American Carmakers Have All But Abandoned Gas-Powered Cars

American Carmakers Have All But Abandoned Gas-Powered Cars

By Jeff Ryer

November 10, 2026

AP

Traditional gasoline-powered five-passenger sedans, once the mainstay of auto sales in the United States, are experiencing a sales resurgence. According to industry sales figures and as reported by Car and Driver, sedans – cars, not SUVs, crossovers, or trucks – from Honda, Hyundai, Kia, Mazda, and Toyota are all posting higher sales for 2026. And, the increases are not small.

Honda's Accord and Toyota's Camry, which historically competed to be America's best-selling car, have seen sales increase by 33 percent and 11 percent, respectively. Not to be left behind, the Hyundai Sonata and Kia K5 are also seeing their sales increase by double-digit percentages.

The gains are not limited to midsized sedans, either. The compact Toyota Corolla, Honda Civic, Hyundai Elantra, and Mazda 3 are all enjoying sales increases.

Since the mainstream marques experiencing higher sales are Asian, you might think American workers are being left behind. But, the Honda Accord and Toyota Camry are assembled in the United States, while most Corollas sold here are built here, too. They turn out our Honda Civics in Canada, while the Mazda 3 hails from Japan. Hyundai and Kia import their cars from South Korea, although both build some of their SUVs and crossovers here.

While consumers foregoing an SUV, crossover, or truck have several great cars from which to choose, there is a glaring omission among the choices: American brands. There is good reason for this: American nameplates have all but abandoned building gasoline-powered cars.

If you want to buy a 2027 gasoline-powered car from an American brand, your choices are limited to the Chevrolet Corvette, Dodge Charger, and Ford Mustang. The Corvette seats two and the Mustang four (provided two of the four are prepubescent). If you hurry to your local Cadillac dealer, you may be able to buy one of the two sedans they offered through the 2026 model year, the CT4 and CT5. Both of these low-volume American luxury cars remain available while dealer inventories last.

Don't look for a gasoline-powered car – sedan or otherwise – at your local Buick, Chrysler, or Lincoln dealer. Buick's last car, the German-built midsize Regal, ended production in 2020. The midsize Chrysler 200 ended its run in 2017, while the Canadian-built 300 stuck around until 2023. Ford ceased offering cars through its Lincoln division in 2020, simultaneously ending production of the midsize MKZ and full-size Continental. Buick and Lincoln now exclusively offer SUVs and crossovers, while Chrysler only sells a (rather excellent) minivan.

How could this have happened? For the 2027 model year, General Motors, which for most of its existence promised "A car for every purse and purpose," offers only one two-seater car with a base price of $71,300. Ford, whose founder pledged "I will build a motor car for the great multitude," now sells a single gas-powered two-door pony car that seats four, at least in theory. Only Chrysler, now Stellantis, offers a sedan. But, that Dodge sedan is built in Canada and carries a starting price of $51,995. The sedans offered by Honda, Hyundai, Kia, Mazda, and Toyota all have base prices under $30,000.

American automotive manufacturers, two of which were bailed out by U.S. taxpayers to the tune of $50 billion in 2008 and 2009, have been systematically discontinuing the cars they offer. Chevrolet cancelled its compact Cruze in 2019, its full-size Impala in 2020, and its midsize Malibu in 2024. Dodge killed the last itineration of the compact Dart in 2016. Ford stopped selling the compact Focus here in 2018, the Taurus in 2019, and the midsize Fusion in 2020. American consumers looking to purchase an affordable sedan still have choices, but none carry the nameplates that once made the American automotive industry the world's leader.

American brands assert they have simply responded to consumer demand, and demand for SUVs and crossovers has been growing. But, just as was the case

immediately prior to the TARP bailouts at the end of this century's first decade, those segments are now experiencing slower growth.

America's Asia-headquartered competitors didn't stop making cars, while still selling lots of SUVs and crossovers. If this year's uptick in car sales indicates a modification of consumer tastes, those manufacturers are ready to meet demand. Their American competitors, once again, are not.

Jeff Ryer is Executive Director of CASE, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy, a free-market oriented consumer advocacy group.