

2013 Toyota Highlander and Highlander Hybrid Add New Entune® Multimedia System Features and 'Highlander Plus' Grade

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TORRANCE, Calif., (Sept. 13, 2012) — The Toyota Highlander and Highlander Hybrid offer additional value for 2013 with more standard equipment, new option packages and audio systems. A new Highlander Plus model grade replaces the former Tech Package and adds numerous popular features, including a rear back-up camera.

The 2013 Highlander and Highlander Hybrid models feature changes to standard and optional multi-media technology for 2013, with Display Audio made standard on Highlander, SE and Highlander Plus grades; the Highlander Hybrid now includes as standard Display Audio with Navigation and the Entune™ multimedia package.

Assembled at Toyota's Motor Manufacturing Princeton, Ind., facility, the Highlander is a three-row crossover that offers a choice between four-cylinder and V6 power, front-wheel drive (FWD) and full-time four-wheel drive (4WD). The Highlander Hybrid provides an exceptional blend of performance and fuel economy, with an EPA-estimated 28 mpg city/28 mpg highway-fuel economy ratings. All Highlander Hybrid models are equipped with four-wheel-drive with intelligence (4WD-i) and are available in Hybrid and Limited grades.

The first-generation Highlander pioneered the midsize crossover utility vehicle segment, ushering in car-like performance, comfort and fuel efficiency with SUV-like roominess and versatility. The current, second-generation Highlander amplifies those attributes and is among the leaders in the segment in standard active and passive safety features.

The 2013 Highlander is available in Highlander, new Highlander Plus, SE and Limited grades with either front-wheel drive (FWD) or full-time four-wheel-drive (4WD). A 270-horsepower, 3.5-liter V6 is standard on the SE and Limited grades and available for the others. Full-time four-wheel drive is available on all V6 grades.

Performance and Efficiency

The Toyota Highlander offers three distinct levels of performance. A 2.7-liter four-cylinder engine, standard for Highlander and Highlander Plus, produces 187 horsepower at 5,800 RPM and 186 lb.-ft. of peak torque at 4,100 RPM and offers an EPA-estimated 25 MPG rating in highway driving. The engine is equipped with a variable intake manifold and dual Variable-Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i), which controls phasing on both the intake and exhaust camshafts to optimize torque and fuel efficiency. The 2.7-liter engine is teamed exclusively with a six-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission.

The available 3.5-liter V6 (standard on SE and Limited) produces 270 horsepower at 6,200 RPM and 248 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,700 RPM. The V6 is also equipped with dual VVT-i and a variable intake manifold. A five-speed, electronically controlled automatic transmission (ECT) offers selectable manual sequential shifting.

The Highlander Hybrid model's Hybrid Synergy Drive system pairs a 3.5-liter V6 gasoline engine with a high-torque electric drive motor-generator for total system output of 280 net horsepower. The 4WD Highlander Hybrid uniquely generates rear-wheel power with a separate electric motor that provides additional drive torque on demand. Thus, the Highlander Hybrid 4WD-i system does not require power-transfer gearing or a driveshaft

from the front. The system electronically varies front and rear torque distribution depending on traction conditions.

Activating an EV-mode switch located on the front center console allows the driver to operate strictly in electric-mode under certain conditions for a limited distance at low speeds, or in some stop-and-go driving conditions. An ECON drive-mode switch activates a throttle-control program that adjusts the throttle response during acceleration, enhancing fuel economy. The Hybrid System Indicator in the instrument gauge panel provides the driver with a guideline to help optimize fuel consumption.

Handling and Ride

The Toyota Highlander continues to build on its strength of delivering one of the most capable, smooth and quiet rides in the segment. Four-wheel independent suspension is via MacPherson struts in front and a dual-link strut rear suspension system. Highlander, SE and Highlander Plus grades are equipped with standard 17-inch alloy wheels with 245/65 R17 tires; the Limited features standard 19-inch alloy wheels with 245/55 R19 tires. A direct tire-pressure-monitoring system is designed to alert the driver if pressure in a tire drops to critical levels.

Active Safety

Highlander comes standard with Toyota's Star Safety System™, which integrates operation of enhanced Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRAC), Electric Power Steering (EPS) and the anti-lock brake system (ABS) with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), and Smart Stop Technology (SST).

Enhanced VSC helps the driver maintain control by automatically adjusting engine output and braking force at each wheel under certain conditions, while also providing steering assistance in the appropriate direction through EPS. Gasoline Highlander models are also equipped with a straight-line steering feature. When varying traction causes ABS to apply different left/right braking force, the system can apply steering torque to help offset left/right pull.

The Highlander Hybrid employs the advanced Vehicle Dynamics Integrated Management (VDIM) system. VDIM is designed to enhance handling, traction and braking systems that normally react to vehicle driving conditions by anticipating tire slippage before a skid, slide, or wheel spin occurs and helps to make corrections in a smooth, progressive way. In addition to integrating all of the Highlander's dynamic control systems (VSC, TRAC, BA, EPS, EBD and ABS), the VDIM system also employs powerful proprietary software to integrate the Electronic Throttle Control with intelligence (ETC-i) and Electronically Controlled Brakes (ECB).

All Highlander models incorporate a corner-braking feature. Harnessing the integration of the vehicle's dynamic control systems, this feature limits brake pressure on inside wheels during cornering to help enhance control through the turn. Standard on all models, Hill Start Assist Control (HAC) helps prevent the vehicle from rolling backward from a stop by applying braking pressure for approximately two seconds.

Downhill Assist Control (DAC) is standard equipment on all Highlander gasoline 4WD models. The DAC feature is designed to maintain a constant speed and maintain handling and steering control by reducing wheel lock under braking even at slow speeds on slippery descents.

The V6 package, enabling up to 5,000-pound maximum towing capacity, is now standard on all V6 models. The four-cylinder tow package has been discontinued.

Occupant Safety

Highlander comes with seven standard airbags, including an Advanced Airbag System for the driver and front passenger, front-seat-mounted side airbags and a driver's knee airbag. Roll-sensing side curtain airbags help to

protect the occupants of all three rows in the event of certain side collisions or the unlikely event of a vehicle rollover. Additionally, all Highlander models are equipped with front-seat active headrests.

Comfort and Convenience

All Highlander models feature a standard 50/50 split third-row seat and rear climate control. Generous standard features on the Highlander grade include front and rear air conditioning; eight-way adjustable driver's seat; power door locks and windows with driver's window jam protection and auto-up/down feature; manual tilt and telescopic steering wheel; cruise control; multi-function keyless entry system; UV-reduction windshield and rear privacy glass; digital clock; conversation mirror; illuminated entry system; scheduled maintenance indicator light; full-size spare tire and more.

The new-for-2013 Highlander Plus grade equips this popular crossover with a 3.5-inch Multi-Information Display that includes a clock, outside temperature, warning messages, and cruise information such as average fuel economy, average speed, distance to empty, current fuel economy, and trip timer. The rear back-up camera displays in the 6.1-inch audio head unit. The front and second-row seats get easy-clean fabric, and the driver's seat adds power lumbar adjustment. Additions that enhance interior comfort include dual extendable sun visors and second-row reading lamps.

For greater versatility, the Highlander Plus model grade is equipped with black roof rails and a lift-up glass hatch. The cargo area gains one-touch fold-flat levers for the second row, and a cargo area cover is included. Metallic accents are used on the steering wheel and interior door handles. Outside, the Highlander Plus features standard fog lamps, and a standard engine immobilizer adds to vehicle security.

The Display Audio system that is standard for Highlander, Highlander Plus and the SE grades features a USB port and hands-free phone capability and music streaming via Bluetooth® wireless technology, helping ensure a wide array of "connected" capabilities for occupants. In the Highlander Plus and SE grades, the system includes the back-up camera.

For 2013, a Leather Premium Package replaces the previous Leather Package for the base grade Highlander Hybrid. The new package contents include a power tilt/slide moonroof; leather-trimmed front and second-row seats and leatherette-trimmed third-row seat; multi-stage heated front seats; HomeLink® universal transceiver; auto-dimming rear-view mirror; leather-trimmed steering wheel with metallic accents and Bluetooth voice controls; leather-trimmed, chrome-accented shift lever with metallic inlay; metallic interior trim, and an engine immobilizer added to the security system.

Newly standard on the 2013 Highlander Hybrid, the Display Audio system integrates Navigation and the Toyota Entune multi-media system. The steering wheel gains controls for the audio, Multi-Information Display and Bluetooth hands-free phone capability.

To that, the Highlander Hybrid Limited grade adds the JBL® Premium Audio system, automatic climate control for the rear and offers perforated leather seating surfaces.

Entune MultimediaSystem

The Toyota Entune™ multimedia system is a collection of popular mobile applications and data services, with three years of complimentary access. Once a smart phone is connected to the vehicle using Bluetooth wireless technology or a USB cable, Entune's features are operated using the vehicle's controls or, for some services, by voice recognition. Entune offers mobile apps for Bing™, iHeartRadio, MovieTickets.com, OpenTable®, and Pandora®. Entune data services include a fuel price guide, sports scores, stocks, traffic and weather.

Options

A variety of available options and accessories include heated side mirrors and windshield wiper de-icer

(Highlander grade); a voice-activated touch screen navigation system (SE grade); JBL audio system (Limited grade); and the Leather Premium Package. Rear seat entertainment remains an option on Limited grade gas and hybrid models.

Exterior Design

Designed at Caltex Design Research in Newport Beach, Calif., the second-generation Highlander conveys a contemporary, dynamic presence via clean, sculpted lines, a wide, stable stance and muscular contours. The Highlander grade could be mistaken for an upgrade model with its six-spoke 17-inch alloy wheels, color-keyed power outside mirrors, and silver-painted front grille.

The Highlander Limited has a luxurious appearance with 19-inch alloy wheels, chrome door handles and roof rails, puddle lamps and rear spoiler. The 2013 Highlander Hybrid is distinguished from the gasoline model by its own unique grille and bumper design, color-keyed rockers with chrome accents, plus vertically stacked fog lamps. The projector-beam headlights and taillights feature blue lens covers.

Interior Design

The Highlander provides an open, airy and versatile interior with seating for seven or up to 95.4 cubic feet of total cargo capacity (94.1 for Highlander Hybrid). There are numerous storage compartments throughout the cabin, along with 10 cup holders, four bottle holders, two front and one cargo-area 12-volt auxiliary power outlets and cargo area tie-down hooks.

The headrests are adjustable in two ways on the Highlander and Highlander Plus grades and four ways on SE and Limited. The second row provides 40/20/40 split seatbacks. The seat functions as either a three-person bench, or by removing the Center Stow™ seat, a pair of captain's chairs complete with armrests. This creates a convenient walk-through area between the seats for easier access to the third row. A second-row Center Stow center console can also be placed between the seats to provide additional storage and added convenience for child seats. The second row also slides fore and aft and reclines.

The third-row provides standard 50/50 split seats with fold-down headrests and fold-flat-into-floor capability for passenger comfort and storage flexibility. Access to the third-row is made easier by placing the walk-in lever at an easy-to-reach position at the bottom of the passenger-side second-row seat. Standard one-touch levers, on Highlander Plus, SE and Limited gas models and all Hybrid models, inside the cargo area allow the second-row seats to fold forward and flat. The third-row seats function in a similar manner, using a lever in the back of the seat.

The Highlander Hybrid is further distinguished with Optitron meters with blue graphics and a power meter with a hybrid system indicator.

Limited Warranty

Toyota's 36-month/36,000 mile basic new-vehicle warranty applies to all components other than normal wear and maintenance items. Additional 60-month warranties cover the powertrain for 60,000 miles and corrosion with no mileage limitation. The hybrid-related components, including the HV battery, battery control module, hybrid control module and inverter with converter, are covered for eight years/100,000 miles.

The Highlander will also come standard with Toyota Care, a complimentary plan covering normal factory-scheduled maintenance and 24-hour roadside assistance for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first.