Ford Named Top Mainstream Brand for New Vehicle Quality in JD Power 2026 U.S. Initial Quality Study, First Time Since 2010

- Ford ranks as the top mainstream brand in the JD Power 2026 U.S. Initial Quality Study (IQS)[SM], becoming the gold standard for new vehicle quality for the first time in 16 years
- Ford also earns best-in-segment awards for the second straight year for F-150, Mustang and F-Series Super Duty, with seven of 10 company models placing in the top three of their segments – the highest percentage of any automaker
- The company recorded lower year-over-year warranty costs in 2025 and expects that trend to continue in 2026. This operational excellence enables the path for continued financial improvement
- IQS recognition is the culmination of years of relentless focus on improving quality and enhancing integration between Vehicle Engineering, Supply Chain and Manufacturing
- Ford – America's No. 1 automaker in terms of vehicles assembled, hourly autoworkers employed and vehicles exported from the U.S. to world markets – continues its commitment to build a culture of continuous improvement to deliver top quality, long-term durability and superior customer service

DEARBORN, Mich., June 25, 2026 – Ford today became the new gold standard for mass market new vehicle quality in America, ranking as the top mainstream brand in the closely watched JD Power 2026 U.S. Initial Quality Study (IQS) – an achievement 16 years in the making.

The company surpassed the industry's traditional mass market leaders in IQS, climbing from No. 15 in 2023 to No. 1 among mainstream brands in the annual survey of new buyers.

"This is a proud day for everyone at Ford, and the result of years of intensive work across our company," said Jim Farley, Ford president and CEO. "Many doubted that an American company with a huge American workforce could compete with the world's best on quality, let alone reach the top. But we put our heads down and worked every day to deliver for our customers. Today, Ford is not only the most American automaker but also the gold standard for new vehicle quality."

Added Farley: "And we are just getting started. We won't be satisfied until Ford delivers best-in-class new vehicle quality, reliability and long-term durability year after year."

Thomas King, president of OEM solutions at JD Power, said Ford not only ranked "highest among mass market brands," but also "the Ford F-150, Ford Mustang and Ford Super Duty ranked highest in their respective segments."

It is the second year in a row that those three iconic vehicles won their segments. The Ford Escape, Ford Explorer, Ford Expedition and Ford Maverick also landed among the top three in their segments. That means seven of Ford's 10 models tested placed in the top three in their segments, the highest percentage of any other automaker.

Ford also ranks third overall among brands. Ford improved by 41 problems per 100 vehicles compared with last year, the largest year-over-year improvement among mainstream brands. The momentum extends to Lincoln, which climbs to No. 6 from No. 8 among premium brands.

Ford improved in nearly every vehicle problem category measured by JD Power. Driven by improvements in infotainment quality which saw the largest leap forward, performing 12.2 points better than the industry average, while powertrain reliability also improved significantly.

Thanks to better engineering and improved manufacturing, Ford's vehicles rolling off the line today are among the highest quality in its history. The company recorded lower year-over-year warranty costs in 2025 and expects that trend to continue in 2026. This operational excellence enables the path for continued financial improvement.

Reaching best-in-class quality levels among mainstream brands is the culmination of an intensive multi-year effort. Here's how Ford methodically moved from quality also-ran to leader.

Closer Collaboration

Understanding the significance of this milestone requires a look back to the start of the decade. The disruptions of the pandemic and a rapidly shifting work culture changed how the industry designed and built vehicles.

As teams adapted to remote work and factory floors adjusted to new protocols, the need for fully integrated collaboration became paramount. With vehicles simultaneously evolving into complex, software-driven machines, Ford recognized traditional processes needed to change.

So the company acted. In 2023, it created a unified industrial system. This meant Vehicle Engineering, Manufacturing, Supply Chain and Quality teams worked side by side under one organization, led by Chief Operating Officer Kumar Galhotra.

The next step came this year when that industrial system evolved into Ford's new end-to-end Product Creation and Industrialization organization, uniting the company's digital, design and global industrial teams.

"Bringing them together allows us to look at the entire ecosystem of a vehicle – from the intricacies of software development to the deepest tier of the supply chain to the plant floor – as one continuous, collaborative flow," Galhotra said. "We rallied the whole company around a clear vision: Quality Comes First. That means hard-wiring rigorous processes deep into the way we work, enhancing problem-solving and recognizing our teams when they prevent issues from reaching customers."

Building Strong Engineering Safety Nets

Reaching best-in-class quality required a significant talent refresh. Over the past few years, Ford replaced about two-thirds of the senior leaders in its industrial system across engineering, supply chain and manufacturing.

In Vehicle Engineering, leaders saw an opportunity to bring deep, specialized expertise into the design phase early. Ford hired roughly 300 veteran engineers who carry the hard-earned wisdom of decades of design.

Free from daily production schedules, these engineers now act as internal auditors, running mandatory weekly design reviews to hunt for and eliminate potential failure points before blueprints ever reach the factory floor.

Integrating and De-Risking the Supply Chain

This upfront engineering rigor was paired with a cultural shift in how Ford manages its supplier network. At first, it meant “go see, find it, fix it” missions. Ford teams went directly onto supplier plant floors to address risks alongside their counterparts.

“It’s easy to celebrate heroes fixing problems,” said Liz Door, Ford chief supply chain officer. “What we really want is to celebrate zero defects.”

Now, Ford integrates suppliers earlier in the development process for rigorous design validation that helps ensure long-term performance – an effort that drove a 30% reduction in launch issues year over year.

Empowering Operators on the Plant Floor

In Manufacturing, the focus turned to benchmarking the best in the world and building strategic action plans to close the gap with rigor in daily standard work around safety, quality, delivery, cost and people. Progress data is standardized and shared throughout each plant so teams can see how vehicle quality is trending.

Often, improvement ideas come from the people closest to the work.

“Leaders spend so much more time on the plant floor now. It’s about supporting and collaborating with our operators and learning from them,” said Bryce Currie, Ford chief manufacturing officer. “We’re averaging over eight ideas per kaizen project from operators, and we are investing to support them.”

Currie challenges each plant to be so clean he can eat off the floor, because every employee deserves to work in a clean environment – and when the standard is high, you can see anomalies quickly. So far, five plants globally have met Currie’s standards, and he’s eaten cookies and sandwiches off the floor.

Closing the Software Gap

Finally, with vehicles becoming highly digital, Ford overhauled its software quality assurance from the ground up to make modern technology as reliable as the physical hardware. Today, before code ever reaches a vehicle, it is stress-tested through hundreds of thousands of automated scenarios designed to simulate unpredictable, real-world use. The result: Ford

catches and eliminates software bugs far earlier in development, for a more seamless customer experience.

Perfecting the Present, Eyeing the Future

While these milestones show that Ford is on the right track, the company remains focused on the road ahead.

“Are we proud? You bet. Satisfied? Not even close,” Galhotra said. “This is a milestone, not a finish line. We will celebrate this moment today, but tomorrow we are back at it: chasing perfection, driving continuous improvement and getting better every single day.”

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About Ford Motor Company
Ford Motor Company (NYSE: F) is a global company based in Dearborn, Michigan, committed to helping build a better world, where every person is free to move and pursue their dreams. The company’s Ford+ plan for growth and value creation combines existing strengths, new capabilities, and always-on relationships with customers to enrich experiences for customers and deepen their loyalty. Ford develops and delivers innovative, must-have Ford trucks, sport utility vehicles, commercial vans and cars and Lincoln luxury vehicles, along with connected services, including BlueCruise (ADAS) and security. The company offers freedom of choice through three customer-centered business segments: Ford Blue, engineering iconic gas-powered and hybrid vehicles; Ford Model e, inventing breakthrough electric vehicles (“EVs”) along with embedded software that defines always-on digital experiences for all customers; and Ford Pro, helping commercial customers transform and expand their businesses with vehicles and services tailored to their needs. Additionally, the company provides financial services through Ford Motor Credit Company. Ford employs about 169,000 people worldwide. More information about the company and its products and services is available at fromtheroad.ford.com.

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