the front, the side mirrors and rear of the vehicle to project a panoramic view of the vehicle's surroundings on the central multimedia monitor. The system offers drivers assistance when parallel parking, and when pulling in and out of parking spaces. The Bird's Eye View Camera system also features a Toyota-first function called Perimeter Scan, which provides a live rotating 360-degree view around the vehicle, helping the driver to see potential obstacles in certain conditions.

More Consumer Choice

The third-generation Highlander, now entering its fourth year, offers room for up to eight with three-row seating. While the gas V6 model adds the sporty SE grade, the Highlander Hybrid adds two new grades, (LE and XLE), joining the Limited and Platinum models for a total of four. Accompanying the gas model's all-new SE grade are LE, LE Plus, XLE, Limited and Limited Platinum, all available in either FWD or AWD.

A Bigger Touch of Luxury

The 2017 Highlander conveys a more elegant presence in all grades for 2017.

The front grille on LE, LE Plus and XLE grades features a silver-painted finish, while Limited and Platinum grades have a painted chrome finish. The taillights are redesigned for a sleeker look and now feature standard LEDs, and the Limited and Platinum models receive tasteful rear bumper chrome garnishes.

Three new exterior colors look as luxurious as they sound: Celestial Silver Metallic, Toasted Walnut Pearl, and, exclusively on the new SE, Salsa Red Pearl.

Inside, all Highlander add four USB ports for a total of five, making charging personal devices easier (and possibly helping to keep the peace on long family trips).

Limited and Limited Platinum grades, previously offered only in seven-passenger configurations with middle-row captain's chairs, now offer a bench-style middle row seat from other grades for eight-passenger seating. The Limited Platinum also offers a lavish new brown leather interior.

Sporty New SE Grade

Meet the SE, a perfect blend of sportiness, premium looks and feel, and functionality. Its trim-specific dark paint treatment for the front grille, headlamp housings and roof rails, combined with unique 19-inch wheels, give the SE an athletic stance and stunning style. The SE goes beyond sporty looks and rides atop specially tuned front and rear suspension that tightens handling agility.

Inside, passengers will notice unique black leather-trimmed seats having silver stitching and pattern inserts, plus matching dark dash and door accents. The SE comes as a V6-powered model in FWD or AWD, and will have a seating capacity fit for seven passengers.

Family Size Pack

Easy to drive and park, the Highlander packs a lot of room into its 192.5-inch length. That's just a few inches longer than a midsize sedan, yet, the Highlander offers three-row seating and up to 158.7 cu. ft. total cabin volume. A one-step second-row sliding seat function on both driver and passenger sides makes entering the third-row easy. Third-row passengers get a standard recline function.

Should the driver or co-pilot need to convey any special instructions to third-row passengers, such as, "Stop annoying each other," shouting won't be necessary anymore. XLE grades and above come standard with Driver Easy Speak. A microphone located in the overhead console amplifies the driver's voice and broadcasts it, one-

way, through the audio system's rear speakers.

With all seat rows in use, an impressive 13.8 cu. ft. of carrying space behind the third row can be utilized. Fold the 60/40 split fold-flat third-row seatbacks to open the space to 42.3 cu. ft., and then 83.7 cu. ft. with the 60/40 split fold-flat second row also lowered.

A Quiet Place

The Highlander has long been renowned for its quiet interior, and the current version is no exception. The solid body structure, combined with finely tuned MacPherson strut front suspension and double-wishbone style multi-link rear suspension, deliver a capable and smooth ride quality.

The roster of sound-control features includes three hydraulic engine mounts, acoustic-type windshield glass along with a dash silencer and extensive body sealing. Even the available panoramic moonroof was designed to reduce wind noise even when open.

The improved quietness, along with a soft-touch instrument panel and silver-painted, satin, and chrome-plated accents, add to the Highlander's overarching premium feel. High quality materials and extensive standard equipment underscore the renowned Toyota value.

Upholstery choices begin at the LE's premium fabric level which trims both front and second row seats, and progresses into the available SofTex® synthetic trim, then culminates at the available smooth or perforated leather. The LE Plus grade and above feature contrast stitching on all seats, and on the Limited grade, wood-grain pattern trim on the dash and doors add touches of elegance. New for 2017, Limited Platinum vehicles receive a unique wood accent.

One of the cabin's many highlights, the roll-top center console, provides a big, comfortable armrest easily shared by the driver and front passenger. This console's inner storage box is roomy enough to hold a very large handbag. An LCD Multi-Information Display within the gauge cluster puts vital information in the driver's line of sight. New for 2017, the LE and LE Plus grades replace their 3.5-inch black and white screen from 2016 with a 4.2-inch color screen displaying odometer, current/average fuel economy, cruising range, and an ECO driving indicator. Drivers of higher grades will notice a 4.2-inch color LCD MID providing odometer, current/average fuel economy, cruising range, average speed, AWD torque distribution (AWD gas models only), cruise control guide, navigation with turn-by-turn directions, audio status, hands-free incoming call notices, telephone information, Eco driving indicator, and energy monitor (Hybrid models only).

Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive (AWD)

SUV drivers nowadays expect an effective, and seamless, all-wheel drive drivetrain. The Gas V6 Highlander models offer Dynamic Torque Control AWD, a sophisticated driving partner that helps get the vehicle through all sorts of slippery situations.

The system takes input from various sensors (vehicle speed, steering speed and angle, throttle angle and yaw rate) to actively govern torque distribution to the rear wheels via an electromagnetically controlled coupling in the rear differential. Dynamic Torque Control AWD automatically shifts to AWD when the steering wheel is turned and when accelerating to help prevent wheel slippage, or when sensors detect wheel slippage in other situations, and can vary front-to-rear torque distribution from 100:0 to 50:50.

Under normal cruising conditions, the system remains in front-wheel drive to help reduce fuel consumption. An AWD LOCK switch holds the 50:50 torque split for certain low-speed driving situations in challenging conditions up to 25 MPH. The multi-information display conveys torque-distribution info. A sophisticated, high-speed interactive management system coordinates control of the AWD, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and Electric Power Steering systems to help enhance performance, handling and safety.

Highlander Hybrid: Higher Power, Higher Fuel Efficiency

The 2017 Highlander Hybrid is one of eight hybrid models offered by Toyota. Available for 2017 in LE, XLE, Limited and Limited Platinum grades, the Highlander Hybrid impresses with its outstanding power and efficiency.

The Hybrid Synergy Drive system pairs the new Direct-Injection 3.5-liter V6 gasoline engine with a high-torque electric drive motor-generator produces 306 total system horsepower for strong acceleration and passing performance. The Hybrid is the most fuel-efficient Highlander too, with an EPA-estimated 30 mpg city/28 mpg highway/29 mpg combined fuel economy rating.

All Highlander Hybrid models come equipped with Electronic On-Demand All-Wheel-Drive System with intelligence (AWD-i) as standard. Instead of transfer gears and a driveshaft to the rear wheels, this AWD-i system employs a second, independent electric motor to drive the rear wheels when needed to help maintain optimal traction.

Toyota Value in Every Grade

The 2017 Highlander starts with the high-value LE grade and progresses to the LE Plus with added equipment. Next come the XLE with even more amenities, the SE and its athletic presence, followed by the top-of-the-line Limited with added luxuries such as heated and ventilated front seats, available heated second-row outboard or captain's seats and a heated steering wheel (on the Platinum Package).

The LE and LE Plus grades are well-equipped "mono-spec" grades, therefore no option packages are offered. The standard equipment rosters are quite extensive, with the LE featuring:

- 18-inch alloy wheels
- Entune[®] Audio featuring a 6.1-inch touchscreen
- Bluetooth[®] phone and music streaming
- Integrated backup camera
- Seating for eight with second- and third-row 60/40 split fold-flat seats
- Heated side mirrors with turn signal indicators
- Windshield wiper de-icer.
- Tow Package on V6 models

The "Plus" for the LE Plus grade adds:

- Fabric and SofTex[®]-trimmed seats
- Fog lights
- Height-adjustable power rear liftgate with flip-up rear hatch window
- 8-way power driver seat with lumbar support
- Entune[™] Audio Plus with SiriusXM[®] Satellite Radio and HD Radio[™] featuring an 8-inch display monitor
- Three-zone automatic climate control
- Leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob

The XLE adds a wide array of comfort and convenience features, including:

- Leather-trimmed seats
- Heated front seats
- Smart Key System with push button start
- Power tilt-slide moonroof

- Driver Easy Speak
- Second-row integrated sun shades
- Chromtec® roof rails
- 4.2-inch color multi-information display
- Anti-theft system
- Homelink®
- Entune™ Premium Audio with Integrated Navigation and App Suite features

The SE brings premium, sporty attributes to the lineup, including:

- Dark Paint treatment to front grill, headlamp housing, and roof rails
- 19-in. split multi-spoke machined-face alloy wheels with black finish and black center caps
- Black leather-trimmed seats with silver stitching and pattern seat inserts
- Black front tray color with Matching dash/door technical pattern inserts
- Sport tuned front and rear suspension (coil springs and shocks)

In the XLE and SE, the Blu-ray® DVD rear-seat entertainment system is also available.

Crossing into Luxury Territory

Once buckled into the Highlander Limited's comfortable seats, passengers have successfully crossed into luxury territory. In addition to the new painted chrome grille finish, the Limited dons a set of 19-inch Chromtec® alloy wheels. Inside, Blue LED ambient lighting around the dash and doors adds a touch of high-tech elegance, and numerous amenities raise the comfort quotient considerably.

Seating for seven includes second-row captain's chairs, perforated leather-trimmed seats, heated and ventilated front seats, a 4-way power passenger seat, and memory settings for the driver seat and side mirrors. Limited also features updated puddle lamps that now feature a Highlander Projection.

Added safety features include rear parking assist sonar, while entertainment is upgraded with Entune™ Premium JBL® Audio with Integrated Navigation and App Suite. Adding the Platinum Package takes Highlander to the top with Bird's Eye View Camera, a panoramic moonroof, heated steering wheel, heated second-row captain's chairs or outboard chairs in the optional bench seat, rain-sensing windshield wipers, dark chrome finish to the 19" Chromtec® wheels and more.

Superior Safety

All 2017 Highlanders have eight standard airbags and Toyota's Star Safety System™, which includes Enhanced Vehicle Stability Control, Traction Control, Electronic Brake-force Distribution, Brake Assist, Anti-lock Braking System, and Smart Stop Technology®. All Highlanders also come equipped with a standard backup camera and Hill-start Assist Control. AWD Gas models feature standard Downhill Assist Control (DAC).

Toyota Safety That Makes Sense

The standard Toyota Safety Sense™ P (TSS-P) driver assist system bundles cutting edge active safety technologies including Pre-Collision with Pedestrian Detection function (PCS w/PPD) featuring forward collision warning and Automatic Emergency Braking, Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist function (LDA w/SA), Automatic High Beams (AHB), and Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC).

The Pedestrian Detection function of Pre-collision System (PCS) uses a camera and radar to detect a pedestrian ahead of the vehicle in certain conditions. When the system determines there is a possibility of collision, it prompts the driver to brake with an audio and visual alert. If the driver notices the hazard and brakes, the system may provide additional braking force using Brake Assist. If the driver fails to brake in a set time and the system determines that the risk of collision with a pedestrian is extremely high, the system may automatically apply the

brakes, reducing speed in order to help the driver avoid the collision or reducing the impact.

Lane Departure Alert (LDA) with Steering Assist function uses an in-vehicle camera designed to detect visible white and yellow lane markers in front of the vehicle and the vehicle's position on the road. If the system determines that the vehicle is starting to unintentionally deviate from its lane, the system alerts the driver with an audio and visual alert. When the alerts occur, the driver must check the surrounding road situation and carefully operate the steering wheel to move the vehicle back to the center part of their lane.

In addition to the alert function of LDA, TSS-P equipped vehicles with EPS will feature a Steering Assist function. When equipped and enabled, if the system determines that the vehicle is on a path to unintentionally depart from its lane, the system may provide small corrective steering inputs to the steering wheel for a short period of time to help the driver keep the vehicle in its lane.

On highways, Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC) functions similar to conventional "constant speed" cruise control in that it helps vehicles travel at a consistent speed set by the driver, but this system adds a vehicle-to-vehicle distance control mode designed to assist the driver by adjusting vehicle speed (within a set range) to help maintain a pre-set distance to a preceding vehicle when the preceding vehicle is traveling at a lower speed.

Once a vehicle speed is set by the driver, Dynamic Radar Cruise Control uses a front-grill mounted millimeter-wave radar and an in-vehicle camera designed to detect a preceding vehicle and help determine its distance.

If the vehicle ahead is detected traveling at a speed slower than your set speed or within your distance range setting, the system is designed to automatically decelerate the vehicle without having to cancel the cruise control. When a greater reduction in vehicle speed is necessary, the system may apply the brakes and operate the vehicle brake lights. The system will then respond to changes in the speed of the vehicle ahead in order to help maintain the vehicle-to-vehicle distance set by the driver. When there is no longer a preceding vehicle driving slower than the vehicle's set speed, the system accelerates until the set speed is reached and returns to the pre-set speed cruising.

Automatic High Beams (AHB) helps enhance forward visibility during nighttime driving. It uses a camera to detect the headlights of oncoming vehicles and the tail lights of vehicles ahead, and then automatically switches between high beams and low beams so as not to interfere with other drivers.

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. The hybrid-related components, including the HV battery, battery control module, hybrid control module and inverter with converter, are covered for eight years/100,000 miles, whichever comes first.

The Highlander also comes standard with Toyota Care, a complimentary plan covering normal factory-scheduled maintenance and 24-hour roadside assistance for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first.

Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana (TMMI) in Princeton, Ind., which employs over 4,000 American workers, assembles all Highlanders and exports them to 12 countries.