

Cross “Get a Second Car” Off the List: Just Get A Gladiator!

What happens when a Jeep Wrangler Unlimited mates with a mid-size pickup? You get the Jeep Gladiator! Yes, Jeep is finally back in the pickup game with its all-new 2020 Jeep Gladiator, touted as “the most capable mid-size truck ever.”

The Gladiator presents the option of owning a five-passenger, four-door, mid-size truck that essentially feels like a Wrangler inside but adds a five-foot cargo bed on the back. Like the Wrangler, the Gladiator offers a soft-top roof option for open air and has a fold-down windshield. Or you may decide to leave the top up, keep the windshield down, and remove the doors for an open-air feeling without the sun exposure. And no worries, builders! There’s a bolt box for your tools that neatly fits under your seat, plus storage compartments under the rear seats, and not to mention multiple phone holders, so nothing bounces out when you can’t resist the urge to go off-road.

The cargo bed? It has a special three-position tailgate perfect for hauling 4-by-8-foot sheets of plywood. Four strong, integrated tie-down loops; the optional Trail Rail™ tie-down system that mounts on the front wall and both sides of the bed; and available 115-volt/400-watt power outlet at the rear of the bed are all ready for action at the job site. Add a roll-up tonneau bed cover, if you wish.



2020 Jeep® Gladiator Rubicon

This is a practical choice! The base Gladiator Sport starts at \$33,545 — just \$2,100 more than a base Wrangler — and it negates the need to buy two vehicles. Plus, you get a lot more with that up-charge. Given its Jeep heritage, it’s no surprise this vehicle can outclimb and out-crawl every other mid-size pickup. But the Gladiator also borrows its five-link rear suspension from its FCA cousin, the Ram 1500, to give it an impressive 7,650-pound tow rating and payload of 1,600 lbs., rivaling the competition there as well. It sports FCA’s 3.6-liter Pentastar engine, offering 285 horsepower and 260 lb-ft of torque paired with a standard six-speed manual transmission and an eight-speed automatic transmission option.

The Gladiator’s steel frame is 31 inches longer than the Wrangler’s, and its

wheelbase is 19.4 inches longer, allowing for improved weight distribution and a better ride while hauling cargo. It handles and rides like the truck that it is, but its rear seat is roomy, and it’s up to date on technology. The base model has features that might be considered a blast from the past: crank windows and manual door locks and mirrors. But Gladiator-driving building contractors are the kind who know a little extra effort won’t kill them. ▼

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