

Toyota Sequoia: A Full-Size SUV for Full-Size Family Adventures

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If the ultimate family vehicle is one that can take the whole family on vacation while towing a boat ... or shuttle most of a Little League team to its game ... or take a new student to college while hauling a dorm room's worth of supplies, then the 2015 Toyota Sequoia is that vehicle.

With seating for up to eight, a 381-hp V8 engine and available full-time four-wheel drive, the Toyota Sequoia is a true full-size, full-capability SUV that also happens to handle everyday driving with aplomb. A four-wheel independent suspension and impressively tight turning circle help make the Sequoia quite comfortable and manageable when making the weekly grocery run or going to dinner with friends.

The Sequoia, which is available in SR5, Limited and Platinum grades, offers the latest Toyota Entune[®] multimedia audio capability, and a factory-installed Blu-Ray[®] rear seat entertainment system. In the Limited and Platinum grades, the Sequoia comfortably steps into the role of luxury vehicle family hauler.

A Foundation for Versatility and Power

An exclusive body-on-frame platform gives the Toyota Sequoia a robust foundation for both exemplary capability and smooth, quiet ride comfort. Four-wheel independent suspension provides outstanding bump absorption on-road and excellent wheel articulation off-road.

The Sequoia model line offers the choice of 2WD and full-time 4WD. The available Multi-Mode 4-wheel-drive system uses a two-speed transfer case with a lockable TORSSEN[®] limited-slip center differential to apportion torque to the front and rear wheels. The driver can shift into low range on the move via a rotary knob, and can lock the center diff with the push of a button.

There's just one engine choice in the Toyota Sequoia, and quite appropriately, it's a V8 that's teamed to a six-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission. The iForce DOHC 5.7-liter V8 produces 381 hp at 5,600 RPM and 401 lb.-ft. of torque at 3,600 RPM. Dual independent Variable Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i) and an Acoustic Control Induction System (ACIS) ensure ample torque across the engine speed range. ACIS switches the intake tract length in two stages, based on engine RPM and throttle angle. True to Toyota value, the Sequoia uses regular-grade fuel.

Born to Tow

With 90 percent of its peak torque on tap at just 2,200 rpm, the big V8 makes an outstanding towing partner. Compliant with the SAE J2807 towing standard, the Sequoia can tow up to 7,400 lbs., depending on model grade and equipment. In fact, Toyota designed numerous features for that purpose. For example, the towing hitch is integrated into the frame as a single unit. The transmission's driver-selectable Tow/Haul mode modifies shift points for optimal performance. Towing newbies and veterans alike will appreciate the Trailer Sway Control system, which uses the Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) to help counteract handling forces that can lead to trailer sway.

Handling and Ride

Now, here's a category that some full-size SUVs might try to duck. But Toyota engineered the Sequoia to driver

“smaller” than its size suggests. Again, a key is the high-strength chassis equipped with four-wheel independent suspension, which uses upper and lower A-arms and coil springs at each wheel. A 38-foot turning circle is one of the tightest in the class. Braking power, too, is formidable, with 13.9-inch ventilated front disc brakes and 13.6-inch ventilated rear disc brakes — all using four opposed pistons.

The Sequoia Platinum grade steps into luxury SUV territory with its load-leveling rear air suspension and Adaptive Variable Suspension. The latter is an electronic damper control system that offers driver-selectable settings for Comfort, Normal and Sport. The rear air spring suspension helps maintain appropriate ride height and chassis attitude when carrying heavy loads or towing.

The Sequoia SR5 rides on 18-inch aluminum wheels with 275/65 R18 tires; Limited and Platinum grades roll on 20-inch aluminum wheels with 275/55 R20 tires. In keeping with the jeweled theme, wheels on the Platinum feature a diamond-cut finish.

Design That Just Works

Forget boxy. The Sequoia’s body contours reduce wind drag for an impressive 0.36 coefficient of drag (Cd). That’s comparable to some smaller crossovers. The overall design and exterior features have been shaped to minimize wind noise, which helps make the cabin an impressively quiet place to spend time.

It’s also a design that favors visibility. Sequoias will see much active duty in sloppy, slushy and even muddy conditions, so headlight washers are standard. Side-view mirrors on the Limited grade are power-retractable and auto-dimming and have built-in turn-signal lamps. The Platinum grade’s mirrors up the ante with puddle lamps, position memory and reverse-linked tilt functions.

Wide-opening rear doors ease passenger entry/exit and child seat installation. Standard front and rear parking sonar sensors on the Limited and Platinum models alert the driver of the position of objects and their distance from the vehicle.

More support for parking or trailer positioning comes from the standard rear view camera. The 3.3-inch display is built into the standard electrochromic auto-dimming rear-view mirror, which also integrates a compass and a map lamp. The camera display uses the larger navigation screen on vehicles so-equipped.

Expansive Interior

The Toyota Sequoia is a true space shuttle. Each of its eight seating positions can comfortably accommodate people well above normal height. When folding the second- and third-row seats flat, the Sequoia can swallow up to 120.1 cubic feet of whatever you need to carry, even objects up to 11 feet long. In the Sequoia, extra-large cup/bottle holders outnumber passengers two to one. The Platinum grade even adds two more for good measure.

Versatile seating is a Sequoia specialty. With a 40:20:40 split, the second-row bench-type seat allows a variety of combinations, augmented by a seat-slide adjustment range of 5.9 inches. The middle row folds flat and there’s a one-touch easy-slide feature to make it easy for passengers to enter the third row. More luxurious second-row captain seats are available for a seven-seat cabin.

The third-row seat, which is fully hospitable for adults, is split 60:40 and can recline. The third row also easily folds flat, a task made even more convenient by the available power tilting and folding feature. The rear liftgate features power sliding glass that can open separately, and the huge cargo area is equipped with handy hooks for grocery bags.

All three grades offer two interior color choices of Graphite and Sand Beige. A Red Rock interior is also available on the Platinum grade, and the SR5 Sport Appearance Package uses an exclusive black interior.

Toyota Safety

Like all Toyota models, the 2015 Sequoia is equipped with Toyota's STAR Safety System™, which includes:

- Vehicle Stability Control (VSC)
- Anti-lock Braking System (ABS)
- Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD)
- Brake Assist (BA)
- Traction Control (TRAC)
- Smart Stop Technology (SST).

On 4WD models, TRAC is replaced by A-TRAC (Active-Traction Control). All models have a direct tire pressure monitoring system.

The 2015 Sequoia is equipped with a dual stage advanced front air bag system, seat-mounted side airbags for the driver and front passenger, roll-sensing side curtain airbags for all three seating rows, plus driver and front passenger knee airbags.

Tuning In with Entune

Any vehicle designed for family duty had better deliver cutting edge information and connectivity. The Sequoia got on board with a major audio system upgrade in the 2014 model year, when the SR5 grade added the Entune Audio Plus system; the Limited added Entune Premium Audio and the Platinum grade gained Entune Premium JBL® Audio with Navigation and App Suite. (The latter is an option for the Limited).

With Entune Audio, pairing a smartphone opens up a whole new in-vehicle experience with fully integrated access to navigation, music and information services. Entune features engaging mobile apps, including Bing™, iHeartRadio, MovieTickets.com, OpenTable®, Pandora®, Yelp and Facebook Places, plus real-time traffic, weather, fuel prices, sports and stocks.

The SR5 grade's standard 8-speaker Entune Audio Plus system combines a high resolution 6.1-inch touch-screen display, AM/FM CD player with MP3/WMA playback capability, SiriusXM All Access Satellite Radio (includes a three-month trial subscription), auxiliary audio jack, USB port with iPod® connectivity, hands-free phone capability and music streaming via Bluetooth® wireless. The subscription-free Entune App Suite expands music choices with Internet radio, including iHeartRadio and Pandora.

To that comprehensive package, the Limited grade's Entune Premium Audio system adds a 6-disc CD changer with MP3/WMA playback capability and 14 speakers including subwoofer.

The Platinum grade's Entune Premium JBL Audio with Navigation and App Suite provides the ultimate level of information and music. The system features a voice-activated touch-screen, integrated backup camera display, SiriusXM All Access Satellite Radio with NavTraffic™ (includes three-month trial subscription) along with all features of the Limited grade's system.

Making the Grades

Upholding the Toyota tradition of outstanding value, the Sequoia SR5 starts as one of the best-equipped vehicles in its class. Standard amenities include:

- a tilt/telescoping steering wheel
- engine immobilizer with alarm
- automatic tri-zone air conditioning
- illuminated entry system
- power windows, locks and sliding liftgate window
- keyless entry
- rear wiper and defogger
- cruise control
- mud guards

The SR5's exceptional value story continues with a standard power tilt/slide moonroof; towing package; 8-way power driver's seat; fog lamps; a roof rack; running boards and tilt/telescopic urethane steering wheel with integrated audio and Bluetooth® hands-free phone controls.

The Sequoia Limited adds functionality with:

- front and rear parking sonar
- power rear liftgate with sliding window
- power folding and reclining 60:40 split third-row seat
- 20-inch alloy wheels.

Luxury takes a big step up with a standard power tilt/slide moonroof; heated front leather-trimmed seats, second- and third-row retractable sunshades and a leather-trimmed tilt/telescopic steering wheel with audio, and Bluetooth® hands-free phone controls.

The Limited grade also features standard 10-way adjustable power driver's seat, a leather-trimmed steering wheel and gear shift knob, Optitron gauges, and a multi-information display.

At the top of the Sequoia line, the Platinum grade comes with standard Dynamic Laser Cruise Control, which can help maintain a set distance from vehicles ahead. A standard rear seat Blue-Ray entertainment system combines a 9-inch LCD screen with a separate rear seat audio system, including dual wireless headphones.

Additional standard features exclusive to the Sequoia Platinum grade include:

- a 12-way adjustable power driver's seat
- simulated wood-trim
- 20-inch diamond cut-finish alloy wheels
- rear load-leveling air suspension
- power seat memory package
- second-row heated seats
- steering wheel with simulated wood trim

Easy to Understand Options

Toyota's grade strategy makes shopping for a Sequoia easier than ever. A Sport Appearance Package for the SR5 includes second-row captain seats, 20-inch super chrome alloy wheels, color-keyed grille and black seat

fabric. Exterior colors for the Sport Appearance Package are limited to black, white and silver.

A Premium Package available on SR5 models includes leather-trimmed, heated front seats, a 10-way power-adjustable driver's seat, four-way power-adjustable front passenger seat, power reclining, fold-flat third-row seat, and an auto-dimming rearview mirror with an integrated backup camera monitor, compass, map lights and HomeLink® universal transceiver.

The Limited can be upgraded with the Entune Premium JBL Audio with Navigation and App Suite from the Platinum grade, along with Blu-Ray Rear Seat Entertainment System. At no additional charge, that package can be ordered with captain's chairs to replace the standard second row bench seat.

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 powertrain for 60,000 miles and corrosion with no mileage limitation. Toyota dealers have complete details on the limited warranty. The Sequoia will also come 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.