

4Runner

The Toyota 4Runner typifies the growth and evolution of the entire SUV market. What began as a compact pickup with a removable fiberglass top is now a family vehicle equipped with the latest technology and car-like convenience features. The first generation 4Runner came in two model grades the Deluxe, which seated two and the SR5.

- **In its first year of availability, *Four Wheeler* magazine awarded the Toyota 4Runner “1985 Four Wheeler of the Year” the first year it was available.**
- **The name 4Runner is derived from “prerunner,” a vehicle that scouts off-road racing courses. The “4” refers to four-wheel-drive.**
- **When the 4Runner debuted as a compact SUV in 1984 there were roughly six vehicles in its segment. In 2006, the 4Runner shared the mid-size SUV segment with 51 models.**

In May 1984, Toyota introduced the 1985 4Runner, a new Sport Utility Vehicle with “the benefits of a wagon and the strength and appearance of Toyota’s popular 4x4 truck.” Built on the chassis of Toyota’s compact pickup, the 4Runner was designed to appeal to active buyers who wanted both passenger and cargo room in an off-road capable vehicle.

In 1985, Toyota’s reputation for building rugged 4x4 vehicles like Land Cruiser and the compact pickup truck helped the 4Runner secure an important share of the growing SUV market.

The same 2.4-liter, four-cylinder engine featured in Toyota’s compact pickup powered the first generation 4Runner. These 4Runners also featured a detachable fiberglass rear top and steel roll bar.

In 1986 a new Hi-Trac independent front suspension increased ground clearance and improved ride quality on the 4Runner. The 1987 model year saw the SR5 grade available with both two and five seat configurations and an electronically controlled, fuel-injection engine producing 135 horsepower with a towing capacity of 3,500 lbs.

Toyota boosted the power in 1987 with a new 3.0-liter V6 engine for better off-road performance.





The second-generation 4Runner was introduced in 1990. This totally new SUV was available with more configuration options including either a two- or four-door body, a choice of both a four- or six-cylinder engine and either two- or four-wheel drive. The fiberglass top was replaced with a permanent steel roof, and more “car-like” options became available including retractable cup holders and power sunroofs.

By 1992 the 4Runner received recognition as the best compact SUV in consumer satisfaction six times. Throughout the 1990s the 4Runner continually topped the J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Survey. The 4Runner was also selected the best compact SUV in initial quality six out of 10 years.

In 1996, for the third-generation 4Runner, Toyota completely redesigned the 4Runner from the ground up, featuring a new platform specifically designed for the 4Runner. The 1996 4Runner received two new engines, a 2.7-liter four-cylinder and a 3.4-liter V6. The Hi-Trac suspension was replaced with a coil-spring, double wishbone suspension. The 4Runner also gained 2 inches to its wheelbase and greater interior volume. Toyota added safety features like dual front airbags and four-wheel ABS to the 4Runner.

From 1997 through 2003, the 4Runner grew into the mid-size SUV category. A Sports Package including color-keyed bumpers, projector fog lamps, fender flares, new wheels, and a hood scoop were available. In 1999, Toyota added an optional multimode feature, so the driver can easily switch from 2 or 4-wheel drive. In 2001, Toyota discontinued the four-cylinder engine and all models came standard with a 3.4-liter V6 engine and automatic transmission as well as Vehicle Skid Control with traction control.

Toyota launched the fourth-generation 4Runner in 2003 powered by an LEV-certified, 4.7-liter I-Force V8 engine capable of 235 horsepower. In December 2002 an all-new LEV certified 4.0-liter V6 aluminum engine (Toyota's first in a light truck) was introduced, capable of 245 horsepower. All 2003 4Runners came standard-equipped with Hill-start Assist Control (HAC) and 4WD models came with Downhill Assist Control (DAC). An optional Appearance Package for the SR5 grade and a Sport Edition with enhanced handling were available.

In 2004 optional third-row seats were added on the SR5 and Limited grades, as well as rear backup camera and navigation system. Like other 2005 Toyota SUVs, the 2005 4Runner came with standard Star Safety System including Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and traction control, an anti-lock brake system (ABS) with Electronic Brake-force Distribution and Brake Assist. Additional enhancements were made to the V8 powertrain for the 2005 model year.

The latest generation 4Runner continue its predecessors' award-winning tradition of quality and off-road capability. In 2003, the 4Runner was named *Truckin's SUV* magazine's "SUV of the Year," *Popular Science* magazine's "Best of What's New" award, and J.D. Power and Associates "Most Dependable Midsize Sport Utility Vehicle."

