

Power, versatility, comfort

Yesterday's options are today's standard features on many model year 2003 and 2004 trucks

BY VICKY POULSEN

Whether it's a Ford F-150 or a heavy-duty Dodge Ram, we've found that many truck manufacturers have packed their 2003

and 2004 lines with Herculean engine and hauling power, comfortable, spacious seating, greater handling capabilities and more standard features that were once optional. We've picked the hottest trucks — the best of the best — to make this year's list. Which one do you like?

Chevrolet-GMC

2004 Canyon

Best features:

► Two in-line engines based on the Vortec 4.2-liter in-line six-cylinder engine. The standard engine, the 2.8-liter Vortec in-line four-cylinder, delivers 175 hp and 185 lbs.-ft. of torque. The optional 3.5-liter Vortec in-line five-cylinder delivers 220 hp and 225 lbs.-ft. of torque

► Five-speed manual transmission, a transfer case for four-wheel-drive models, and the four-speed Hydra-Matic 4L60-E automatic transmission

2003 Silverado (available in 3/4- and one-ton pickups, including 3/4-ton 2500HD and one-ton 3500 Series regular cabs, four-door extended cabs, crew cabs and chassis cabs)



GMC's 2003 Silverado with four-door extended cab.

Best features:

► Equipped with a Vortec 6000 6.0L V8 with hardened, upgraded valves and seats

► Special versions with reduced Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) (8,500 lbs.) and 9,200-lb. GVWR models are available

► Available with gas or diesel engines — Duramax 6600 6.6L diesel V8 delivers 300 hp at 3,100 rpm and 520 lbs.-ft. (705

Nm) of torque at 1,800 rpm; an optional Vortec 8100 8.1L V8 gas engine has 340 hp at 4,200 rpm and 455 lbs.-ft. (617 Nm) of torque at 3,200 rpm

► Available with the Allison 1000: full electronic control of shift-timing points, five forward speeds and helical-type planetary gear sets for quiet operation

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► A handling and trailering package standard for HD pickups

2003 GMC TopKick C4500 and C5500 series trucks

Best features:

- GVWR of 16,000 lbs. for C4500; 18,000 to 19,500 lb. GVWRs available in the C5500
- Allows turning diameters as low as 35.3 ft.
- Greater maneuverability and visibility
- Advanced chassis and braking system

Isuzu

2004 NQR

Best features:



GMC's 2003 TopKick offers better visibility.

- GVWR of 17,950 lbs. and body/payload range from 11,733 to 11,965 lbs.
- Body lengths range from 12 to 20 ft. with a choice of four different wheelbase lengths
- A straight channel, ladder-type frame with a section modulus of 7.20 cu. in. and a Resistance Bending Moment (RBM) of 316,800 lbs. for those demanding heavier body applications

- Equipped with front and rear semi-elliptical, multi-leaf springs and shock absorbers
- A front stabilizer bar contributes to greater handling and steering capabilities
- Equipped with ABS
- 4.75-liter, 4HE1-TC, four-cylinder diesel engine
- It incorporates an overhead cam engine design and direct fuel injection. This 4HE1-TC is rated at 175 gross hp at 2,700 rpm and 347 lbs.-ft. gross torque at 2,000 rpm
- A choice of transmissions

2004 low cab-forward crew cab (NPR-HD and NQR)

Best features:

- Seats a crew of seven people comfortably — three across in the front and four abreast in the back
- Available in two wheelbase configurations — a 150-in. wheelbase accommodates 12-ft. bodies, and a 176-in. wheelbase handles 16-ft. bodies
- The crew cab's diesel engine, coupled with a four-speed overdrive automatic transmission, delivers 175 hp at 2,700 rpm
- Visibility is enhanced with an oversized panoramic-view windshield
- The NPR-HD crew cab is rated at 14,500 lbs. GVWR. The NQR is rated at 17,950 lbs. GVWR
- NPR-HD crew cab features 4,500-lb. GVWR; 150- and 176-in. wheelbases; accommodates 12-ft. bodies
- NQR crew cab features 17,950-lb. GVWR; 150- and 176-in. wheelbases; accommodates 16-ft. bodies

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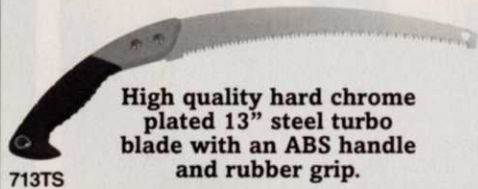
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Dodge's 2003 Dakota features a choice of two Magnum V-8 engines.



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2004 Class 6-7 F-Series commercial trucks

Best features:

- ▶ Class 6 FSR, Class 6 to 7 FTR and Class 7 FVR are powered by an Isuzu 6HK1-TC diesel engine in two horsepower configurations
- ▶ The 7.8-liter overhead cam engine is turbocharged, intercooled and equipped with electronic fuel injection
- ▶ Installed in the FSR and FTR, the six-cylinder diesel develops 200 hp at 2,400 rpm and 441 lbs.-ft. gross torque at 1,500 rpm. The version used in the higher payload FVR diesel engine develops 230 hp at 2,400 rpm and 506 lbs.-ft. gross torque at 1,500 rpm
- ▶ All F-Series models include as standard an Isuzu MLD6Q six-speed manual overdrive transmission, synchronized in gears two through six. The transmission has a standard PTO opening. An Allison AT545 four-speed automatic transmission is available as an option in the FSR and FTR

Dodge

2003 Dakota

Best features:

- ▶ Choice of two Magnum V-8 engines
- ▶ Dakota Quad Cab offers six-passenger seating
- ▶ New 5-45RFE five-speed automatic transmission with 4.7-liter engine provides a second overdrive ratio
- ▶ Four-wheel disc brakes with rear-wheel anti-lock (RWAL) are now standard on

4WD models and 2WD models

- ▶ 5,350 lbs. GVWR and over

2003 heavy duty Ram 2500/3500

Best features:

- ▶ The high output Cummins Turbo Diesel engine is available in the 2500/3500 segment, producing 305 hp at 2,900 rpm and 555 lbs.-ft. of torque at 1,400 rpm
- ▶ Delivers a towing capability of 23,000 lbs. (GCWR)
- ▶ Comes with a 3500 single rear wheel option

Ford

2004 F-150

Best features:

- ▶ Its fully boxed frame is about nine times stiffer torsionally than its predecessor
- ▶ A maximum tow rating of 9,500 lbs. and maximum payload capacity of 2,900 lbs.
- ▶ Regular Cab and SuperCab models have a passenger compartment that is six in. longer, providing more space inside for occupants and their gear
- ▶ A 5.4-liter, 3-valve Triton V-8 engine produces 300 peak hp
- ▶ 8-ft., 6-1/2-ft., and 5-1/2-ft. box lengths offered

2004 F-250/F-350 series super duty

Best features:

- ▶ A 32-valve 6.0-liter Power Stroke V-8 diesel engine and five-speed TorqShift automatic transmission
- ▶ A newly designed five-speed gearbox

and electronic control system

- ▶ Transmission's tow-haul mode helps improve shift control under demanding operating conditions



Hino

FB medium-duty Class 5 truck

Best features:

- ▶ An 11,000-lb. body and payload capacity
- ▶ It can be spec'd as a flatbed, with stake beds or with a small dump body
- ▶ Powered by a turbo intercooled four-valve overhead cam engine and driven through a five-speed direct drive transmission or optional four-speed automatic
- ▶ Its cabover design makes driving in tight residential areas easy
- ▶ Cab features an enlarged interior with room for three people
- ▶ Six-way adjustable air-ride driver's seat with improved support on a chassis that's supported by long, taper-leaf springs

Mitsubishi Fuso

2003 FG four-wheel drive cabover

Best features:

- ▶ 145-hp, intercooled, turbocharged diesel engine, five-speed manual transmission and optional, limited slip differential
- ▶ Available in Class 3 (12,000 GVWR) and Class 4 (14,050 GVWR)
- ▶ Advanced diesel engines with either

Mitsubishi's 2003 FG 4-wheel drive cabover has a 145-hp engine.



manual or automatic transmissions

- ▶ Three-person cab with side door crush bars and a collapsible steering wheel for added safety

Toyota

2003 Tacoma

Best features:

- ▶ Standard four-wheel anti-lock brake system (ABS)
- ▶ 17 model configurations, based on three cab types — standard, extended Xtracab with rear jump seats and the four-door Double Cab. The Tacoma standard-cab and Xtracab models feature a 74.5-in.-long bed. The Double Cab comes with a bed length of 61.5 in.
- ▶ A 142-hp, 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine with 160 lbs.-ft. of torque powers the 4X2 standard cab and features a 1,480-lb. payload capacity
- ▶ PreRunner and 4X4 models are available with two engines, a 150-hp 2.7-liter DOHC four-cylinder that produces 177 lbs.-ft. of torque and a DOHC 190-hp 3.4-liter V6 that puts out 220 lbs.-ft. of torque
- ▶ The V6-powered Tacoma models can tow up to 5,000 lbs.; four-cylinder models tow up to 3,500 lbs.

2003 Tundra StepSide Access Cab

Best features:

- ▶ Available in V8 Access Cab two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive models in SR5 and Limited grades
- ▶ Available in 15 configurations comprising two cab styles (Regular and Access Cab), two engines (3.4-liter V6 and 4.7-liter i-Force V8), two- and four-wheel drive, two bed lengths (98 in. for regular cab model, 75 in. for Access Cab models) and three model grades (Base, SR5 and Limited)
- ▶ Powered by the 4.7-liter i-Force V8, which produces 240 hp at 315 lbs.-ft. of torque
- ▶ A 3.4-liter DOHC V6 engine is standard in five of the Tundra models and produces 190 hp and 220 lbs.-ft. of peak torque. The V6 engine comes standard with a five-speed manual transmission
- ▶ Offers up to a 1,875-lb. payload capacity (V8 2WD Access Cab SR5) and up to 7,200 lbs. of towing capacity (V8 4x4 regular cab)
- ▶ All V8 models offer a new towing package which includes a Class IV tow hitch

Cub Cadet

Series 8000 utility tractors

Best features:

- ▶ Power ranging from 40 to 45 hp
- ▶ Shuttle shift transmissions allow for easy, efficient operation and increased maneuverability under any condition

- ▶ Cast-iron engine
- ▶ Standard four-wheel drive operation
- ▶ Optional attachments include loader, backhoe and standard Category I rear mount attachments, which result in a convenient multi-task tractor whether you're pulling, pushing or clearing

Series 7000 utility tractors

Best features:

- ▶ 20 to 36 hp and a choice between gasoline or diesel engines
- ▶ Hydrostatic transmission allows for easy, efficient operation and increased maneuverability under any condition



- ▶ Two- or four-wheel-drive operation keeps tractors from turfing in two-wheel drive and provides maximum traction to operate with four-wheel drive in rough terrain

John Deere

ProGator utility vehicle

Best features:

- ▶ Available in 23.5-hp diesel and 26-hp gas versions
- ▶ Five-speed, fully-synchronized transmission
- ▶ One-piece axle supporting the rear wheels, and dual leaf spring suspension

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instead of coils

- ▶ Hydrostatic steering provides for precision control and a tight turning radius of only 33 in.
- ▶ A 2,650-lb. load capacity

E-Z-GO Textron

Workhorse LX line

Best features:

- ▶ Like the standard Workhorses, the LX models have differential scuff guards, tubular front bumpers, bed liners, horns and fuel gauges or charge meters
- ▶ The LX line offers a 36-volt high-efficiency electric motor, 9-hp twin-cylinder, overhead cam gasoline engine and a 11-hp



twin-cylinder, overhead cam gasoline engine

Leer Inc.

700 Series Tonneau cover

Best features:

- ▶ Fiberglass construction produces a snug-

fitting, tight-sealing lid over the entire cargo space

- ▶ Spring-assisted gas struts make opening and closing the lid easy
- ▶ Entire installation and mounting of the 700 Tonneau engineered without drilling or cutting the pickup bed steel, minimizing any risk of cosmetic damage or rust
- ▶ Instead of a flat surface with no character, the 700 Series features curves and shapes that will improve the pickup truck's overall appearance

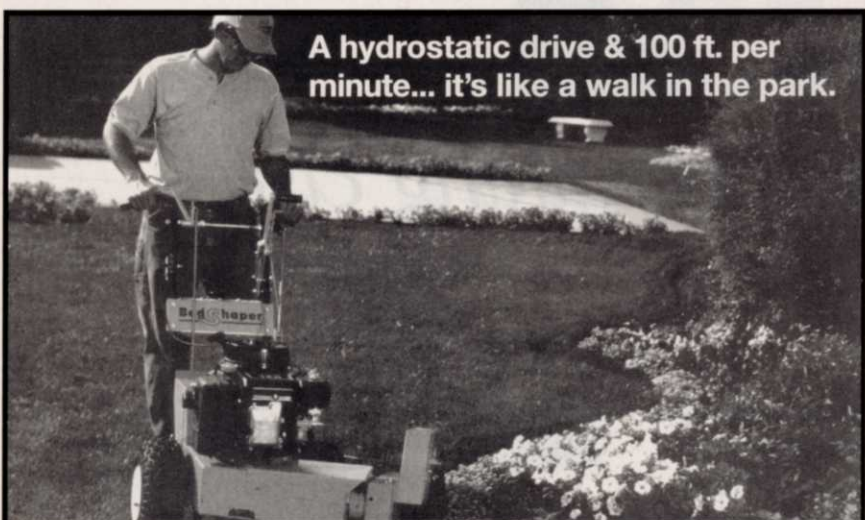


Omaha Standard

Landscaper Body

Best features:

- ▶ 10-gauge sides (available in 40- and 52-in. heights) and rear gate
- ▶ The 48-in. cargo door on the curb side front swings open to allow for loading of palletted materials, balled trees, shrubs and bagged materials
- ▶ Triple acting 16-in. tailgate folds down flat to extend platform length for dumping or spreading materials, and drops 280-degrees for rear loading



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Circle 131



Polaris

Professional Series UTV 1500 2x4

Best features:

- ▶ 18-hp V-twin air-cooled engine, heavy duty transmission and lowering gear
- ▶ Auto tranny with low, super-low, reverse
- ▶ Can carry a payload of up to 1,250 lbs. and tow 1,000 lbs.
- ▶ Upfront, independent MacPherson strut suspension with 4.6 in. of travel
- ▶ Spacious seating for three

Reading

Landscape Body

Best features:

- ▶ Side access door (curbside) features reinforced, 14-gauge, two-sided, A-60 galvanized steel; heavy duty, full opening door, two heavy duty hinges on door, draw latch holds with a 51-in. clear door opening width



- ▶ Rear cargo doors are 14-gauge, two-sided, A-60 galvanized

steel, perforated and reinforced — two heavy-duty hinges on each door

- ▶ Four-way double hinged lower tailgate, fully welded and reinforced, converts easily to all purpose platform or flat dump and allows for manual metering of material

Super Lawn Trucks

Super Lawn Truck Equipment Storage & Transportation System

Best features:

- ▶ Eliminates the need for trailers
- ▶ Equipped with a hydraulically operated ramp that allows large commercial mowers to drive right into the back of the truck

- ▶ Large box-type van is equipped with a hand and power tool storage system
- ▶ Fuel transport tanks carry enough fuel for the whole week



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