

2010 TRUCK KING COMPARRISON FORD 150

The newest Ford F-series pickup is 61 years removed from the original 1948 F1, but it still carries many of the forward thinking features that first model offered like a larger cab, improved suspension, better payload and extra driver comforts. Sticking to a program of innovation and improvement over its many generations of F-series trucks has equalled the sales success of this model.

For 2009 the F-series is sporting several key changes. Payload and towing capacity have increased supported by a new frame designed with new high-strength steel. To support these weights Ford opted to add longer (six inches) and wider (three-inch) leaf springs that improve lateral stiffness and offers a better ride particularly under load. Compare this to GM's 2.5-inch wide leaves or Dodge's new coil spring rear suspension. Also upgraded are the tires – new LT (Light Truck designated) tires have stiffer sidewalls for better towing and payload support.

Truckers seem to always be looking for more space and the '09 F-series offers it with a new longer wheelbase that supports a stretched four-door SuperCrew (15 cm more for the backseat alone). And because the frame has lengthened Ford did not rob the cargo bed for that stretch.

That extra space in the rear is part of a completely new flat floor. This feature is highlighted by a rear bench seat that folds up flat against the back wall – freeing up the maximum cargo space for bulky items.

The new cab is also better insulated for noise and is supported entirely on isolated rubber mounts that make it more comfortable than previous versions. In fact I recently test drove a new Ford Flex (that cleverly disguised mini-van) and after driving the F-150 on public roads in the Michigan countryside I was struck by how similar they were – firm, smooth and quiet.

This quiet interior is complemented with a nice range of driver comforts in the newly appointed base cabin package. But for '09 another high-end trim level called the Platinum has been added; sliding in above the King Ranch this brings to seven the number of appearance packages that the F-series now offers. While largely unchanged from '04, the new cabin (with tweaks) leaves Ford's interiors competitive – but no one else offers this array of trim packages.

Innovations on the '09 model include items such as an integrated trailer brake controller, pull-out tailgate step, retractable box-side steps, stowable bed extender and available cargo management system.

Among the best of these is the integrated trailer brake controller that Ford first introduced in its Super Duty series of trucks three years ago. Now available in the half-ton this feature will be of particular interest to the more than 50 per cent of owners who tow regularly (GM has this now but Dodge and Toyota do not). But this F-150 also adds another new towing feature – a Trailer Sway Control can sense yaw motion in the trailer (fishtailing) and apply precise braking and cut power to bring the truck and trailer back into line.

In keeping with the current trend of fuel conservation Ford invested a considerable amount of its development dollars in powertrain and fuel economy improvements for the new truck. The net result is fuel economy gains as high as 12 per cent versus the previous generation (equipped with the high-volume 3-valve 5.4-liter V8). Including the other engines fuel economy across the line averages out at around eight per cent.

Some other engineering that has made these gains possible includes a new six-speed automatic transmission, and an optional 3.15:1 rear axle. This alone contributes a 4 to 6 percent fuel economy improvement over the old four-speed gearbox.

The F-150 also uses a deceleration fuel shut-off. This neat little trick also saves fuel. Fuel shut-off is automatic and requires no driver input – as the accelerator is released the system temporarily turns off the fuel. The flow resumes when the truck reaches idle or the driver hits the gas again.

For 2010 Ford will continue to offer four wheelbases: 126, 133, 145 and 163- inches; three cabs and three boxes: Regular, SuperCab and SuperCrew (with 5.5, 6.5, 8-ft boxes) and a choice of engines: 4.6L (two-valve) V8 248 hp and 294 lb-ft of torque – four speed auto

4.6L (three-valve) V8 292 hp and 320 lb-ft of torque – six speed auto
5.4L (three-valve) V8 320 hp and 390 lb-ft of torque - six speed auto
And there are three rear axle ratios to choose from 3.15, 3.31, and 3.73

Vehicle tested: 2009 F-150 SuperCrew 4x4 Lariat Base Price: \$46,699

Optional Equipment:

P275/55R20 OWL All-Terrain tires	\$370.00
Skid Plates	\$120.00
Power Sliding rear window	\$170.00
Max Trailer Tow package (w/controller)	\$940.00
Power Trailer mirrors	\$360.00
Sony Navigation Radio	\$2,300.00
Pickup Box Extender	\$350.00
Pickup Box Access step	\$300.00
Tailgate Step	\$300.00
Rear View Camera	\$500.00
Lariat Chrome Package	\$1,090.00

Price as tested at Head Lake, ON \$53,499.00

Some changes for the 2010 model year:

- **Flareside bodystyles are no longer available**
- **SuperCab models are no longer available with the 5.5' box except with Mid Box Prep Package**
- **All units equipped with a 5.4L Flex Fuel engine will receive a new FFV tailgate badge**
- **STX standard seat is cloth 40/20/40 bench with manual adjuster.**

Some new options include:

- **New heated rear seats on the King Ranch, Harley-Davidson and Platinum**
- **New ambient lighting**
- **Power deployable running boards**
- **Heavy Duty payload package available**