

ADVERTORIAL

The future looks bright for Ford with the release of their 2004 F-150 and all new Freestar

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2004 Freestar SE

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Freestar means never having to leave anyone or anything behind. With comfortable seating for seven and plenty of room for everything they bring along, the new Freestar makes family life simple. And when a trip to the garden centre or lumber yard is on your schedule, Freestar turns into one heck of a convenient cargo hauler in just seconds.

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2004 F-150

WHEN IT COMES TO RIDE AND HANDLING...

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• How can the new F-150 be so powerful when it's so quiet?
The remarkable quietness of the new F-150 – the quietest pickup on the planet – may lead some long-time truck owner to think quiet means underpowered. But loud, rough-running pickup engines are a thing of the past: the new F-150's 4.6L and 5.4L Triton® engines are uncompromisingly quiet and capable.

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2004 F-150

Ford's future could be decided on the success of their new pick-up truck, the 2004 F-150. With the addition of more room, better ride, refinement, and handling, the future certainly looks bright indeed.

The new and improved 2004 F-150 is tougher and smoother than ever. Starting with the frame, the backbone of the truck, which is now stronger because of it being fully welded and boxed along its entire length. The new frame is now 50% stiffer in bending to previous F-150s and 9 times stiffer in torsion.

To meet the demand of growing personal use purchases, Ford has increased the F-150 cab size of each of the Regular and SuperCab trucks in order to meet the demands of the North American family. In 2004, the Regular Cab has been lengthened by 6 inches and now comes with a pair of hinged "doorlets" which provide access to an even greater storage area. The SuperCab has also been lengthened by 6 inches and is also available with a class exclusive 5.5-foot box that makes it easier to put in the family garage and provides more rear seat comfort with a more reclined backrest, something that was a key issue of existing SuperCab customers.

To improve the 2004 F-150 for a smoother ride and better handling, Ford is now promising new standards. Key improvements are wider leaf springs for enhanced lateral stiffness and rear shocks mounted outboard on the springs, which enable more precise control of the axles movement. The new highly rigid rack and pinion steering, coil-over-shock front suspensions, with the addition of advanced rubber bushings also add to a softer ride by being softer vertically while remaining stiff laterally.

The 2004 F-150 is also the only truck in the industry to come with a standard V8. The standard engine is a V8 Triton 231 hp, 4.6 litre, however if more power is desired, Ford has offered an upgraded engine option which is the Triton 5.4 litre V8 which delivers 300 hp and 365 lb. Ft. with enhanced fuel efficiency.

Truly the only way to get the full appreciation of the all new 2004 F-150 is to get behind the wheel of one for a test drive to really see the difference in power, handling, comfort and refinement.

The All New 2004 Freestar.

With the all-new 2004 Freestar, Ford is now able to play catch up with the makers of imported minivans. Replacing the Windstar, the Freestar has been made to be one of the safest vehicles on the road. Designed with reinforced heavy steel, and having new options such as the canopy side airbag, which is designed to unfold and protect even a sleeping child and is also constructed with a rollover sensor which will keep the bag inflated for 6 seconds in the event of the vehicle rolling over in an accident. Another safety option that will be offered is the Canadian Safety Driving Package at a bargain of \$800. The Safety package will include Ford's Advancetrac stability system, a panic brake enhancement system, and reverse sensing. Also four larger disc brakes with ABS braking systems will come standard with all Freestar models.

The Freestar has also many performance features outside of safety as well. The first feature is its fold flat 3rd row bench seat. Despite this feature being offered on other competitors' minivans for some time now, Ford's version is better in a couple of areas. Primarily the 3rd row bench seat is made to fold down without removing the headrests and is made in such a way that the driver's view will not be obstructed when there are no passengers in the Freestar. Also the 3rd row seat can be reversed to face the opposite direction that would be useful for picnics and tailgate parties.

Only one engine size will be offered with the 2004 Freestar. The 4.2 V6 will have 201 hp and 265 lb. ft. of torque. The advantage with this engine is that it has been designed to run quietly and smoothly even under hard acceleration and offers 90% of its torque at just 1500 rpm.

Gone is the heavy truck feel for steering as well. Replaced with a lighter and more precise steering system, the 2004 Freestar handles more like a car preventing any wandering within your driving lane and on roads designed with steep angles.

The Freestar is an excellent vehicle for the family. With seating capacity suited to 7 people and 25 cu. ft. of storage with the 3rd row bench being used. Fold down the 3rd row seat and the storage area increases to 69 cu. ft. and remove the 2nd row bench seat and you can store up to 134 cu. ft.

There is no better offering Ford could have made to replace the Windstar. The Freestar will have no trouble keeping up to the Ford tradition of safety, performance, and family convenience for their minivans in the years to come.