

In the twilight of the muscle car era, demand for the new 486-horsepower V-8 Ford Mustang is roaring

August 11 2023



Bill Ford, executive chairman of Ford Motor Company, introduces one of the models of the 2024 Ford Mustang, the performance vehicle Dark Horse, at the North American International Auto Show, Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2022, in Detroit. New versions of the Mustang muscle car will begin shipping next week and more than two thirds of the orders include the big, 5-liter V-8 engine, Ford said Friday, Aug. 11, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Jose Juarez, File

New versions of the Mustang muscle car will begin shipping next week and more than two thirds of the orders include the big, 5-liter V-8 engine, Ford said Friday.

Demand for roaring engines remains strong in an era when Detroit automakers are starting to phase out the rumbling gas burners and transition to [electric vehicles](#) in order to meet strict government emissions and fuel economy requirements.

There are about 13,000 U.S. orders for the 2024 Mustangs, Ford says, which also can be equipped with a four-cylinder turbocharged engine. Of those orders, 67% have the V-8, and more than a quarter of the people seeking that Mustang want the six-speed manual transmission, spokesman Mike Levine says.

But muscle cars, at least new ones, are on their way out.

General Motors announced in March that it will stop making the Chevrolet Camaro early next year as a 2024 model. The company wouldn't rule out a replacement for the Camaro at a future date.

Stellantis, formerly Fiat Chrysler, will stop making gas versions of the Dodge Challenger and Charger muscle cars by the end of this year. But the company has plans to roll out a battery-powered Charger performance car sometime in 2024.

Levine wouldn't say whether this version of the Mustang would be the company's last gas-powered muscle car. "That remains to be seen," he said.

There also could be an electric Mustang sports car in the future. Electric

cars, with instant torque and a low center of gravity, often are faster and handle better than internal combustion vehicles.

People are going for V-8 Mustangs with stick shifts in part because they may be the last of the gas-powered muscle car era, said Guidehouse Insights eMobility analyst Sam Abuelsamid.

"The most hard-core fans, they're going to go out and grab one of these because you don't know when it's going to end," he said.

When a new Mustang comes out, the V-8 order rate is almost always higher than the other available engines, as is the demand for manual transmissions, because fervent Mustang fans are often the first to order, Abuelsamid said.

"We tend to see more demand from enthusiasts for the V-8 whenever an all-new Mustang is introduced," Jim Owens, Mustang brand manager, said in a prepared statement.

The new Mustang, which is on the same underpinnings as the current version, is built at a factory in Flat Rock, Michigan, south of Detroit. Most of the V-8s will produce 486 horsepower, but a Dark Horse version puts out 500.

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Citation: In the twilight of the muscle car era, demand for the new 486-horsepower V-8 Ford Mustang is roaring (2023, August 11) retrieved 21 May 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-08-twilight-muscle-car-era-demand.html>

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