

# Ford returns to Formula One in partnership with Red Bull

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The new RB19 F1 car is unveiled during an event in New York, Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday that begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/Seth Wenig

Formula One's booming popularity in the United States has lured another

American brand to the series as Ford said Friday it would return to the globe-trotting series as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing.

The partnership begins with immediate technical support this season, but Ford engines in 2026 when F1 adopts new hybrid regulations that lured Ford back after a 24-year absence.

Red Bull powertrains and Ford will partner on the development of a hybrid power unit that will supply engines to both Red Bull and AlphaTauri when new F1 regulations begin in 2026. The partnership—which is for at least eight years—was announced in New York as Red Bull unveiled the car design it will use in 2023. Red Bull won the constructors title last season, and Max Verstappen is the two-time defending world champion.

"Red Bull is committed to winning and they've demonstrated that they are capable of winning," Mark Rushbrook, global director of Ford Performance, told The Associated Press. "We want to be in motorsports for the technology and for the marketing, but we want to do it winning and with the right partner. They're committed to that, they have a winning culture."

Ford dominated F1 in the late 1960s and 1970s as an engine manufacturer with Cosworth and the American automaker is the third most successful engine maker in F1 history with 10 constructors' championships and 13 drivers' championships. Ford won 176 races and owned and ran the Jaguar F1 team until 2004 when Jaguar was sold and became Red Bull Racing.



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Ford was lured back to F1, where it competed for 38 years until it pulled out in 2004, by F1's focus on sustainable racing and explosion in popularity throughout North America.

"To have the ability to draw on Ford's experience, EV knowledge and depth of resource is tremendously exciting," said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner. "From the first moment we met and spoke, it was clear there was a natural synergy between the two companies. an easy deal to put together because the desire was there from both sides."



Ford is the first American engine supplier to commit to F1 and its impending regulations as the series is set to race five times this year in North America, with three of those races in the United States. General Motors has announced a partnership with Andretti Global to be its engine supplier if Andretti gets an F1 team.



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"The numbers globally are enormous for Formula One," Rushbrook told The AP. "Especially in the United States, where the growth and diversity

of the fans is enormous. That's important for us. We don't want to just race and learn technology. We need to do that. We must do that. But we also must be able to connect with fans.

"With Red Bull and AlphaTauri, that's exactly what we will be able to do."

Ford chairman Jim Farley and F1 CEO Stefano Domenicali appeared on Fox early Friday to announce Ford's return and discuss the push toward electric technology. The partnership with Red Bull was not announced until Red Bull's launch an hour later.

"Ford is a global brand with an incredible heritage in racing and the automotive world and they see the huge value that our platform provides with over half a billion fans around the world," Domenicali said. "Our commitment to be Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and to introduce sustainable fuels in the F1 cars from 2026 is also an important reason for their decision to enter F1."



Christian Horner, team principal of the Red Bull Formula One team, left, talks with Ford CEO Jim Farley during an Oracle Red Bull Racing event in New York, Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday that begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/Seth Wenig

"We believe that our sport provides the opportunity and reach unlike any other and we cannot wait for the Ford logo to be racing round F1's iconic circuits from 2026."

And Mohammed Ben Sulayem, head of F1 ruling body FIA, said Ford's return to the series is validation of the 2026 engine rules.



"There are few manufacturers who have such a celebrated motorsport history as Ford, so to see them coming back to the FIA Formula 1 world championship is excellent news," Sulayem said. "It further underlines the success of the 2026 Power Unit Regulations that have at their heart a commitment to both sustainability and spectacle, and of course having more interest from the United States is important for the continued growth of the world's top motorsport category."

The F1 2026 rule changes call for the current twin-turbo V6 engines to run on sustainable fuel and be fitted with hybrid components.



Christian Horner, team principal of the Red Bull Formula One team, left, talks while Ford CEO Jim Farley, right, listens during an Oracle Red Bull Racing event in New York, Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday that

begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/Seth Wenig

Red Bull will continue to race with unbranded Honda power units until 2026. Honda withdrew from F1 at the end of the 2021 season and Red Bull used its own-badged engines to win both championships in 2022. Honda still owns the intellectual property of the engines and agreed to maintain and support the powerplants until 2026.

Porsche was set to replace Honda with Red Bull and when that deal collapsed, Ford jumped in. Ford will begin with immediate technical assistance and then supply Ford engines when the new regulations begin.

Ford has split itself into two divisions, one to focus solely on electric vehicles and the other to handle internal combustion engines. Last year Ford laid off about 3,000 white-collar workers to help fund the multi-billion dollar transition to EVs. The company is acquiring battery minerals and setting up partnerships to build EV batteries.





Oracle Red Bull Racing drivers Sergio Perez, left, Max Verstappen, center, and Daniel Ricciardo participate in an event in New York, Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday that begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/Seth Wenig



Ford CEO Jim Farley, left, and Red Bull Racing driver Max Verstappen participate in an Oracle Red Bull Racing event in New York, Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday that begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/Seth Wenig



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In this Oct. 20, 2019 file photograph, a Ford logo is displayed at a Ford dealership in Littleton, Colo. Ford will return to Formula One as the engine provider for Red Bull Racing in a partnership announced Friday, Feb. 3, 2023, that begins with immediate technical support this season and engines in 2026. Credit: AP Photo/David Zalubowski, File

It has announced three new battery factories in Kentucky and Tennessee. Ford expects to be able to produce electric vehicles at a rate of 600,000 per year by late this year, and hit a manufacturing rate of over 2 million per year by the end of 2026.

"This is the start of a thrilling new chapter in Ford's motorsports story that began when my great-grandfather won a race that helped launch our company," said Bill Ford, executive chair. "Ford, alongside world

champions, Oracle Red Bull Racing, is returning to the pinnacle of the sport, bringing Ford's long tradition of innovation, sustainability and electrification to one of the world's most visible stages."

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