

Ford says Q4 sales fall on lingering COVID-19 hit

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Ford reported lower US auto sales in the fourth quarter, citing a lingering hit from a spring manufacturing shutdown caused by the coronavirus

Ford reported a drop in fourth-quarter US auto sales Wednesday, citing the extended effects from a COVID-19 production shutdown that hit the

supply of their most popular vehicle in the American market.

Inventories of the F-150 pickup truck have suffered due to "lingering effects of the Q2 coronavirus production stoppage," Ford said, pointing to the roughly two-month halt to manufacturing at the height of the spring lockdowns.

The F-150 held on to its title as the best-selling US vehicle for the 44th straight year, but sales of the [vehicle](#) dropped 15.2 percent in the fourth quarter to 198,388 and 12.2 percent for the year to 787,422.

Ford is in the process of transitioning to the revamped 2021 version of the F-150.

The company's overall US [auto](#) sales fell 9.8 percent in the fourth quarter to 542,749. Sales for all of 2020 were down 15.6 percent to 2.0 million.

Ford's report comes a day after General Motors, Fiat Chrysler and other leading automakers reported full-year sales.

US auto sales for 2020 are projected to drop 15.3 percent to 14.4 million—which would make it the worst year since at least 2012—according to a December forecast from Cox Automotive.

Despite the lower sales, analysts have been encouraged by the recovery in auto sales in the second half of 2020 after the US car market almost completely froze during spring lockdowns as the country contended with a spiraling coronavirus crisis.

While the pandemic has caused elevated unemployment and long lines at food pantries, other consumers have more cash for cars and other big-ticket items due to less spending on travel and other discretionary goods,

and many have benefited from federal stimulus funds.

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