

# New horsepower king

310 horsepower across all trims tops the segment - by Joe Sage

The midsize pickup market is red hot right now and only becoming moreso. Nissan—a brand that has never departed the small and midsize niche—has responded for 2022 with a new generation (only its third since 1998 under the Frontier name) and a new engine with a highly significant and very welcome claim to fame, the most horsepower in the segment. We've often noted that even the most capable midsize pickups of recent (and current) years could use some more juice, and

here it is—310 hp from its 3.8-liter V6—and the same engine is in all trucks across the lineup.

Frontier also offers the only six-foot bed in the segment, a huge plus for anyone who likes to sleep in the back of a go-anywhere truck and always useful for more load in general.

Frontier gets a solid "A" for its restyling, too. Even its most ardent fans have long known it was not glamorous, even by rugged standards. This one is a beauty.

Midsize trucks have grown in size over the

years, as has pretty much everything, but while sedan and crossover brands think nothing anymore of somehow having a half dozen overlapping sizes from subcompact to full-size, midsize pickups have to be careful to remain distinct from full-size trucks. Basics of cargo size and tow capacity keep this pretty clear, but physical size can be another matter—for better or not. We welcome their growing ride height, for emotional parity in traffic as well as for ground clearance. Growing too wide can be a mixed affair, though. Whereas wide wheel well flares may fend off brush or cactus on the trail, Frontier's slim form and strong yet gently sloped hood are welcome both off-road and around

town, for better visibility and trimmer maneuverability. Usefully tech-laden, the new Frontier takes visibility a step farther, as the first vehicle from Nissan—itsself a pioneer in advanced surround imaging—to include not only a well-above average rear camera and a full top view, but adding moving object detection and an off-road mode to its smart 360-degree imaging.

Frontier's horses are fed through a nine-speed automatic on all models (no manual), sometimes a little unresponsive coming out of city corners, though this and the lack of a manual option are easily conquered in manual mode (via the shift lever), which also provides notably consistent hold during routine downshift-worthy descents. All this feeds a full 4x4 transfer case with on-the-fly 2HI-4HI, as well as 4LO and a crawl feature.

Our PRO-4X adds an electronic locking differential, as well as Bilstein off-road shocks and underbody skid plates. The solid feel con-

tinues with rare-these-days hydraulic rack and pinion steering, which is engine-speed-sensitive (itself sometimes noticeably different when inching into a tight spot).

We took our Frontier PRO-4X off-roading on a rural trail, throwing it into 4HI as we hit the steeper stretches. Its power and adhesion were tops, though its stock all-terrain tires might benefit from a more purpose-built off-road fitment if this is your primary use.

This is one sharp and useful midsize pickup, an all-new truck from a deeply experienced midsize player, notably adding that key component that comes up a bit shorter in its competitors—Nissan has rounded up the missing horses.

Note: one domestic brand has now announced they will match (but surprisingly not beat) Frontier's horsepower in 2023—but only in top trim, leaving Nissan with its full-lineup top horsepower bragging point intact. ■

**PRO-4X**



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Canton, Mississippi
ENGINE / TRANSMISSION.....	USA / Japan
BUILD.....	heavy-duty fully boxed ladder frame
ENGINE.....	3.8L dir inj V6 alum/alum, DOHC 24v CVT, var valve
COMPRESSION RATIO.....	11.0:1
HP/TORQUE.....	310 hp / 281 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....	9-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN.....	shift-on-fly 2HI/4HI/4LO 4x4, electronic locking rear differential, 4HI 1.00:1, 4LO 2.717:1, crawl 54.52:1
MODES.....	off-road mode in 4LO, hill start assist, hill descent control
FINAL DRIVE RATIO.....	3.692
SUSPENSION.....	F: indep dbl wishbone w Bilstein twin-tube shocks; 36mm stblzr bar R: overslung multi-leaf w Dana solid axle; 25.4mm stblzr bar
STEERING.....	engine-speed-sensitive hydraulic rack & pinion
BRAKES.....	F: 11.7 x1.1, 2-piston vented, R: 11.3 x0.7, single piston vented
WHEELS.....	17-in aluminum alloy, opt beadlock style, Lava Red center cap
TIRES.....	265/70 R17 all-terrain
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	224.1 / 139.8 in
OVERALL WIDTH / HEIGHT.....	74.7 / 72.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE (F/R DIFF).....	9.5 / 9.4 in
APPRCH / DEPART / RAMP.....	32.3 / 23.0 / 19.6°
TURNING CIRCLE.....	42.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/R).....	(w/sunrf) 39.1 / 38.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....	42.3 / 33.2 in
BED LENGTH.....	72.7 in
WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION.....	4708 lb / F/R 57/43%
GVWR.....	6012 lb
MAX PAYLOAD.....	1230 lb
TOW CAPACITY.....	(RWD S,SV) 6720 lb sway control standard on all models
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	regular / 21.0 gal
MPG.....	17/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE.....	<b>\$37,240</b>
PREMIUM PAINT: TACTICAL GREEN.....	395
OFF-ROAD-STYLE STEP RAILS.....	750
BED ACCESS PKG.....	540
PRO CONVENIENCE PKG: spray-in bedliner, Utili-track system w 4 adjustable tie-down cleats, 120V outlets in bed & rear console, heated seats/mirrors/wheel, LED under rail lighting, remote start, hitch w/harness, around view monitor w motion detect & off-road mode, wireless charging.....	1990
PRO PREMIUM PKG: Fender premium 10-sprkr audio, leather, auto-dim mirror w Homelink, auto-tilt/slide sunrf w manual shade, 17-in beadlock-style alloy wheels.....	2790
SPORT BAR.....	1095
TECHNOLOGY PKG: lane depart, blind spot warn, rear cross traffic alert, rear sonar, rear auto brake, high beam assist, smart cruise, traffic sign recognition.....	990
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1175

**TOTAL.....\$46,965**  
(Note: prices have increased; see below.)

## 2022 NISSAN FRONTIER LINEUP

	RWD.....	4x4
S.....	King Cab.....	\$28,690.....\$31,890
	Crew Cab.....	29,990.....32,990
SV.....	King Cab.....	31,390.....34,590
	Crew Cab.....	32,790.....35,790
	Crew/Long Bed.....	34,690.....37,690

PRO-X.....Crew Cab.....35,120.....

PRO-4X.....Crew Cab.....**38,120**  
(Destination Charge now \$1295)