

Autotrader Names 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2024

Kick Off National Tailgating Day with Expert Picks for Vehicle Features that Enhance the Pre-Game Experience

ATLANTA, Sept. 5, 2024 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- While temperatures may still feel like summertime across much of the country, the unofficial start of fall in America kicks off in September with football season. Whether you're hailing your college alma mater, rooting for a professional team, or cheering on your local high school players, oftentimes the pre-game tailgate traditions with friends create just as many memories as the actual game itself. To benefit all football fans and in honor of the upcoming National Tailgating Day on September 7, the experts at Autotrader, a Cox Automotive brand, recently named [10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2024](#).

"Beyond the snacks and traditions, there are some other must-haves that can make tailgating even better. The Autotrader editors compiled a list of our favorite features available on new cars today that can really enhance the pre-game experience," said Brian Moody, executive editor for Autotrader. "From in-vehicle power outlets for your favorite game day gadgets to second and third-row screens and the latest in tailgate technology, football fans can go from rookie to pro status with their next parking lot get-together."

Autotrader's 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2024

1. On-Board Power

Some people lug a generator with them to power the TV, fridge and more while tailgating. Wouldn't it be better to let your truck serve as the generator? For now, there is only one company that lets you do that. Ford's Pro Power Onboard is available with gas-powered F-150s, hybrid models, and the all-electric F-150 Lightning. Even the base version of it can power a mini-fridge, blender, TV, portable speakers and a heater at the same time. Pro Power Onboard options get much more robust from there, with four different power outputs to choose from.

2. In-Bed Audio

Tailgate parties are even better with music, and a few pickups are available with audio systems in the truck bed. The Honda Ridgeline has had this option for many years. In addition, Chevy and GMC paired with Kicker for a system that's integrated into the Multi-Flex/MultiPro tailgate. You can use Bluetooth, aux or USB connections to play your favorite psyche-up songs.

3. Multi-Function Tailgates

Tailgates have come a long way from merely holding cargo in place. The F-150, Sierra and Silverado have tailgates with a step, and the F-150's tailgate step also includes a handrail. Some tailgates have cupholders stamped into the flat surface. Many have a power release that lets you open them with the key fob. If you're going all-out and towing a smoker or grill, Ford and Ram have split tailgates that let you get to your truck bed while the grill is hooked up.

4. Fridge or Drainable Storage

Admittedly, having an on-board fridge for your game-day drinks is next level compared to dropping the trusty Igloo into the pickup bed. The Cadillac Escalade and Jeep Grand Wagoneer offer them, while the Lexus GX and Toyota Land Cruiser have cool boxes. Several trucks, including the Ram 1500, Ridgeline and Santa Cruz have drainable storage in the bed, a great way to load up ice and drinks.

5. Household-Style Plug Outlets

If you're powering a lot of electronics, you must be able to plug them in, so the more 3-pronged household plug outlets on the vehicle, the better. Dozens of trucks, minivans, cars and SUVs have them. These are incredibly handy throughout the year, but they are essential on game day.

6. **Wi-Fi**

As the season goes on, you want to keep up on what's happening in your division or post pics from your tailgate bash, and you may not have great signal wherever you're tailgating. Maybe that one friend who was supposed to bring the chips is lost or running late. On-board wi-fi to the rescue! Honda, Toyota, Kia, Hyundai, Mazda, Subaru, Chevrolet, Ford and more offer this feature.

7. **Seat Heaters and Coolers**

It would be great if every football game was in 70-degree weather, but those days are rare in some parts of the country. Why not make sure you and your friends can get to the tailgate party in comfort? You might freeze your tail off or roast once you get outside, but you can certainly stay comfy on the way there and back.

8. **Massaging Seats**

Speaking of comfort, massaging seats are such a welcome feature to have after a long drive to the game. They also are terrific if your back hurts after too much time standing around at the party, or if you felt something tear or strain while tossing the football with your buddies (It happens.). You can relieve those sore muscles on the drive back.

9. **Second- and Third-Row Screens**

Whether you're on your way to the party or the weather has gone south, there are fantastic rear-seat entertainment systems that will keep you from missing a play. The Cadillac Escalade has 12.6-inch screens in back, and the Pilot has 10.2-inch screens. The Pacifica, Sienna, Odyssey and Kia Carnival all have excellent rear-seat entertainment systems with big screens, too.

10. **Split Tailgates**

It's a shame more SUVs don't have split tailgates. This feature makes it easy to sit and watch the game – and sitting on a split tailgate is much more comfortable than sitting in a regular SUV's open cargo area. There are some used models that have split tailgates; new SUVs that have them include the BMW X5, BMW X7, Range Rover and the 2025 Lincoln Navigator.

To learn more about the 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2024 from Autotrader, visit <https://www.autotrader.com/best-cars/best-tailgating-features>.

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