



2011 Ford F-Series Super Duty



2011 Ford Taurus



2011 Ford Mustang GT

## Ford Vehicles Rate High in Kelley Blue Book Resale Value List

by Gerald Scott  
Editor  
U.S. Auto Scene

As if we needed more evidence that Ford's long-term vehicle quality is tracking straight and true, along comes last week's announcement from Kelley Blue Book that Ford products swept three of their major categories for re-sale value for 2011 model year vehicles.

Kelley Blue Book, the long-time provider of new and used vehicle information in the domestic marketplace, announced its comprehensive list of the all-new 2011 model year vehicle winners of its annual Best Resale Value Awards, which recognize current and forthcoming vehicles for their projected retained value five years from now.

Ford vehicles, it might be noted, won in the following popular new-car sales categories:

- Full-size car: Ford Taurus;
- High-Performance Car: Ford Mustang GT;
- Full-size Pickup Truck: Ford F-Series Super Duty.

"Consumers should take a good look at the projected resale value of a car when choosing their next new-vehicle purchase, and they would be wise to carefully consider the 2011 Best Resale Value Award winning vehicles and brands on this year's list," said James Bell, executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's onsite equivalent found at kbb.com.

"Vehicle depreciation is a

new-car buyer's biggest expense, yet many shoppers don't realize that resale value information is available for free.

"Taking time to research and choose vehicle makes, models and options wisely can help new-car shoppers hold value down the road when they go to sell or trade-in the vehicle," he added.

Bell said that while most car buyers today consider sticker price one of the most significant numbers when choosing the new vehicle, the editors of Kelley Blue Book recommend that shoppers consider a number they won't find on any new-car window sticker – the resale value number.

Depreciation is often the single greatest expense incurred by drivers during their first five years of new-car vehicle ownership.

KBB further says that an average vehicle will only retain about 34 percent of its original value after a five-year ownership period, meaning that a \$50,000 new car today will only be worth somewhere close to \$17,000 after five years of normal use.

Vehicles with average or below-average resale values are generally plentiful in the marketplace and easy to find.

But certain vehicles are projected to hold their value better than others. While much of a vehicle's resale value is based on supply and demand, as well as current and projected future market conditions, vehicles that maintain their value best are

never heavily discounted to begin with and tend to generate customer enthusiasm across the board.

KBB points out that Ford is in good global-vehicle company considering that other winners on this list include the Honda Accord for Mid-Size Car; Lexus IS for Near-Luxury Car; Volkswagen Golf TDI for Alternative Energy Car and Toyota FJ Cruiser for Mid-Size Utility Vehicle.

Ford rival GM, by comparison had one single vehicle on the list – the GMC Acadia, for

Full-Size Utility Vehicle.

KBB says that most options and packages added to a vehicle do not necessarily increase its resale value. However, there are exceptions to this rule – such as a high-performance engine (think the SHO version of the Ford Taurus, for example) or a performance package in a dedicated factory sports car.

Also, regional preferences can significantly impact the value of a vehicle. In the colder sections of the country, the two-wheel-drive vehicle's re-

sale value will typically not be as high as four-wheel or all-wheel drive option of that very same model.

At the other end of the geographic thermometer, in warmer climates, black (dark-colored) cars will not have high resale value as they could command in more temperate regions – KBB says that trend is true even for black colored premium vehicles with low mileage.

While the company's Residual Value Guide has been published since 1982, Kelley

Blue Book established its annual Best Resale Value Awards in 2003.

KBB reports projections based on current vehicle data, sales data, market conditions for each vehicle, competition within vehicle segments and other differentiators.

Residual values as defined by KBB reflect projected future auction values for vehicles in average condition, with about 75,000 miles at the end of a typical five-year lease or ownership period embraced by a new car buyer.

## Ford Fiesta, Mazda2 Score Well in CR Road Testing

YONKERS, N.Y. – The new Ford Fiesta and Mazda2 subcompacts posted "Very Good" ratings in Consumer Reports' ratings, are both fun to drive and deliver impressive fuel economy. The vehicles are part of a test in the January issue that featured four different types of fuel-efficient cars.

The new two-seat Honda CR-Z hybrid hatchback scored too low for CR to Recommend it. Despite getting 35 mpg overall and having a crisp manual transmission, its ride was stiff, visibility is lacking, and it isn't very sporty to drive. It was the lowest ranked of the four fuel-efficient cars that CR tested this month.

The Volkswagen Jetta Sportwagen TDI posted an "Excellent" score, delivering impressive comfort, convenience and room.

The issue also features a claim check on the Fuel doc-

tor FD-47 device whose packaging says it increases power and improves mpg. CR's engineers put it through extensive testing on a number of vehicles and found that it made no significant difference in any evaluation and rated the product a "Don't Buy: Performance Problem."

"The Fiesta and Mazda2 are both fun to drive and provide excellent fuel economy, but there are trade-offs, like sluggish acceleration in the Fiesta and choppiness in the Mazda2's ride," said Rik Paul, Automotive Editor, Consumer Reports.

"The CR-Z tries to be a sporty hybrid and it's not outstanding in either category. It's not fun to drive and the fuel economy is not what you'd expect from a hybrid."

Full tests and ratings for all the vehicles appear in the January issue of Consumer Reports, which goes on sale

December 7. The reports are also available to subscribers of [www.ConsumerReports.org](http://www.ConsumerReports.org). Updated daily, ConsumerReports.org is the go-to site for the latest auto reviews, product news, blogs on breaking news and car buying information.

Prices ranged from \$14,770 for the Mazda2 Sport with manual transmission to \$27,204 for the Volkswagen Jetta Sportwagen TDI.

Vehicles were selected for this grouping because the CR-Z, Fiesta, and Mazda2 are all recent introductions. CR previously tested a Jetta TDI diesel sedan with a manual transmission and had not tested the diesel engine in a Jetta SportWagen with a manual transmission.

While the Jetta is Recommended, the Ford Fiesta and Mazda2 are too new for CR to have reliability data and the CR-Z scored too low in CR's road tests to be Recommended. CR only Recommends vehicles that have performed well in its tests, have at least average predicted reliability based on CR's Annual Auto Survey of its more than seven million print and Web subscribers, and performed at least adequately if crash-tested or included in a government rollover test.

The Volkswagen Jetta Sportwagen is a premium compact wagon whose ride has an underlying firmness, especially at low speeds, but is supple and well controlled. The Volkswagen Jetta Sportwagen TDI, is powered by a 140-hp 2.0-liter four-cylinder turbodiesel engine that delivers leisurely acceleration and gets 36 mpg overall and a superb 49 mpg on the highway in CR's own fuel economy tests. The six-speed manual transmission shifts smoothly. Braking is Very Good. The interior is well-finished. Folding the 60/40-split rear seatbacks creates a spacious cargo area.

Ford's subcompact Fiesta is enjoyable to drive. Its agile handling, relatively quiet cabin and composed ride are high points. The Ford Fiesta SE sedan (\$16,595 MSRP as tested), is powered by a 120-hp, 1.6-liter four-cylinder en-

gine that delivers adequate acceleration and gets 33 mpg overall. The six-speed automatic transmission shifts responsively. Braking is Good. The interior is well-finished. The trunk will hold three large upright suitcases and one large duffel bag.

The Mazda2 is fun to drive, with excellent fuel economy, responsive steering and a usable rear seat despite the car's modest dimensions. The Mazda2 Touring (\$17,075 MSRP as tested), is powered by a 100-hp 1.5-liter 4-cylinder engine that accelerates modestly and gets a very good 30mpg with the automatic transmission. The four-speed automatic transmission shifts smoothly. Braking is Good. The cargo area can hold one large upright suitcase and two duffel bags with the rear seats in place.

## GM Mulls New Investment in Ft. Wayne Plant

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) – General Motors is considering \$230 million in upgrades to its truck assembly plant near Fort Wayne to build its next generation of pickup trucks.

Factory spokeswoman Stephanie Jentgen says GM has submitted a tax abatement request to Allen County officials for the project. But she tells The Journal Gazette that other sites are also being considered for the upgrades and that she didn't know when a decision would be made.

The project isn't expected to mean more jobs for the 3,800-worker factory, but County Council President Paula Hughes tells The News-Sentinel that the upgrades would protect its viability.

United Auto Workers Local 2209 President Orval Plumlee says there would be a "considerable" expansion of the plant, which has added a third shift and more than 700 employees this year.

Fort Wayne and Flint build GM's big pickup trucks.

## FANUC Delivers Robots to Big 3 Auto Factories

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well." FANUC builds the largest, heaviest-payload, biggest-reach robots – ones that can flip a car chassis around effortlessly – but it also builds smaller "spyder robots" that can do finite, parts sorting kind of line work.

FANUC is looking forward to delivering its next 100,000 robots as demand gradually returns to the industrial marketplace.

"As the economy recovers from the current recession, we've consistently maintained our leadership position, and continue our commitment to providing intelligent robots and systems that deliver the highest levels of quality and productivity.

## GM's Chuck Jordan 'Knew Design Had a Soul'

by Christine Snyder  
Staff Reporter  
Tech Center News

For many who knew and worked with him, Chuck Jordan, GM's fourth design chief, who died earlier this month, was remembered as an inspirational leader and a courageous champion of design.

Jordan hired Ed Welburn, now GM vice president of global design, as an intern in 1971 while Jordan was working for Bill Mitchell, GM's third design chief.

"I will always be appreciative of the opportunity he gave me to join GM's design organization," said Welburn in a press statement.

Welburn said Jordan was a strong creative force at GM Design. "It always felt as if every new project he was leading represented a new mountain to climb and was a fresh opportunity to create new trends and statements in automotive design."

Timothy Greig, an interior design manager at GM, said he remembers Jordan's fearlessness.

Greig said he had the opportunity to work with the Pontiac interior design team in the 1980s and 1990s when Pontiac was reinventing its image.

"As a young designer fresh out of college, I didn't have the design sense of a seasoned veteran, so my creativity didn't have any limits," said Greig. "Most design VPs would have dialed us back closer to reality, but not Chuck. It seemed nothing scared him.

"We experimented with some amazing designs. At times, I sensed that he was a little nervous with what we were proposing, but he had the courage and the conviction to let his team reach new creative heights."

To Bill Porter, retired Pontiac design chief, Jordan championed design even when it was not politically expedient.

"There are many people in the business who had other objectives other than good design," said Porter. "He forwarded the cause of design

through hell and high water. He was a great champion in the corporate world where design was not always in the forefront of minds."

Jack Harned, one of the principals of AutoCom Associates and a retired GM communications executive, remembers being assigned to facilitate Jordan's public relations.

"He was a great communicator for the values and traditions of design within GM," said Harned. "He followed in the footsteps of Harley Earl and Bill Mitchell very effectively."

Welburn said this past summer, Jordan visited GM Design when he was back in metro Detroit to attend the Concours d'Elegance at Meadow Brook.

"It was wonderful to have him back in the place in which he helped create such a rich legacy."

Jordan was 83 years old when he died this month. He was the fourth man elected to the position of vice president of GM design staff in 1986. He held that position until his retirement six years later.

Jordan joined GM Design in 1949 as a junior engineer. After moving around in a number of different studios and positions, he settled at Advanced Design where he designed a couple of the notable "Motorama" dream cars in the 1950s, such as the 1955 Cameo show truck and the 1956 Buick Centurion.

One of his advanced studio concepts was chosen by Pontiac general manager Bunkie Knudsen as the basis for that division's first "wide tracks." He was also instrumental in the design of the 1958 Corvette and the XP-700 "Phantom" Corvette concept.

Jordan was appointed Cadillac chief designer in 1957, and in 1962 became executive in charge of automotive design for all GM car and truck exteriors.

From 1967 to 1970, Jordan was director for Adam Opel AG in Germany, where he was responsible for a number of well-regarded vehicles, including the Manta coupe and the 1968 production model



Chuck Jordan

GT sports car.

Upon his return to the U.S., Jordan became the executive in charge of automotive exterior design for GM's upscale car segment, the Buick-Oldsmobile-Cadillac group.

He assumed a similar position for Chevrolet-Pontiac in 1972.

In 1977, Jordan was named director of design for the en-

tire Design staff and served until Irv Rybicki retired in 1986 and he was named vice president of design.

The Jordan team was responsible for the 1990s generation of Camaros, Firebirds, the Oldsmobile Aurora and the 1992 Cadillac STS. His design leadership team also produced concept cars.

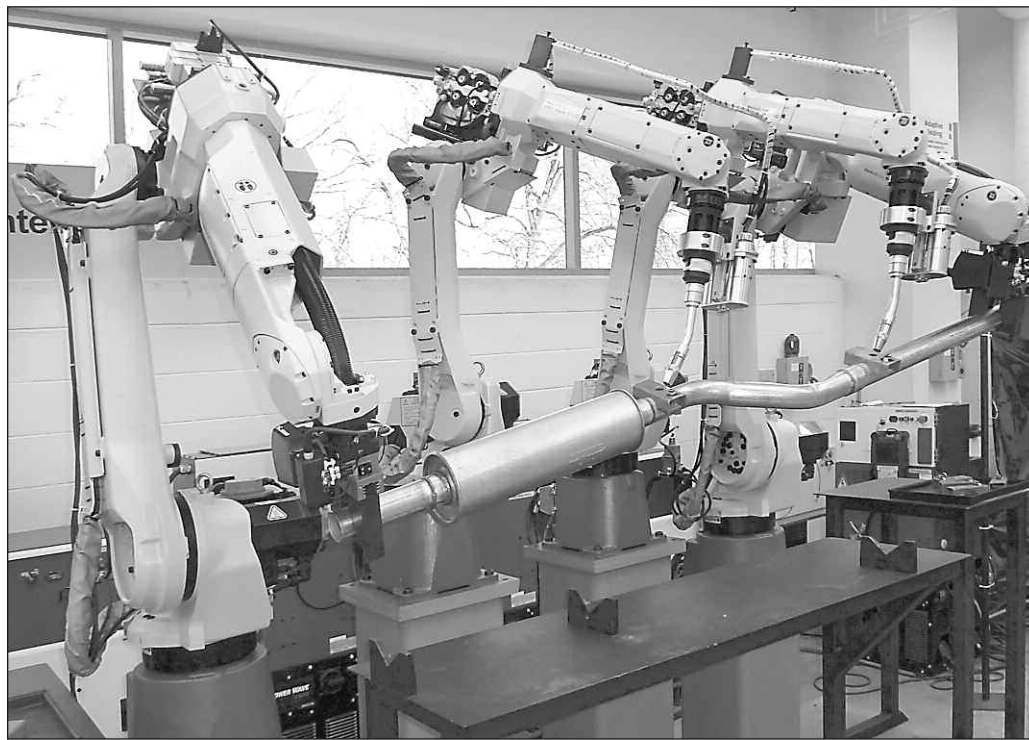


PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

A tandem of Fanuc robots handle an automotive exhaust system in a demonstration of coordinated work at the Rochester Hills supplier's floor lab last week.