

Review: Ford Lightning vs Rivian R1T

October 26 2022, by Miles Branman



This photo, provided by Edmunds, shows the 2022 Rivian R1T. It is an all-electric pickup truck with an EPA-estimated range of 314 miles in its initial configuration. Credit: Rex Tokeshi-Torres/Courtesy of Edmunds via AP

Tesla, the first high-volume EV maker, was early to promise a zero-emission pickup, but it was Rivian, an American startup, that delivered the first mass-production EV truck. With impressive range, dazzling

performance and innovative features, the R1T has attracted both conventional truck shoppers and early adopters.

Ford's all-electric F-150 Lightning, was the second EV pickup to arrive this year. It achieves competitive range and power, while packaging clever features in a traditional full-size pickup body. Which truck is the better buy? Edmunds' experts compared them to find out.

POWERTRAINS AND RANGE

Rivian is currently delivering the R1T as a four-electric-motor model only. There's a motor at each wheel to give the truck all-wheel drive as well as a staggering combined output of 835 horsepower. That's enough for the R1T to dash from 0 to 60 mph in just 3.5 seconds in Edmunds' testing. The R1T's so-called Large battery pack is good for an EPA-estimated 314 miles on a full charge. In Edmunds' real-world range test, the R1T slightly beat that estimate, going 317 miles.

The F-150 Lightning is equipped with two electric motors and all-wheel drive as standard. Customers can choose from two levels of output and range: The standard-battery model produces 452 horsepower and an EPA-estimated 230 miles of range, while the extended-range battery jumps to 580 horsepower and up to 320 miles of range. Edmunds tested a Lightning in the Platinum trim, which has the big battery and 300 miles of range. It was slightly slower than the R1T, needing 4 seconds to get to 60 mph, but went 332 miles in Edmunds' range test.

Both trucks are impressively rapid and have enough range to make [long-distance](#) driving realistic. The R1T's quicker acceleration helps it eke out a win here.

Winner: R1T



This photo, provided by Edmunds, shows the 2022 Ford F-150 Lightning. It is an all-electric pickup truck with an EPA-estimated range between 230 and 320 miles depending on the configuration. Credit: Rex Tokeshi-Torres/Courtesy of Edmunds via AP

UTILITY AND TOWING

The R1T is smaller than the F-150 but cleverly designed. It has a large front trunk, a tunnel-like storage area between the cabin and bed, and an additional storage area in the bed's floor. The R1T packs useful goodies, too. A built-in air compressor comes in handy and a camera monitoring system keeps valuables secure. Towing is rated at 11,000 pounds.

The F-150 Lightning features its own enormous front trunk and a longer bed—5.5 feet compared to the R1T's 4.5 feet. Ford also engineered its EV pickup to allow owners to use the battery to [power tools](#), appliances and even a house in case of emergency. Properly equipped, the Lightning has a maximum towing capacity of 10,000 pounds.

The R1T and Lightning trade blows here. While the R1T offers greater towing capacity and some trick storage areas, the Lightning boasts a bigger bed and a more robust system for supplying power.

Winner: tie

STYLING AND COMFORT

Rivian aimed for the right-size pickup with just enough standout style to intrigue but not overwhelm. The result is a modern exterior and an upscale interior. Many of the R1T's controls are housed in its central touchscreen, which can be distracting while driving. The R1T is quiet, but its ride quality is firmer than some other trucks.

Ford wanted few visual distinctions between its gas-powered F-150 and its all-electric model, so the Lightning looks slick and tough. Inside, the layout feels familiar to truck buyers, while a 15.5-inch vertical infotainment adds a splash of innovation. An independent rear suspension delivers a smoother ride than a regular F-150. The Lightning's larger size affords greater interior volume and its ride quality is more supple than the R1T's.

Winner: F-150 Lightning

VALUE AND WARRANTY

The configuration that Rivian is taking reservations for now is the

\$88,500 quad-motor Adventure trim with the large battery pack and a delivery timeframe of late 2023. It comes well equipped with vegan leather seats, a height-adjustable air suspension and a 16-inch center touchscreen. It's backed by a five-year/60,000-mile basic warranty and an eight-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty.

Ford is taking orders for the 2023 Lightning, though you may find some 2022s on dealer lots. For the 2023 truck, there's the stripped-down Pro grade starting at \$54,269 including destination. The loaded-up Platinum sits at the top of the range, at \$98,219. Ford's bumper-to-bumper warranty of three years/36,000 miles trails the R1T's, but its battery warranty equals Rivian's.

The R1T carries a higher starting price but includes many desirable features as standard. The Lightning can be cheaper but gets similarly pricey with options.

Winner: tie

EDMUNDS SAYS:

This contest comes down to what kind of electric pickup you want. The Rivian R1T is an incredible first effort from a startup and stands out with its distinctive styling, clever storage and muscular power. Ford's F-150 Lightning is the more conservative choice but gives buyers more flexibility in its available accessories and the reassurance that comes from an established brand.

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Citation: Review: Ford Lightning vs Rivian R1T (2022, October 26) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2022-10-ford-lightning-rivian-r1t.html>

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