

[Savvy Trucks & Toys]

A \$20K HYBRID COMPACT; AN ALL-ELECTRIC THAT SURPASSES GAS COUSINS IN HORSEPOWER AND TORQUE— **FORD’S TRUCK TEAM SHOWS THE WORLD WHAT’S POSSIBLE**

By Beverly & Steve Smirnis, the Savvy Drivers



Whether driving a bread-and-butter work truck or the smartest, most innovative game changer, one thing holds true—the design and engineering teams from Ford know how to deliver trucks that sell.

Ford’s Maverick is perfect for those seeking the versatility of a small pickup but not needing all the capability offered by a midsize or full-size truck. The big news is—it can be had for \$20K with a hybrid engine. Staying on the \$20K budget means a pretty simple interior, but one that we still found stylish enough. Our XL FWD 4X2 had power windows and locks, but no cruise control and no power seats. Tech features were limited but the essentials were there—an 8-inch touchscreen with standard Apple CarPlay and Android Auto smartphone integration and a nice backup camera. But hey, during times of inflation and high gas prices, the price tag and EPA rated 37 mpg from the hybrid engine are pretty darn appealing.

Sharing the infrastructure of Ford’s small SUV, the Escape, and its compact crossover SUV, the Bronco Sport, the Maverick is unibody construction, but besides the fact that it drives smoother than a body-on-frame truck, the Maverick feels and drives like a truck. The standard 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine paired with an electric motor produces a combined

191 horsepower and is EPA rated at an excellent 37 mpg combined. An optional turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine produces 250 hp. With either of the two engine choices, it has a 1,500 pound payload. Tow rating is 2,000 pounds with the hybrid motor and 4,000 with the turbo—enough to get the job done for most.

“Every so often, a new vehicle comes along that disrupts the status quo and changes the game ... Model T, Mustang, Prius, Model 3. Now comes the F-150 Lightning.”

--Ford President and CEO Jim Farley.

Produced at the all-new Ford Rouge Electric Vehicle Center in Dearborn, Michigan (dubbed by Ford as “the cathedral of American manufacturing.”), the all-electric F-150 Lightning ushers in a truck that will lead Ford—and the entire industry—into a new era of smart, connected, zero-emission vehicles. According to Ford, electric vehicles also require significantly less maintenance than a typical gasoline engine, creating more than 40 percent savings for its lifetime total cost of operation.

The all-electric F-150 features dual electric motors targeted to deliver more horsepower and torque than any F-150 available today, the fastest acceleration, and the ability to tow heavy trailers.

With the smaller 98.0-kWh battery, Ford claims a driving range of 230 miles per charge; upgrading to the larger 131.0-kWh extended range (ER) battery boosts driving range to 320 miles. On Lightning, Ford also debuts technology that allows mobile power generation so customers can use their trucks as a power source for places from campsites to jobsites when needed. The Lightning shares much of the regular F-150's body and cabin. The absence of a tall engine under the hood gives Lightning a giant front trunk (frunk) for 14.1 cubic feet of extra cargo-carrying space.

Importantly, the price range for the various Lightning trim levels are comparable to the gas-powered or hybrid versions of the F-150 and rival trucks. Our Lightning Pro tester is considered the base model work truck. MSRP was just under \$40K before adding essentials that would be important to building industry pros. The longer range ER battery added \$10K. Our truck also sported the Tow Technology package and Max Trailer Tow package to boost towing capacity to 10,000 pounds. Pro Power OnBoard enables 9.6 kilowatts of exportable electricity (enough to power a residential construction job site for three days or cut up to 30 miles of plywood on a single charge), Ford claims. The final option was a spray-in bedliner. Inclusive of destination and delivery, total MSRP was \$56,109—before federal, state or power company incentives, which can allow up to \$7,500 or more off.



2022 Ford Lightning

Beverly & Steve Smirnis are members of the Texas Auto Writers Association and the Texas Motor Press Association, reviewing vehicles and casting their votes at driving events where the Truck of Texas, Car of Texas and Off-Road Truck of Texas are some of the titles awarded. Follow their automotive blog on TheSavvyList.com/TheSavvyDriver



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