

Appraiser Blog

How American Pickups Have Evolved Over The Years

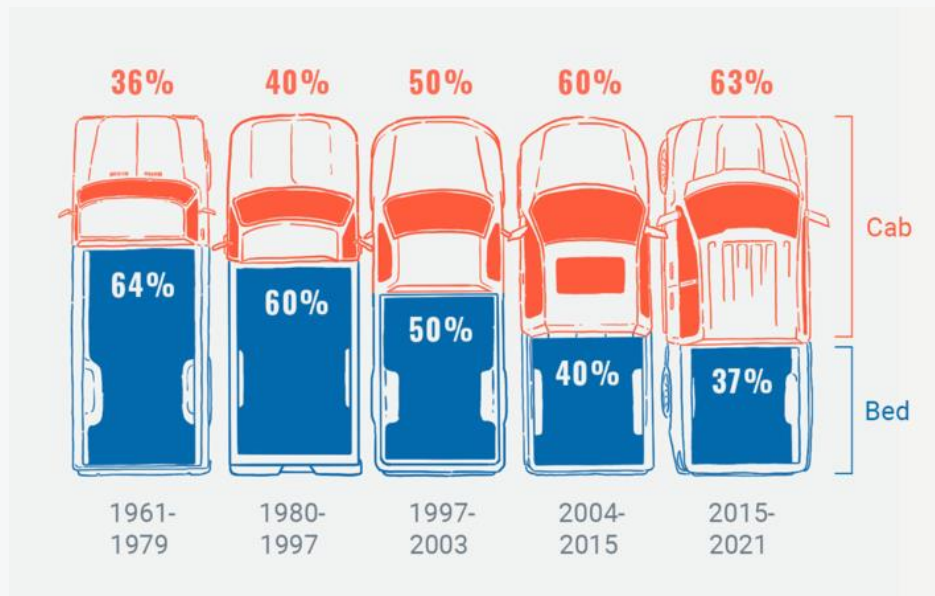


By Tony Rached

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For over four decades, the Ford F-150 has reigned as America's top seller. During that time, however, pickups have evolved from basic workhorses to larger, more feature-rich vehicles. In the '80s, half of all trucks were considered small or mid-size; by the 2010s though, small pickups had all but disappeared in favor of huge, luxury trucks. To accommodate this shift from work to lifestyle vehicle, cabs enlarged to fit more passengers while beds shrank.



Ford F-150 Through the years

A truck was the third-best-selling car last year, with an F-Series being sold every 49 seconds. As a result of this transition from work tool pickups to everyday use, one-third of pickup truck owners rarely or never haul, while two-thirds rarely or never tow. Instead, 87% of pickup truck owners use their trucks for shopping and 70% say they do it for pleasure.

What does that mean?

As a result of supersized trucks, pedestrians and other drivers are exposed to greater risks. Drivers of today's trucks sit higher, creating a blind spot that hides small children or wheelchair users. Additionally, pickup trucks' weight increased by 32% between 1990 and 2021, causing them to strike pedestrians harder.

Additionally, a truck's tall front strikes pedestrians in the torso or head, which contain vital organs, whereas a car's lower hood usually strikes pedestrians in the legs. In collisions between different-sized vehicles, pickups are more dangerous — a 2019 study found that car drivers who collide with a pickup are 2.5 times as likely to die as those who collide with another car.

With this in mind, Ford emphasizes safety as a priority and highlights safety features such as pedestrian detection sensors, automatic emergency braking, and 360-degree cameras. Therefore, the 2022 F-150 earned top ratings in various crash tests, including those with other vehicles and pedestrians.

They've probably reached the top of their size, but they're still evolving. With the new age of electric vehicles, many pickup trucks offer features not available on gasoline or diesel trucks.