

autobuzz



New Hilux takes Toyota's pickup into a new era

TDT | agencies

Toyota has given its iconic Hilux pickup a major overhaul for 2026, bringing sharper styling, a more modern cabin and updated technology while retaining the rugged character that has made it a familiar sight across the Gulf.

The ninth-generation Hilux retains the body-on-frame construction of its predecessor but receives substantially redesigned front and rear sections. The angular new design features slimmer LED headlights, sharper body lines and

a more prominent front treatment, giving the pickup a more contemporary appearance while preserving its rugged character.

Inside, the Hilux gets a redesigned dashboard with a floating touchscreen and an all-black theme. The high driving position continues to provide a commanding view, while improved cabin insulation helps keep engine noise under control.

The powertrain remains focused on proven performance, with petrol and diesel engines available depending on the Gulf market.

Higher-powered versions offer strong torque for towing, off-road driving and carrying loads, while automatic transmissions are available across much of the regional range.

Off-road ability remains central to the Hilux formula. Features include selectable 2H, 4H and 4L drive modes, Multi-Terrain Select, an electronic differential lock and downhill assist. Its 700mm water-wading capability further underlines its ability to tackle demanding terrain.

However, the pick-

up's workhorse character comes with compromises. The leaf-spring rear suspension is designed to cope with heavy loads but can feel firm when the cargo bed is empty. Its considerable length and turning radius can also make tight urban manoeuvres more challenging.

The new Hilux is not simply about adding luxury features. Toyota has retained the model's focus on durability, load-carrying ability and off-road capability, even as the cabin and technology become more modern.



A Bugatti Type 35 car is displayed during the Grand Prix Centenary event at Brooklands Museum and race circuit, in Weybridge, south-west of London. 2026 marks the 100th anniversary of Britain's first Grand Prix, held at the Brooklands race circuit.



POLLUTION FROM ELECTRIC VEHICLES

1 MINING & RAW MATERIALS

Extraction of lithium, cobalt, nickel & other minerals causes:

- Land damage
- Water pollution
- Habitat loss

2 BATTERY PRODUCTION

Energy-intensive process that creates:

- Factory emissions
- Chemical waste
- High water use

3 ELECTRICITY GENERATION

EVs are clean on the road, but electricity may come from polluting sources such as:

- Coal power plants
- Oil and gas plants

4 END-OF-LIFE & DISPOSAL

Improper disposal or recycling can cause:

- Soil & water contamination
- Toxic emissions
- Resource loss

EVs reduce tailpipe emissions, but pollution shifts to other stages of the life cycle.

KEY FACTS

- An EV can produce 20-70% less CO₂ over its lifetime than a petrol car.
- The cleaner the electricity grid, the lower the overall pollution.
- Battery recycling can recover up to 90% of key metals.
- Renewable energy charging makes EVs far cleaner.

HOW EVs COMPARE OVER THEIR LIFETIME

EVs	VS	PETROL / DIESEL CARS
Higher emissions during manufacturing (mainly batteries)	MANUFACTURING	Lower manufacturing emissions
Lower emissions in use phase, depends on electricity source	USE PHASE (DRIVING)	High emissions from fuel combustion
Lower maintenance, no tailpipe emissions	MAINTENANCE	Higher maintenance related emissions
Recycling improving, battery recycling still evolving	END-OF-LIFE	Established recycling, but still creates waste and emissions

EVs have a lower total carbon footprint over their lifetime, especially when charged with clean energy.

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Saudi recalls over 27,000 Chevrolet vehicles over airbag defect

TDT | agencies

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Commerce has announced the recall of 27,360 Chevrolet vehicles over a defect in the driver-side airbag inflator that could pose a serious safety risk.

The recall covers Chevrolet

Trax models from 2010 to 2017, Cruze models from 2012 to 2018, and Aveo models from 2010 to 2017.

According to the ministry, the defect could cause the airbag inflator to rupture during a crash, potentially sending sharp metal fragments into the vehicle and causing serious injury or death.

Lotus Emira 420 Sport introduced in Middle East

TDT | agencies

Lotus has introduced the Emira 420 Sport in the Middle East, adding a new performance-focused variant to the Emira range. In the UAE, the model is being offered through AGMC, the official Lotus distributor.

The Emira 420 Sport is powered by a 2.0-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine producing 416bhp, paired with an eight-speed dual-clutch transmission. Lotus quotes a 0-100kph time of 3.9 seconds and a top speed of 300kph.

The model features a revised chassis that sits 5mm lower than the standard Emira, along with upgraded brake cooling and

seven aerodynamic changes. Lotus says the aerodynamic revisions increase downforce by 25kg while maintaining the car's standard drag level.

A lightweight handling package is also available, reducing weight by up to 25kg. The package includes lightweight components aimed at reducing the car's overall mass.

The Emira 420 Sport remains a mid-engined, rear-wheel-drive sports car and uses the same 2.0-litre engine and eight-speed DCT configuration offered in the Emira Turbo and Turbo SE.

The new variant is part of Lotus' updated Emira line-up for the 2026 model year. The UAE Lotus website currently lists the Emira 420 Sport among its models, although UAE pricing has not been published on the official site.

BYD takes on Japanese rivals with small 'kei' car

AFP | Tokyo, Japan

Chinese giant BYD launched an electric "kei" car in Japan with an ad campaign featuring a top actor, taking on local rivals whose own pint-sized vehicles rule the road. Ideal for Japan's often narrow roads, the super-compact category of cars up to 1.4 metres (4.9 feet) wide and 3.4 metres long accounts for some 40 percent of new vehicle sales there.

B Y D

said the Racco is the first "kei" car launched in Japan by an overseas automaker.

The car has a height of 180 centimetres and is priced from 2.1 million yen (\$12,830).

"Kei" cars -- "kei-jidosha" ("light vehicle") in Japanese -- have a cult following. Admirers include US President Donald Trump, who told US firms in December to "START BUILDING THEM NOW!"