YouGov

UNITED STATES

Driving brand preference: U.S. auto rankings 2026

Exploring the top auto brands in the U.S. and the consumers that are planning to buy them.



/Research Reality

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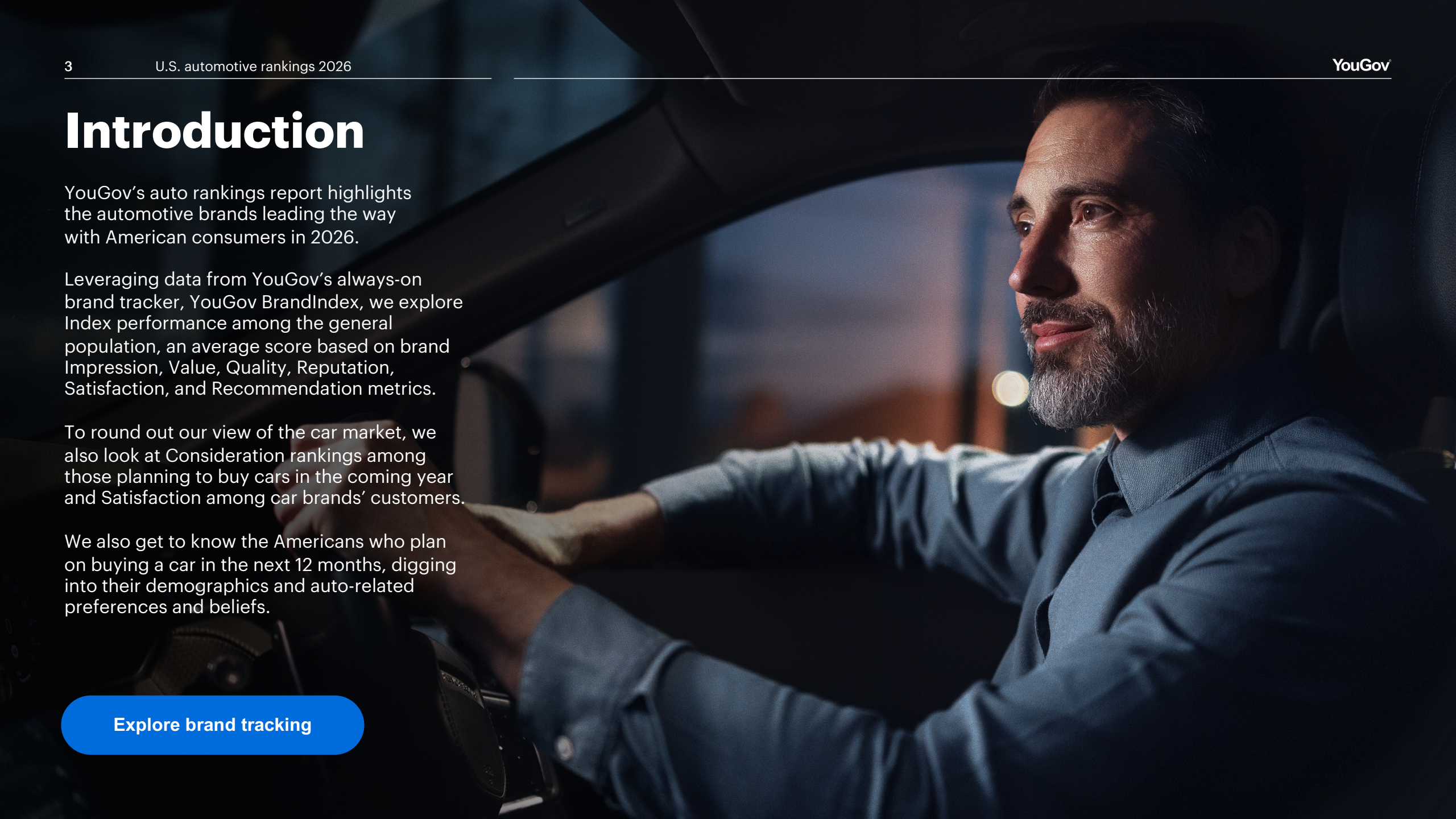
Introduction

YouGov's auto rankings report highlights the automotive brands leading the way with American consumers in 2026.

Leveraging data from YouGov's always-on brand tracker, YouGov BrandIndex, we explore Index performance among the general population, an average score based on brand Impression, Value, Quality, Reputation, Satisfaction, and Recommendation metrics.

To round out our view of the car market, we also look at Consideration rankings among those planning to buy cars in the coming year and Satisfaction among car brands' customers.

We also get to know the Americans who plan on buying a car in the next 12 months, digging into their demographics and auto-related preferences and beliefs.



Explore brand tracking



Profiling America's car buyers

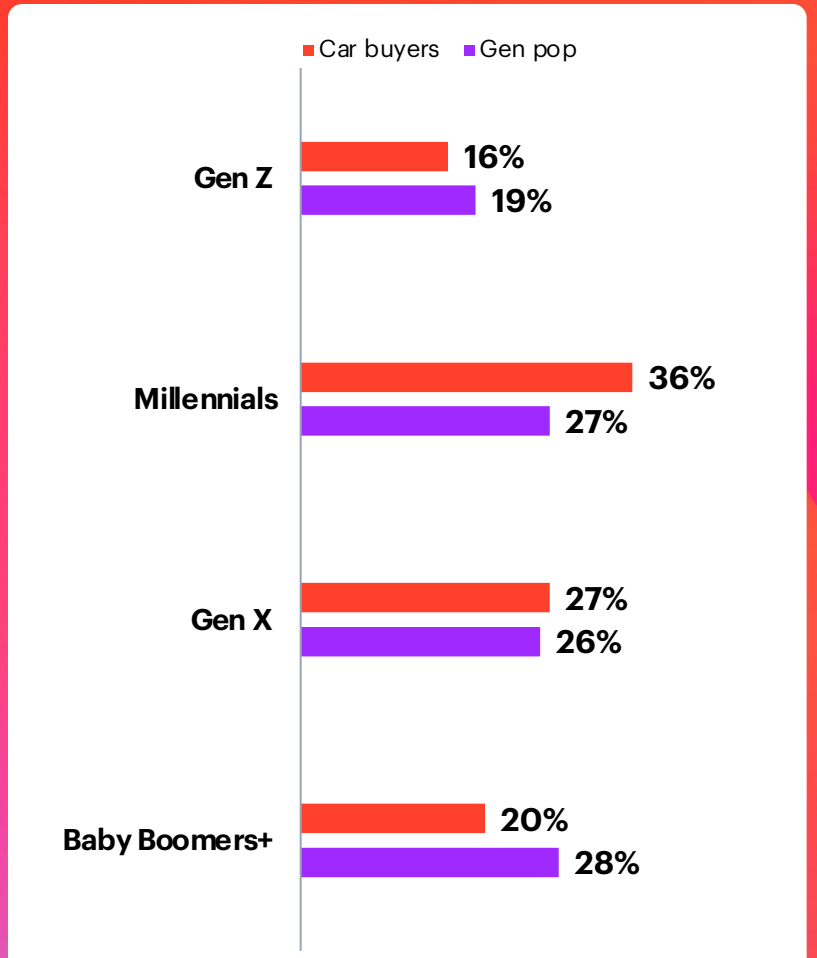
These are the consumers that are looking to buy a vehicle in the coming year and what they'll be shopping for.

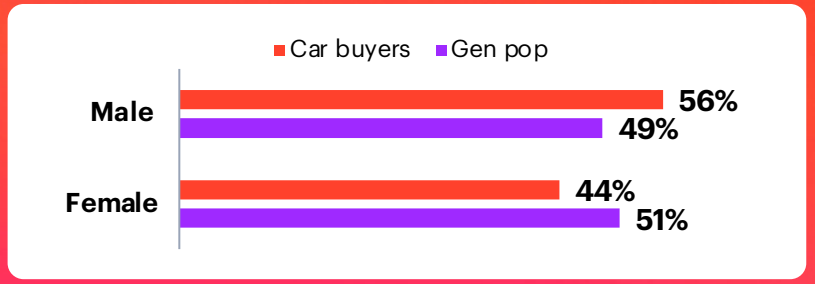
Profile spotlight: In-market for a vehicle in the next year



15%

of Americans likely to purchase a car or truck within the next 12 months





48%

are currently working full-time

Compared to **35%** of gen pop



37%

have at least one child younger than 18

Compared to **24%** of gen pop



YouGov Profiles, April 2026. Car buyers n> 3,500, U.S. gen pop n> 28,800. Car buyers are respondents who are likely to purchase a car or truck within the next 12 months.

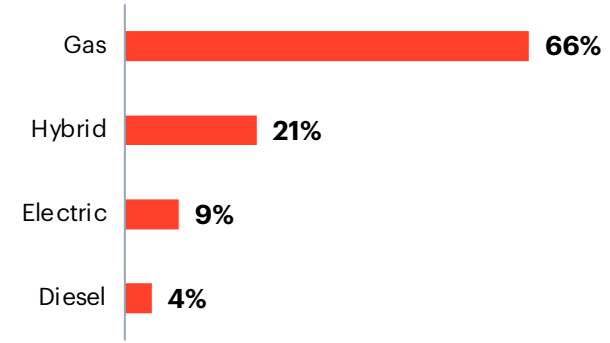
YouGov

What are car buyers most likely to purchase next?

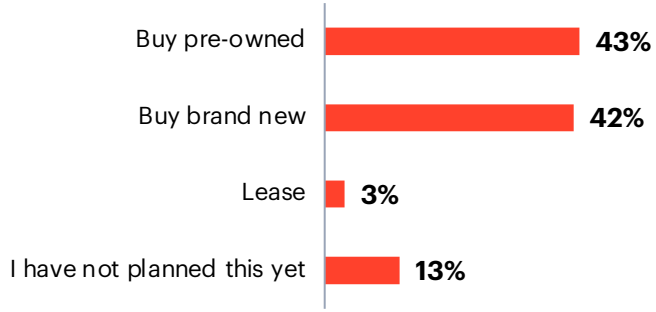
The shift to electric vehicles will not be completed in 2026. Only 9% of car buyers plan to buy electric, though 21% say they'll most likely choose a hybrid engine. The engines will most likely power large vehicles with SUV/crossover being the most popular category, with 43% planning to buy one. Sedans follow at 23%.

Get in touch for more data

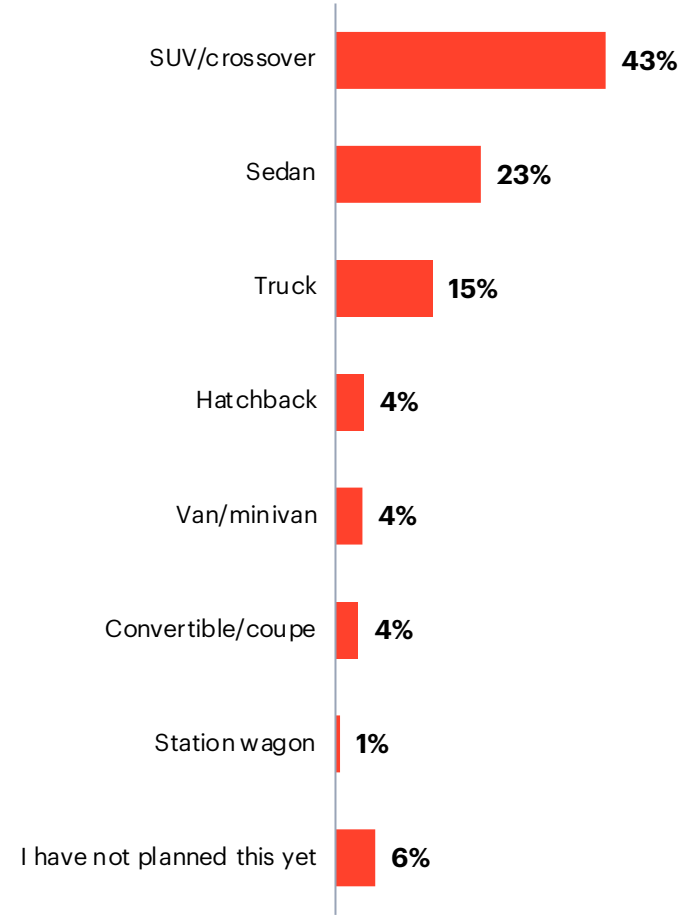
Which type of engine are you most likely to purchase for your next automobile? (% of car buyers)



Do you expect to purchase brand-new, purchase pre-owned, or lease your next automobile? (% of car buyers)



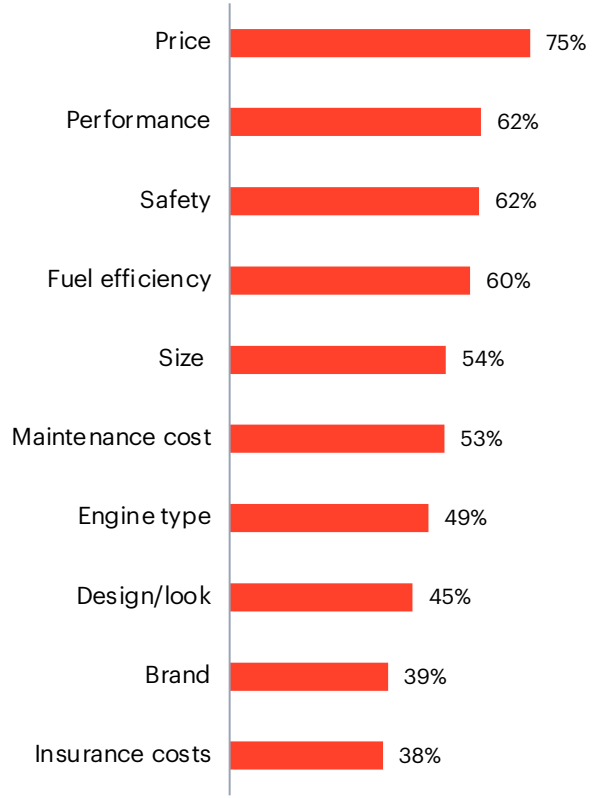
Which type of automobile are you most likely to purchase next? (% of car buyers)



YouGov Profiles, April 2026. Car buyers n> 2,800. Car buyers are respondents who are likely to purchase a car or truck within the next 12 months. *Data rebased to the car buyers and who were asked these questions. *Questions allow multiple selections.

Purchase factors, info sources, budget, and purchase venue

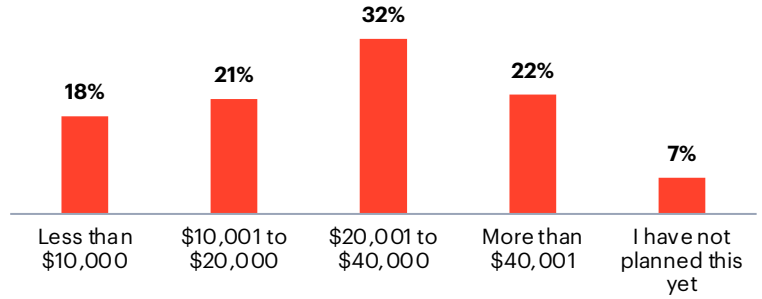
Which factors are important to you when purchasing an automobile?* (% of car buyers)



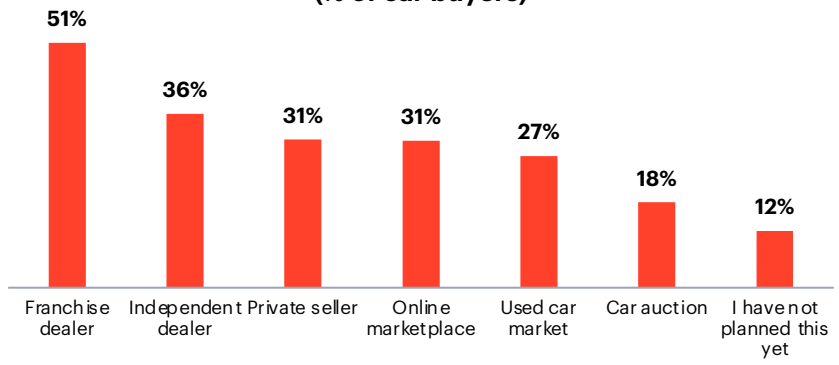
How do you find information on automobiles before buying them?* (% of car buyers)



How much do you expect to spend on your next automobile purchase? (% of car buyers)



Where would you consider buying your next automobile? (% of car buyers)



YouGov Profiles, April 2026. Car buyers n> 2,800. Car buyers are respondents who are likely to purchase a car or truck within the next 12 months.
*Data rebased to the car buyers and who were asked these questions. Top 10 responses shown. *Questions allow multiple selections.

Younger buyers more likely to need GPS and to envision an EV-led future

Gen Z and Millennials seem more tech-forward than their elders. The majority of them (65%) believe that electric cars are the future of the motor industry compared to 45% of older consumers. Similarly, they are more likely to depend on their car GPS (60% vs. 40%).

"Electric cars are the future of the motor industry"

53%

65% among Gen Z & Millennials vs
45% among Gen X & Baby Boomers+





"I couldn't live without a GPS in my car"

52%

60% among Gen Z and Millennials
40% among Gen X and Baby Boomers+

YouGov Profiles, April 2026. Car buyers: All n> 1,400, young (Gen Z+ Millennials) n> 250, older (Gen X & Baby boomers+) n> 1,100. Car buyers are respondents who are likely to purchase a car or a truck within the next 12 months.

Auto rankings 2026: Index

The top ranked car makers based on Index score, a composite of Impression, Value, Quality, Reputation, Satisfaction, and Recommend metrics.



Top auto brands by Index score

Japanese carmakers dominate the top of the rankings.

Toyota is by far the top brand with an index score of 42.3. Honda follows with 33.0, leading the rest of the pack by more than 10 points. Chevrolet and Ford are the top American brands in the fourth and fifth position.

Get in touch for more data

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**42.3**
2	Honda	**33.0**
3	Subaru	**22.7**
4	Chevrolet	**22.4**
5	Ford	**20.3**
6	Lexus	**18.1**
7	Mercedes-Benz	**17.6**
8	BMW	**17.0**
9	Nissan	**16.4**
10	Audi	**13.2**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. gen pop n> 29,600. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days). Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

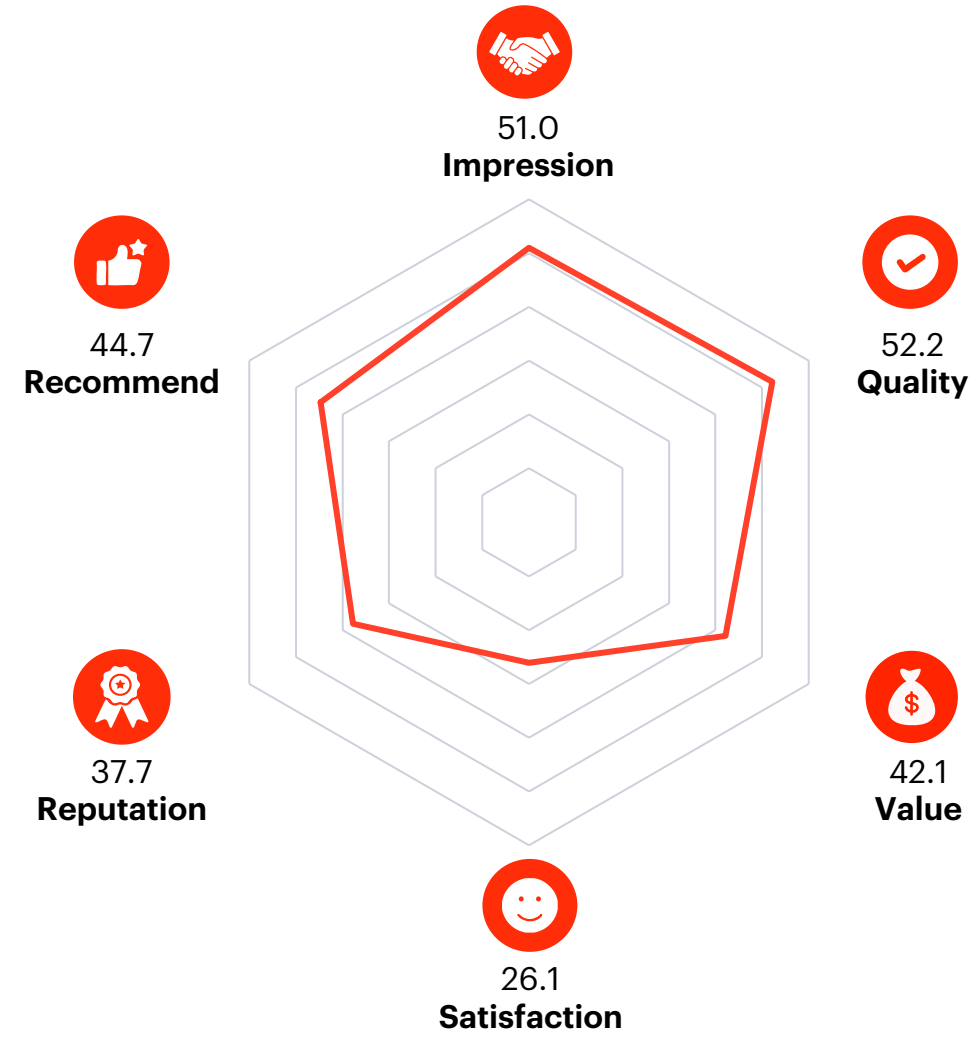
#1:

Toyota

42.3

Average Index score

Top performing metric > Quality (52.2)



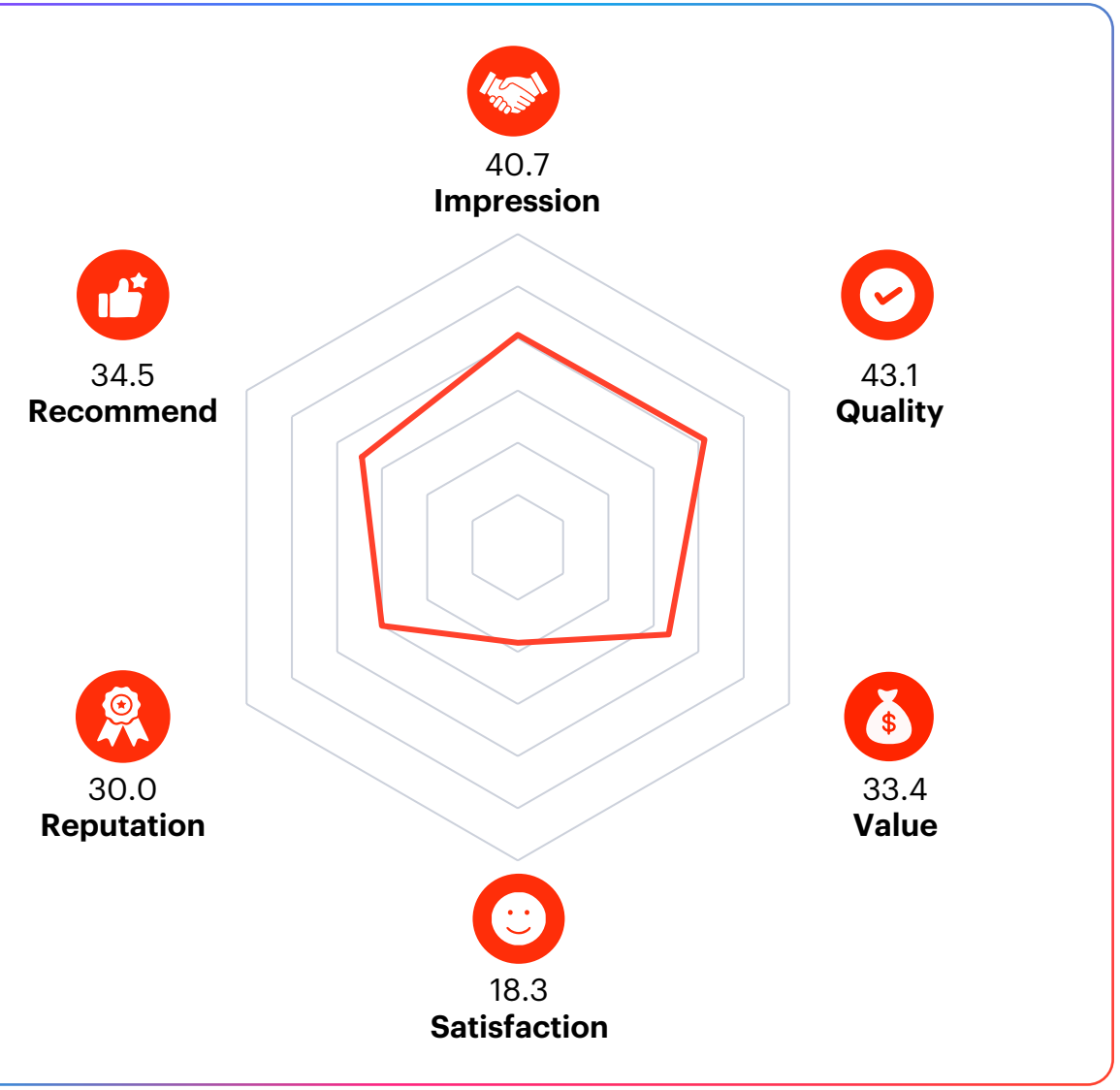
YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. gen pop n> 29,600. Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

#2:
Honda

33.0

Average Index score

Top performing metric > Quality (43.1)



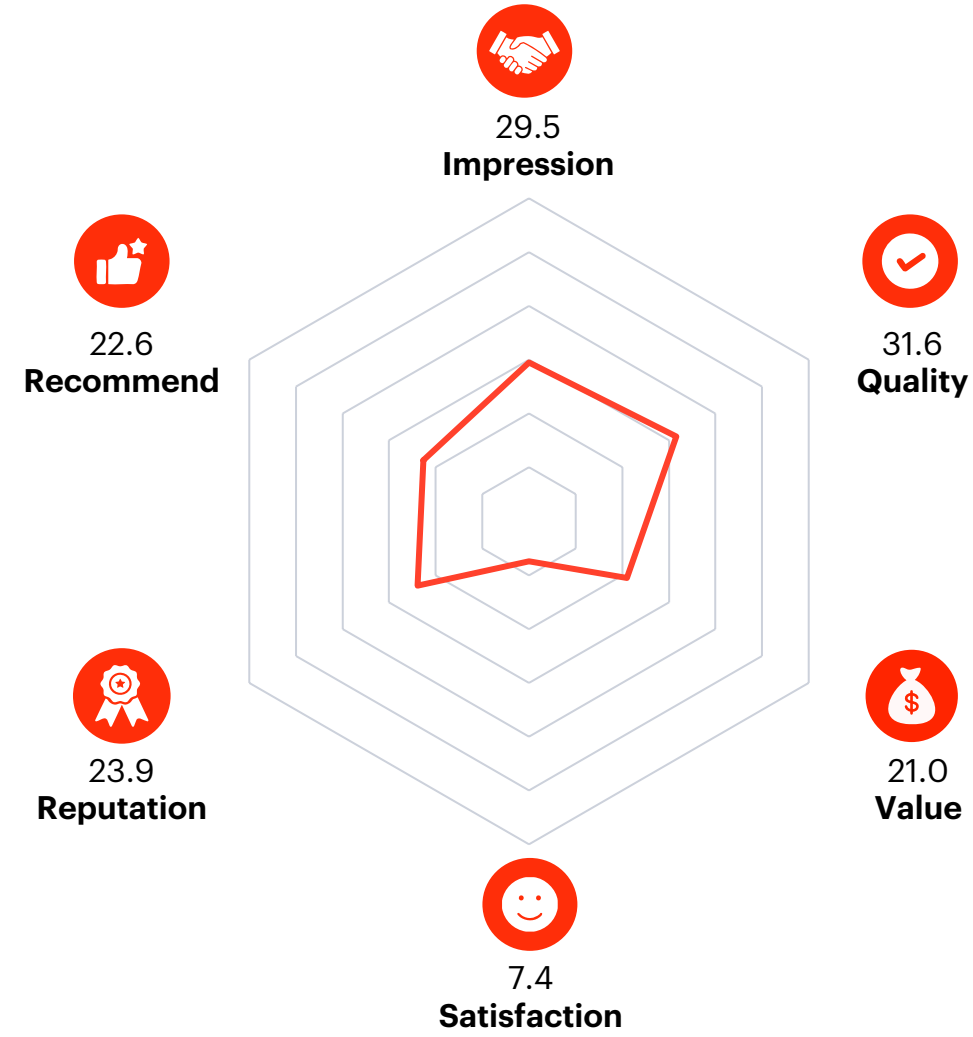
YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. gen pop n> 29,600. Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

#3:
Subaru

22.7

Average Index score

Top performing metric > Quality (31.6)



YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. gen pop n> 29,600. Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

Top auto brands by gender: Index

Men

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**43.4**
2	Honda	**33.5**
3	Ford	**21.6**
4	Subaru	**21.3**
5	Chevrolet	**20.5**
6	Lexus	**19.7**
7	Mercedes-Benz▲	**19.7**
8	BMW▲	**18.9**
9	Nissan	**15.4**
10	Audi▲	**14.5**

Women

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**41.4**
2	Honda	**32.6**
3	Chevrolet	**24.0**
4	Subaru	**23.8**
5	Ford	**19.1**
6	Nissan	**17.4**
7	Lexus	**16.8**
8	Mercedes-Benz▼	**15.8**
9	BMW▼	**15.3**
10	Jeep▲	**13.4**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Men n> 13,600, women n> 15,900. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days).
Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores. ▲/▼: +/-10% relative difference from gen pop.

Top auto brands by generation: Index

Gen Z (18+)

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**41.7**
2	Honda	**30.1**
3	BMW▲	**26.1**
4	Mercedes-Benz▲	**26.1**
5	Lexus▲	**22.3**
6	Ford	**20.5**
7	Audi▲	**18.7**
8	Nissan	**16.9**
9	Porsche▲	**16.8**
10	Chevrolet▼	**16.6**

Millennials

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**43.2**
2	Honda	**33.9**
3	Chevrolet	**20.8**
4	Ford	**19.2**
5	Subaru▼	**18.9**
6	Mercedes-Benz	**18.3**
7	BMW	**18.2**
8	Lexus	**17.5**
9	Nissan	**15.7**
10	Audi▲	**15.4**

Gen X

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**41.7**
2	Honda	**34.1**
3	Chevrolet	**24.2**
4	Subaru	**22.8**
5	Ford	**18.6**
6	Nissan	**16.6**
7	Lexus	**16.5**
8	Mercedes-Benz▼	**14.9**
9	BMW▼	**14.3**
10	GMC	**13.0**

Baby Boomers+

Rank	Brands	Index score (net)
1	Toyota	**42.3**
2	Honda	**32.8**
3	Subaru▲	**26.9**
4	Chevrolet	**24.0**
5	Ford	**21.8**
6	Lexus	**18.1**
7	Nissan	**16.7**
8	Mercedes-Benz	**16.2**
9	BMW▼	**15.1**
10	Volvo▲	**14.7**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Gen Z n> 3,400, Millennials n> 6,900, Gen X n> 6,800, Baby Boomers+ n> 12,200. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days). ▲/▼: +/-10% relative difference from gen pop.
Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

Explore brand tracking

Most improved auto brands year-on-year based on Index score

As a composite score, recording significant Index uplift can be challenging. In the U.S., Honda leads the way with an uplift of 0.9 points.

Index score is a brand health measure that is a composite of Impression, Value, Quality, Reputation, Satisfaction, and Recommend metrics.

Discover brand tracking

Rank	Brands	2026 Index score (net)	2025 Index score (net)	Change in score
1	Honda	**33.0**	**32.1**	**+0.9**
2	Kia	**8.5**	**8.2**	**+0.3**
3	Ram	**6.6**	**6.4**	**+0.2**
4	Toyota	**42.3**	**42.2**	**+0.1**
5	Polestar	**1.5**	**1.4**	**+0.1**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2026. U.S. gen pop n> 29,700. To qualify as top improvers, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days). Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.

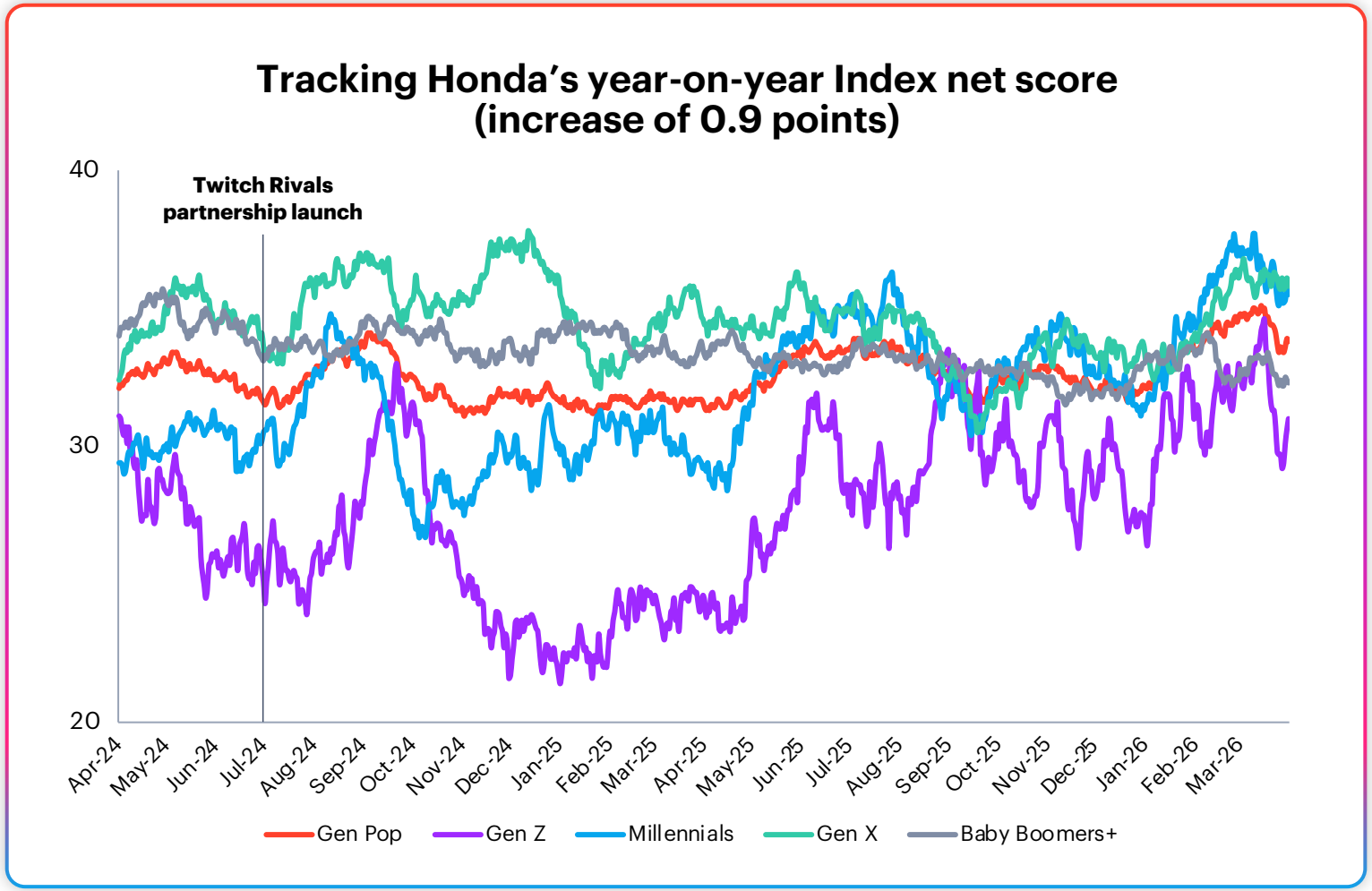
Tracking Honda's growth year-on-year

Honda's rising Index score is being driven largely by younger consumers.

This may be related to a broad marketing push behind the Civic hybrid model through 2025 and broader hybrid expansion across the lineup.

Growing popularity among Gen Z may be linked to Honda's marketing push into gaming and esports with a Twitch sponsorship starting in July 2024.

Get in touch



YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2026. U.S.: gen pop n> 4,400. Gen Z n> 300, Millennials n> 900, Gen X n> 900, Baby Boomers+ n> 1400. Eight week moving average is applied. To qualify as top improvers, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days). Index score: average of Impression, Quality, Value, Satisfaction, Recommend, and Reputation scores.



Car buyer rankings

The brands that Americans are considering buying in the next year.

Most-considered brands among car buyers

Of the consumers who are likely to buy a car in the next year, 44.7% are considering buying a Toyota, more than any other brand. Honda and Ford follow with Consideration scores of 30.8 and 20.1, respectively.

Get in touch for more data

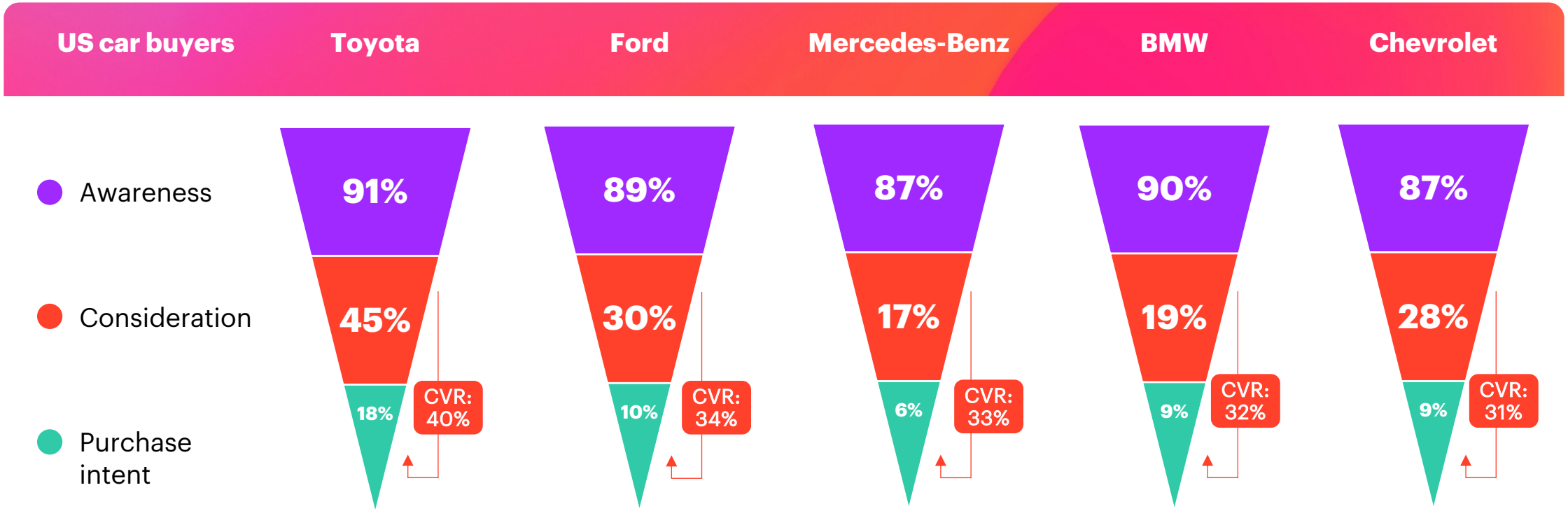
When you are in market next to purchase from one of the following brands, from which of the following would you consider purchasing?

Rank	Brands	Consideration among car buyers (%)
1	Toyota	**44.7**
2	Honda	**30.8**
3	Ford	**30.1**
4	Chevrolet	**28.1**
5	Nissan	**21.0**
6	Kia	**18.7**
7	BMW	**18.7**
8	Jeep	**18.6**
9	Lexus	**17.7**
10	Subaru	**17.2**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. Car buyers n> 2,800. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days). Car buyers are defined as respondents who answered, "Likely" or "Very Likely" to the question: "How likely are you to purchase a car or truck in the next 12 months?"

Mercedes, BMW punch above their weight in conversion

Top 5 brands ranked based on Consideration-to-purchase-intent conversion rate



YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. U.S. Car buyers n> 2,800. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days). Car buyers are defined as respondents who answered, "Likely" or "Very Likely" to the question: "How likely are you to purchase a car or truck in the next 12 months?"
Awareness: Whether or not a consumer has ever heard of a brand (% aware); Consideration: If a consumer would consider a brand or not the next time they are in the market for a purchase (% considering);
Purchase Intent: Whether a consumer would be most likely to purchase a specific brand from their consideration set (% top choice);
Conversion rate (CVR): Purchase intent divided by Consideration.

Most improved by Consideration among car buyers

Toyota is America's most improved auto brand based on consideration among car buyers, recording a 5.8 percentage point increase year-on-year.

Honda and Nissan have also seen significant gains, improving by 4.3 and 4.0 percentage points, respectively.

Discover brand tracking

When you are in market next to purchase from one of the following brands, from which of the following would you consider purchasing?

Rank	Brands	2026 Consideration among in-market car buyers (%)	2025 Consideration among in-market car buyers (%)	Change in Consideration
1	Toyota	**44.7**	**38.9**	**+5.8**
2	Honda	**30.8**	**26.5**	**+4.3**
3	Nissan	**21.0**	**17.0**	**+4.0**
4	Subaru	**17.2**	**14.7**	**+2.5**
5	Chevrolet	**28.1**	**25.7**	**+2.4**
6	Kia	**18.7**	**17.4**	**+1.3**
7	Jeep	**18.6**	**17.4**	**+1.2**
8	Ford	**30.1**	**29.1**	**+1.0**
9	Mazda	**12.7**	**11.8**	**+0.9**
10	Acura	**9.3**	**8.4**	**+0.9**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2026. U.S. Car buyers n> 2,800. To qualify as top improvers, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days). Car buyers are defined as respondents who answered, "Likely" or "Very Likely" to the question: "How likely are you to purchase a car or truck in the next 12 months?"



Customer satisfaction rankings

These are the cars that owners and former owners are happiest with.

Top auto brands by customer satisfaction

Some specialty brands that do not make the top ten Index or Consideration rankings still leave their customers satisfied.

Electric carmaker Tesla scores 69.0 in satisfaction and iconic motorcycle brand Harley Davidson scores 63.5.

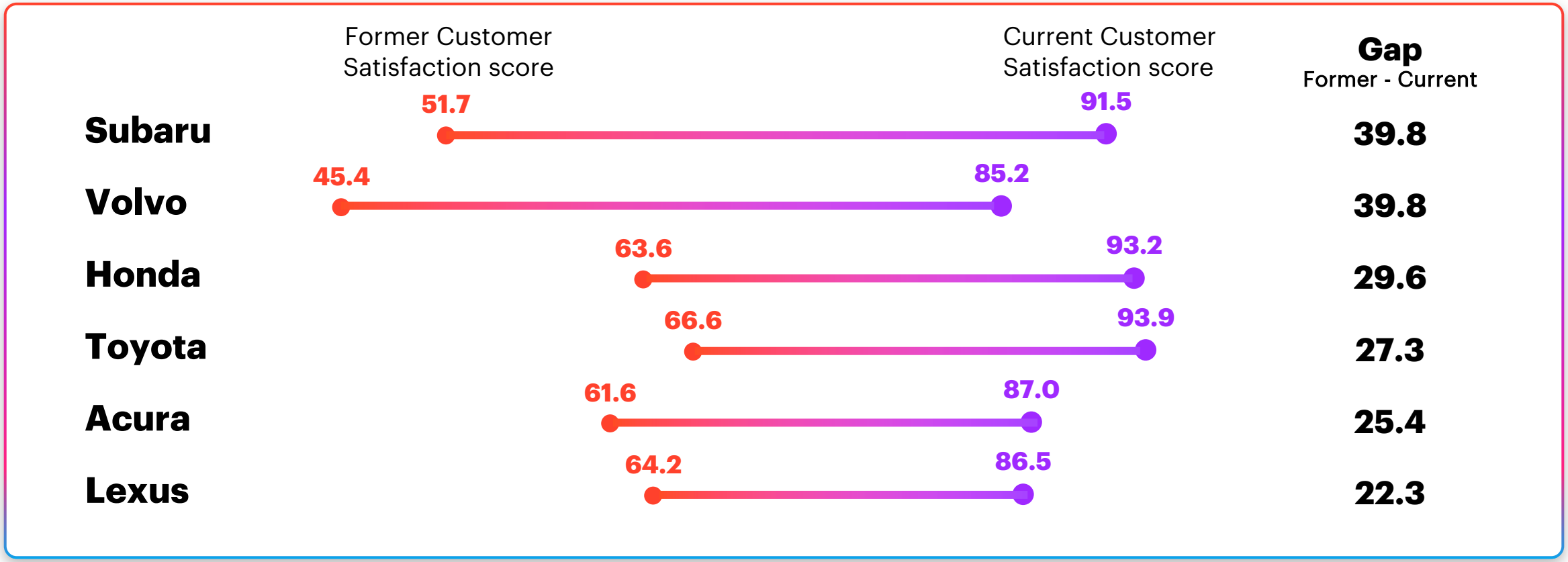
Get in touch for more data

Of which of the following brands would you say that you are a "Satisfied/Dissatisfied Customer"?

Rank	Brands	Net Satisfaction among customers
1	Toyota	**80.0**
2	Honda	**76.5**
3	Lexus	**76.2**
4	Subaru	**71.0**
5	Tesla	**69.0**
6	Acura	**68.6**
7	Harley-Davidson	**63.5**
8	BMW	**61.9**
9	Mercedes-Benz	**61.9**
10	Porsche	**57.1**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Customers of each brand n> 450. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days).

Current customers rate these brands much higher than former customers do



YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Former Customers of each brand n> 100; Current Customers of each brand n> 150. To qualify as top-ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days).

Most improved auto brands by customer satisfaction

Volvo is America's most improved auto brand based on satisfaction among current or former customers, recording a 4.1 point score increase year-on-year.

Acura and Honda have also seen notable gains, improving by 3.3 and 2.4 points, respectively.

Get in touch for more data

Of which of the following brands would you say that you are a "Satisfied/Dissatisfied Customer"?

Rank	Brands	2026 Net Satisfaction among customers	2025 Net Satisfaction among customers	Change in score
1	Volvo	**54.3**	**50.2**	**+4.1**
2	Acura	**68.6**	**65.3**	**+3.3**
3	Honda	**76.5**	**74.1**	**+2.4**
4	Mazda	**54.9**	**53.2**	**+1.7**
5	Nissan	**53.2**	**51.7**	**+1.5**
6	Tesla	**69.0**	**67.6**	**+1.4**
7	Dodge	**31.9**	**30.8**	**+1.1**
8	General Motors	**36.8**	**35.8**	**+1.0**
9	Chevrolet	**50.0**	**49.1**	**+0.9**
10	Kia	**56.7**	**56.0**	**+0.7**

YouGov BrandIndex, April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2026. Customers of each brand n> 700.
To qualify as top improvers, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days).

Spotted a competitor in the rankings?

The best brands don't rank by accident. When it comes to brand health, the strongest brands know exactly where they stand.

Keep up with the competition through brand tracking that’s tailored to your industry and built to track the metrics that matter. Unlock reliable intelligence from the global leader in daily brand tracking.

Explore brand tracking





Metrics

Advertising awareness

Methodology

The insights and brand tracking data in this report have been sourced via YouGov's always-on brand tracker: YouGov BrandIndex and YouGov Profiles.

- The rankings in this report are based on nationally representative data. We have highlighted the top performing auto brands that are winning over Americans based on index performance, an average of: Impression, Value, Quality, Reputation, Satisfaction, and Recommend scores per brand.
- We have looked at the top performing auto brands based on a brand's Consideration score among Americans likely to be in the market to purchase car or truck in the next 12 months – "Car buyers." To qualify for this, respondents answered "Very Likely" to the question: "How likely are you to purchase car or truck in next 12 months?"
- Consideration score is based on the question, "When you are in market next to purchase from one of the following auto brands, from which of the following would you consider purchasing?"
- Satisfaction rankings are based on the current/former customers' data. Satisfaction scores are based on respondents' answers to the following question: "Of which of the following airline would you say that you are a satisfied or dissatisfied customer?"
- A minimum base size of 300 (n) is required. To qualify as top ranked, brands have held tracked scores for at least 6 months (183 days).
- For improvers, brands are ranked based on their change in scores. To qualify as top improvers, brands have held tracked scores for at least 18 months (548 days). In cases where the change in score is the same between two brands, the current scores are used as a secondary metric to determine their ranking. 2026 BrandIndex US data is weighted based on updated ACS census targets and RIM weighting.
- Throughout the report, unless otherwise noted, each generation is defined as: Gen Z (1997 or later), Millennial (1981-1996), Gen X (1965-1980) and Baby Boomers+ (Pre-1964).
- The profile deep dive in this report was powered by YouGov Profiles – an ever-growing source of consumer data, with 2+ million data variables from YouGov's 30 million+ global panelists. The data used in this report was accessed via Profiles+ USA 2026-04-19.
- Car buyers are defined as respondents who answered, "Likely" or "Very Likely" to the question: "How likely are you to purchase a car or truck in the next 12 months?"

YouGov

Thank you

/Research Reality

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