

ROCK SOLID AND PURE OF HEART

EVERYTHING A JEEP HAS EVER BEEN, IMPROVED IN EVERY WAY. BY JOE SAGE



The term "icon" may be a cliché. It not only fits, however, but has been earned in the case of Jeep Wrangler, the tough do-everything vehicle that sits at the core of the brand's seven-slat identity.

When a vehicle was born perfect, you improve it carefully, and incrementally. Perfection is always subject to context. Whereas the first military Jeep came just 14 years after the last Model T Ford, today's buyer expects not only the same indomitable duty, but also a higher level of technology and creature comforts, improvements in ride and handling, and competitive everyday fuel economy. And in

the usual bold Jeep way, it has to be stylish.

The 2018 Jeep Wrangler is everything a Jeep has ever been, improved in ways both incremental and dramatic—but the magic is that even its most dramatic changes seem incremental, as the total package remains all Jeep and instantly recognizable.

Jeep's history has taken many twists and turns. Its image and purpose survived as the CJ (civilian Jeep) from 1944, through years of ownership by Willys-Overland, Kaiser-Jeep and American Motors Corporation, until AMC passed the baton of the first Jeep Wrangler model to Chrysler in 1986.

Modern Fiat Chrysler Automobiles takes the preservation and protection of this huge heritage very seriously—which may not be as hard as it sounds, as the team consistently displays their love of and commitment to the purity and possibilities of this unique (another overused, but here earned word) vehicle.

Developing a new Wrangler is as daunting

(and potentially fulfilling) a challenge as any vehicle design team could face. Some fans might have been happy had the original 1941 Army Jeep just continued as was for the duration. But change is good, as they say, and Jeep is here to prove it.

Changes are implemented throughout—from body materials, to form, to drivetrains, to creature comforts and tech features.

The new Jeep Wrangler went through 3.9 million miles of development. But don't visualize Interstate highway mile markers—think Moab, Rubicon Trail, and Michigan and Arizona Proving Grounds. Think Arizona again, along with Alaska, for extreme climate testing. It's more than ready for anything.

To illustrate the Jeep's unmatched heritage and simultaneously show its significant evolution, samples of every generation were brought to the launch of this new Wrangler, held in the mountains outside Tucson.



2018 Jeep Wrangler
4-Door Sahara

Top off, windshield down and headed up our challenging off-road course. Having a second to grab a photo means this was one of the easier stretches.

MODELS: Two-doors (or none) may be at the heart of Jeep's roots, but as tastes have evolved and sales have skyrocketed for the brand overall, four-door Jeep Wrangler models now account for 75 to 80 percent of all Wrangler sales. And why not? It's a rare combination: a five-seat SUV with presence equally suited to Rubicon Trail, country club, business meeting or soccer practice duty. And it offers a manual transmission. (Note that the Unlimited name is now dropped from four-doors.)

Trims include Sport, Sport S (with added convenience features and upgraded wheels), Sahara (four-door only) and Rubicon. Sport has been the biggest seller, Rubicon remains top dog off-road, while Sahara presents top creature features with less extreme off-roading capability than Rubicon.

POWERTRAINS: There are two engines—a 3.6L Pentastar V6 and a new 2.0L turbo four. The V6 (now with auto stop-start) has a six-speed manual standard, with eight-speed auto option, while the 2.0L is automatic-only. (A 3.0L EcoDiesel will join the lineup in 2019, as of now to be auto-only.)

The 2.0L turbo has a suite of eTorque technologies: a 48-volt battery, a belt-to-crank system with no alternator. Benefits include auto stop-start, electric power assist, shift management, intelligent battery charging, regenerative braking and extended fuel shutoff during stops, coasting or deceleration, delivering higher fuel economy, better launch performance and smoother auto stop-starts.

Four-wheel-drive systems vary by model (see sidebar), with exceptionally low crawl ratios—up to 84.2:1 in a manual-shift Rubicon.

TOPS: There are three distinct tops for the new Wrangler (four if you count hardtops two ways)—



but it seems like many more. Newest is the Sky One-Touch power top—a hardtop with fabric power sunroof, for those who like a hard-sealed cabin and open air, both. Hard Freedom Tops—in three modular pieces, with rear wiper-washer-defroster and full-frame doors—are standard in black for all, with body-color available on Sahara and Rubicon.

Completely reengineered soft tops have two additional bows and position detents, allowing you to raise the front about 45 degrees (even solo), pause and let go to refresh or reposition before continuing. You can drive with the front half open, or do the final full roof drop also with just one hand. Rear windows are no longer a cumbersome zipper affair: three panels (sides include hard rear corners) now slide easily in and out in grooved channels. With windows removed (and doors, if you like, also more easily than ever), but the full-length fabric top up, you have a safari style Jeep—a distinctive look very popular during our launch drive and sure to be widely so in

KEEP RIGHT >>



2018 Jeep Wrangler
2-Door Rubicon

SPECIFICATIONS

LAYOUTLongitudinal front engine, 4WD
CONSTRUCTIONLadder frame, open body (steel and aluminum)
ASSEMBLYToledo, Ohio
ENGINE (V6)3.6L Pentastar V6 chain-driven DOHC, 24v, hydraulic end-pivot roller rockers
HP/TORQUE285 hp (6400 rpm) / 260 lb-ft (4800 rpm)
COMPRESSION RATIO11.3:1
FUEL87 octane regular unleaded
OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY5 qt / 10 qt
TRANSMISSIONstandard: 6-spd manual/OD optional: 8-spd auto/OD
MPGV6 AUTO 18/23/20 (city/hwy/comb) V6 MAN 17/23/19 (city/hwy/comb)
ENGINE BUILDSaltillo, Mexico

ENGINE (2.0L)2.0L 16v DI inline-4 turbo chain-driven DOHC, 16v, with eTorque tech
HP/TORQUE270 hp (5250 rpm) / 295 lb-ft (3000 rpm)
COMPRESSION RATIO10.0:1
FUEL87 reg unl / 91 prem unl recmd
OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY5 qt / 9.9 qt
TRANSMISSION8-spd auto/OD
MPGAUTO 2-DR TBD (city/hwy/comb) AUTO 4-DR TBD (city/hwy/comb)
ENGINE BUILDTermoli, Italy / Trenton, Mich

ALTERNATOR / BATTERY160 amp / 600 CCA
TRANSFER CASE: SPORT / SAHARA (STANDARD)
 NV241 Command-Trac part-time 4WD
 2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low
 Low range2.72:1

TRANSFER CASE: RUBICON (STANDARD)
 NV241OR Rock-Trac part-time 4WD
 2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low
 Low range4.0:1

TRANSFER CASE: SAHARA (OPTIONAL)
 MP3022 Selc-Trac full-time
 2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low
 Low range4.0:1

AXLE/FRONTDana 30 / Dana 44 (Rubicon)
 Ratios3.45, 3.73, 4.10
AXLE/REARDana 35 / Dana 44 (Rubicon)
 Differential: open (Sport/Sahara) w avail Trac-Lok anti-spin, Tru-Lok electronic locking (Rubicon)
 Ratios3.45, 3.73, 4.10

STEERINGelectro-hydraulic power
TURNING CIRCLE2-door: 34.5 ft
4-door: 40.8 ft

SUSPENSION/FRONT: Solid axle, link coil, leading arms, track bar, coils, stblzr bar (Rubicon: electronic sway-bar disconnect).

SUSPENSION/REAR: Solid axle, link coil, trailing arms, track bar, coils, stabilizer bar.

SHOCKS (Sport): gas charged twin tube w full displacement Multi-Tuned Valve tech; (Sahara): high-pressure gas charged monotube w MTV tech; (Rubicon): high-pressure gas monotube w MTV tech and hydraulic rebound stop.

BRAKES ...F: 12.9 vented, twin-piston floating R: 12.9 or 13.4 solid, single-piston floating

WHEELS17x7.5, 18x7.5, vary by model

TIRESSport:P245/75R17 Sahara:P255/70R18 Rubicon:LT285/70R17C Addtl tire options available

APPROACH41.4-41.8° / Rubicon 43.9-44°

BREAKOVER20.3-25° / Rubicon 22.6-27.8°

DEPARTURE35.9-36.1° / Rubicon 37°

GRND CLEARANCE9.7-10 in / Rubicon 10.8 in

SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D >>

This Mojito! green four-door Wrangler is outfitted with ever-expanding genuine Jeep accessories, no aftermarket. Total add-ons here: about \$10,000.

Arizona, where shade is often very welcome.

WINDSHIELD: For the full bugs-in-your-teeth feeling, dropping the windshield—formerly a task that took 28 bolts and maybe an hour and a half—has been massively simplified to just four bolts and a few minutes. A full roll cage is left intact.

INTERIOR: As always, with doors removable, the new interior concentrates features and controls in the console, center stack and instrument panel (itself a rugged modernized echo of the original). You'll find more refined build and finishes than ever, integrated with strong nods to heritage styling and tough functionality (materials range from fabric to leather). Weatherproofed pushbutton start is now standard. Touchscreens are at top center (5-inch base, or gen-four Uconnect, either 7- or 8.4-inch), with volume and climate knobs(!), USB and other ports just below. The driver gets either a 3.5-inch or configurable 7-inch display and a full array of wheel controls. Storage includes door-length mesh pockets, many places for a phone, out-of-sight subfloor storage behind rear seats, and lockable glove box and console. An available new Trail Rail cargo system allows easy access and organization for additional gear in the back. The rear seat is at a more comfortable angle. Carpet is removable, and new studs make it easy to put back in.

TECH: The new Wrangler has more than 75 available active and passive safety and security features. Four standard air bags include new front seat-side. Blind-spot monitor, rear cross path alert, backup camera with dynamic lines, and ESC with electronic roll mitigation are available.

OUR ON-ROAD DRIVE: We drove surface streets and freeways near Tucson, and curvy, hilly two-lanes through the countryside—half the day in a Sahara four-door with V6 and automatic, the other half in the same but with 2.0L turbo.

With 15 percent more torque (earlier and across a much wider band) and only a 5 percent dip in horsepower, the 2.0L turbo has an overall advantage. Fuel economy has not been released yet, but is expected to reinforce the 2.0's edge. The two-liter turbo's automatic-only drivetrain, though, will drive devoted manual fans straight to the V6.

The on-road experience (wheel-and-tire-dependent by model) is improved across the board.

Windshield rake is increased, optimized for reduced wind noise, contributing to the new Wrangler's nine percent improvement in aerodynamics. As a styling change, it's either imperceptible or cool, reflected in the angle of the upper grille area.

OUR OFF-ROAD DRIVE: The event team had prepped an exceptional course for our drive—the kind only the most experienced off-roader would



even think drivable, the very definition of bouldering. We used the Rubicon here, with transmission and transfer case in the lowest of lows. Though the two-door seemed to occupy every cubic inch of space in our carefully prepared course, the longer four-door (not surprisingly) did every bit as well.

For anyone with any trepidation that a new Wrangler may have been lessened in a reengineering, fear not: this newest Jeep is simply the best yet. Despite having grown ever so slightly in size, it's as nimble as always, and the turning circle is in fact now actually a foot tighter.

Production has already started on the new 2018 Jeep Wrangler, and you will surely start seeing them right away. Spotter's guide: up front, look for the slight slant up the upper grille and the inset of the headlights into its outer slats. In the rear, various top configurations may give it away, but look for the black bulges on the sides of the taillights (part of the backup and rear cross-traffic systems).

The prior model will still be built for awhile, also, as a 2018 Wrangler JK, until all production lines are all fully converted to the new model. ■



SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D

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| LENGTH / WHEELBASE | 2DR: 166.8 / 96.8 in |
| | 4DR: 188.4 / 118.4 in |
| WEIGHT: 2-DR 3.6L V6 | 3,955-4,145 lb |
| 2-DR 2.0L Turbo | 4,010-4,175 lb |
| 4-DR 3.6L V6 | 4,200-4,455 lb |
| 4-DR 2.0L Turbo | 4,320-4,485 lb |
| TOW OPTION | 2-dr 2000 lb / 4-dr 3500 lb |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 2-dr: 18.5 / 4-dr 21.5 gal |

MODELS: 2-DR: Sport, Sport S, Rubicon
4-DR: Sport, Sport S, Sahara, Rubicon
TOPS: • Sunrider folding soft top w sunroof feature standard on all.
• Premium Sunrider soft top avail on 2-dr Rubicon and all 4-drs.
• Freedom Top 3-piece hard top avail on all.
• Body-color hard top avail on Rubicon 2-dr, all 4-doors.
• Powertop avail on 4-dr Sahara and Rubicon.
• Dual Top Group avail on all 4-drs except Sport.
PAINTS: Black, Bright White, Firecracker Red, Granite Crystal Metallic, Hella Yella, Ocean Blue Metallic, Punk 'n Metallic, Sting-Gray, Mojito!, Billet Silver Metallic.
UCONNECT: Choice of 5.0-, 7.0- or 8.4-inch touchscreens with pinch-and-zoom, Apple/Android.
AUDIO: 8-speaker or optional premium 552-watt 9-spr/all-weather-subwoofer Alpine Audio.

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| BASE PRICES: | |
| 2-DR SPORT | \$26,995 |
| RUBICON | 36,995 |
| 4-DR SPORT | \$30,495 |
| SAHARA | 37,345 |
| RUBICON | 40,495 |
| DESTINATION CHARGE | 1,195 |

