Autotrader's 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2025

Up Your Game with Expertly Chosen Vehicle Features to Maximize Tailgating Experience

ATLANTA, Sept. 4, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- While some may think of Labor Day as the official start of fall, others would argue that the first big football game is the season's true kickoff. As another football season launches into action, fans are pre-gaming in parking lots across the nation each week in eager anticipation of their team's next win. Whether rooting for your local high school team, revisiting glory days at your college alma mater, or packing the stadium of your favorite professional team, the tailgating tradition often can be just as fun as attending the game itself. In honor of the upcoming National Tailgating Day on September 6, 2025, Autotrader, a Cox Automotive brand, named the 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2025.

"Solidifying all of the important game day plans – from who is bringing the food and drinks to what time and where the crew is kicking off the tailgate – is all part of the football season fun," said Brian Moody, executive editor for Autotrader. "One of the best ways to boost your tailgating game is to own a vehicle optimally equipped for the pre-game experience. Modern trucks have items like reconfigurable tailgates, a built-in audio system, WiFi, plus handles and rails to make accessing all the food and equipment that much easier. To help shoppers find the right tailgate champ, Autotrader editors recently pooled their collective wisdom to determine the top roster of must-have features."

Autotrader's 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2025	
1.	**Onboard Power** Ford offers the Pro Power Onboard system in some F-150 pickups, while Chevrolet has the PowerBase in the Silverado EV. These will give tailgaters the power to run appliances, like that blender, a small fridge, a heater, and more.
2.	**Truck Bed Audio** Several trucks, such as the GMC Sierra, Chevrolet Silverado, Nissan Frontier, and Honda Ridgeline, offer audio systems in the truck bed. The real trick would be to pair a system like this with Alexa, allowing you to serve as DJ from within earshot of the truck.
3.	**Handles, Steps and Rails** Making sure your friends and family have easy access to the back of the truck can help ensure the day stays fun and safe.
4.	**Multifunction Tailgates** Tailgates have come a long way from merely holding cargo in place. Some tailgates have cupholders stamped into the flat surface. Many have a power release that lets you open them with the key fob. And if you're going all-out and towing a smoker or a grill, Ford and Ram have split tailgates that let you get to your truck bed while the grill stays hitched.
5.	**Fridge or Drainable Storage** Whether you go fully posh with the Cadillac Escalade's center console fridge, opt for a cool box like in the Lexus GX and Toyota Land Cruiser, or fill up the Ram 1500 RamBox or the Honda Ridgeline's in-bed storage with ice, having easy access to cold drinks is a huge plus for tailgate parties.
6.	**Load Leveling and Camp Modes** If you're parked on a slight incline and want to do some food prep, things could literally run downhill. This feature will make cooking easier. And if you camp out hours ahead of time — or overnight — Camp Mode turns on a courtesy mode for other tailgaters and turns off interior displays.

7.	**Extra Screens** Sure, you're all there for the big game. But what if you want to check out what's going on with your cross-town rival, or see what happened with your fantasy picks? If your ride has multiple screens, partygoers can keep track of everything that's going on in the sports world.
8.	**Split Tailgates** If you have an SUV, a split tailgate makes it easy to sit and watch the games. The bottom part of the gate serves as a flat bench. This feature is much more comfortable than sitting where the liftgate latch connects. Vehicles like the Ford Expedition, BMW X5, and the Lincoln Navigator come with this welcome feature.
9.	**Wi-Fi** As the season goes on, you want to keep up with the goings-on in your division or post pics from your tailgate bash. Maybe that one friend who was supposed to bring the chips is lost or running late, and you might not have a strong signal where you're tailgating. Onboard Wi-Fi to the rescue!
10.	**Seat Heating, Cooling and Massagers** Tailgate party days can be long, and depending on the time of year, the weather can be super frosty or stiflingly hot. You can prepare with seat heaters and coolers with the right vehicle. And if the seats have massagers or can fully recline, that's even better for the ride back home after the game.

To learn more details about the 10 Must-Have Tailgating Features for 2025 from Autotrader, including specific vehicles that offer these features and more, visit https://www.autotrader.com/car-shopping/best-tailgating-features.

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