

Beat: Automobiles

MORE FORD BRONCO DELIVERIES COMING SOON

BRONCO SALES A BRIGHT SPOT FOR FORD

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USPA NEWS - Ford have done something a little different with how they build the new Ford Bronco. They tell me, "We have designed each Bronco series around different types of adventure. Choose the series that fits you and your adventures best, then customize it even more with over 200 Ford accessories to truly make it your own."

In this report we'll look at models, options and MSRP. With a variety of models to choose from there should be something for everyone. Models include: Base, Big Bend, Black Diamond, Outer Banks, Badlands, Wildtrak, and First Edition.

NEW ICON FROM OLD

The Bronco was actually the first sport-utility vehicle developed by Ford, and they sold five generations from the 1966 to 1996 model years.

It was supposed to compete with the Jeep CJ-5 and International Harvester Scout. The nameplate has been used on other Ford SUVs, including the 1984-1990 Ford Bronco II compact SUV and the Ford Bronco Sport compact CUV.

After a decline in sales over the years (brought about partly by Ford's own introduction of the Ford Expedition and Ford Excursion), production ceased in 1996. After 25 years, Ford reintroduced the sixth incarnation of the American Icon, and it appears the baby Bronco, known as the Bronco Sport, is selling well, according to Ford's Q4 sales figures.

According to the Detroit Free Press, Keri Yncian (pronounced IN-cine), 53, a construction company controller from Schertz, Texas, grew up in the "Bronco era" but never thought she'd get one, she said. But the snappy SUV in teal gray-green known as Area 51 proved irresistible. Now it's not unusual to get stopped and have pictures taken. "People are gawking, basically," Yncian said. "I just had no idea how popular it was. At night, it's all lit up and looks like a Range Rover. People are videoing me."

AVAILABILITY

The models that most folks are waiting for will be here by summer. As mentioned, the "Baby Bronco" is already out, but it's the bigger two- and four-door Broncos that appeal more to the outdoor types.

Buyers placed orders for over five thousand in December 2020 alone. My friend who now lives in Atlanta says he ordered on the evening of the "Reveal" in February 2021. He expects to get his in August of this year or earlier. He tells me Ford will be advising build dates in late May. Another friend says she hopes he gets it in that timeframe. She works with a lot of OEMs and says many are experiencing delays based on production shutdowns last year.

Base Model

Only the absolute essentials included and ripe for customization, states Ford: Standard 4x4; easy-to-remove doors and roof; available 35" tires with Sasquatch Package; starting at \$28,500.

BIG BEND

Creature comforts along with your standard Bronco features: leather-wrapped steering wheel; heated front seats; aluminum wheels; remote start (with 10-speed automatic only); starting at \$33,385.

BLACK DIAMOND

Next-level outdoor adventure complete with washout interior; rear locking differential; steel front and rear bumpers; 7 G.O.A.T. Modesâ„¢ (Goes Over Any Type of Terrain); heavy-duty bash plates; starting at \$36,050.

OUTER BANKS

The trim that puts off-road style and tech front and center: 18" bright black high gloss painted aluminum alloy wheels; LED headlamps and taillamps; optional 12" LCD touchscreen; available B&O Sound System; starting at \$38,955.

BADLANDS

For those who crave the extreme in their off-roading: HOSS (High-Performance Off-Road Stability Suspension) System; Bilsteinâ„¢ position sensitive monotube shocks; 33" all-terrain or available 33" or 35" mud-terrain tires; Marine grade vinyl interior; rock rails; starting at \$42,095.

WILDTRAK

Styled and made for high-speed off-roading: 2.7L twin-turbocharged V6 engine; 10-speed automatic Transmission; Sasquatch Package with 35" tires; starting at \$46,980

FIRST EDITION

Limited edition that combines the best of the Bronco models: only 3,500 available; unique hood and bodyside graphics; Sasquatch Package with 35" tires; leather-trimmed seats; starting at \$57,410, but you'll have to get one of these on the secondary market since all 3,500 are currently spoken for!

CONCLUSION

For those lucky enough to have a reservation for the Limited Edition, they will have an iconic version of the Bronco. All the reservations are full, so you'll only be able to get one from someone other than the dealer, though things could change. All models come with manual swing-gate with up to 150-degree swing; flip-up rear glass; hard top (2-Door) molded-in-color (optional for 4-door model); removable doors and top. There are many options available depending on the model including suspension, traction control and 4 x 4 engagement modes and trail modes.

Finally, the all-important engine and transmission options. The first five models in the list above come with a 2.3L EcoBoost engine as standard. For these models there is the 2.7L EcoBoost available, which is standard on the Wildtrak and First Edition. These later two models have a 10-speed automatic transmission with Trail Control, the Outer Banks model similar, and the other models a 7-speed manual transmission with crawler gear. If you choose the upgraded engine for the lower models, you'll get the 10-speed gearbox to handle the power.

Motortrend reports the 4-Door Base model as having 270 Horsepower, Torque of 310, and towing capability of 3,500 pounds. They had some likes (iconic, trim choices, off-road capability and removable body panels), but didn't like the door mirrors staying on when the doors are off, nor the visibility, thought it was a little too wide for Wrangler trails and that the aftermarket support was better for the Jeep. On that later point, I think it will just take time for the aftermarket to build after the Bronco has been out there a while. I'm looking forward to seeing more on the road after summer!

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