



# 2011 Toyota Sienna

By Steve Schutz, MD

**swagger** [swág-er]—verb: to walk or strut with a defiant or insolent air, to boast or brag noisily;  
noun: swaggering manner, conduct, or walk; ostentatious display of arrogance and conceit.

Toyota calls their new Sienna the “swagger van”; and given the definition of the word, that’s pretty cheeky. A minivan with swagger? What would the current arbiter of swagger, the popular singer, Ke\$ha, say? Ummm... I have no idea, but my personal opinion is that Toyota is OK using swagger as an adjective describing their newest family hauler which is designed to provide family-friendly transportation for moms and/or dads with young kids—without the nerdiness that gives minivans such a stigma.

Which reminds me: can we stop calling these family haulers minivans already? Yes, they’re vans, but at 4200 or so pounds each, they’re not really mini; they’re big!

For the record, the 2011 Sienna is virtually the same size as the outgoing version; and as before, it can seat seven or eight passengers with its available all-wheel drive—a Sienna exclusive. But, there are some significant mechanical improvements for 2011 such as a new four-cylinder engine and six-speed automatic transmission.

Anyway, the swagger that Toyota refers to in their marketing materials isn’t empty PR-speak. The design is surprisingly aggressive and provocative with a wedgy profile, lower stance and organically sculpted head- and tail lights. Unlike the understated previous-generation Sienna, the 2011 model looks almost angry from the front, thanks to lots of down-sloping cut lines, a big grille and air intake.

The interior is less visually interesting but similarly advanced. Naturally, the third-row seats fold flat, and there are storage nooks and cup holders everywhere. But there are new features too, like the dual glove compartments in front, and mid-position cushions in the second row bench that can be removed, revealing yet another cup holder and storage area. Cool interior options are second-row lounge chairs that recline with swing-up foot rests, and a unique 16-inch wide-screen video monitor that can display either one show across the whole monitor or two different shows side-by-side.

Like its less “swaggery” competitors, the Sienna provides plenty of space for a full complement of passengers and their gear. All seats are



comfortable and well-situated, and all except the third row can slide forward and backward; there’s 39 square feet of cargo space behind the third row and 87 square feet behind the second row when the third row is folded down.

New this year is a 2.7 liter four-cylinder engine that makes 187 horsepower and gets an impressive 19 MPG city/26 MPG highway. Also available is a 265-HP 3.5-liter V6 that gets 18 MPG city/24 MPG highway with front-wheel drive and a 16 MPG city/22 MPG highway with AWD.

Both engines come with a six-speed automatic transmission; expect an eight second zero-to-sixty time for the V6, and a slightly slower time for the in-line four. While most buyers will select the bigger motor, it’s nice to have a more fuel-efficient engine available.

The 2011 Toyota Sienna minivan comes in five trim levels—base, LE, SE, XLE, and Limited. The base Sienna includes the aforementioned four-cylinder engine, 17-inch alloy wheels, dual sliding rear doors with power-down windows, triple-zone climate control, telescoping steering wheel, and four-speaker stereo with auxiliary audio jack. The four-cylinder LE adds tinted glass, heated side mirrors and a few other doo-dads, while the V6 LE includes a roof rack, auto-dimming rearview mirror, power side doors, second- and third-row sunshades, Bluetooth, and a six-speaker audio system with satellite radio and iPod connectivity.

The sporty SE is essentially an LE V6 with bigger 19-inch alloy wheels, a unique front end with fog lights and a mesh grille, lower body skirts, sportier gauges, and a nicer steering wheel.

Siennas with XLE trim feature a metallic gray grille, power liftgate,



sunroof, three-zone automatic climate control, leather upholstery, faux wood interior trim, power driver's seat, heated front seats, and automatic up/down power windows. The AWD XLE comes with those cool second-row lounge seats with their swing-up footrests.

The Sienna Limited features 18-inch alloys, a chrome grille, power-folding side mirrors with auto-dimming and puddle lamps, dual power sunroofs, keyless ignition/entry, driver seat memory settings, leather-and-wood steering wheel, upgraded 10-speaker JBL surround-sound audio system, second-row lounge seats, and power-folding/split third-row seat.

Notable options include xenon headlights, rain-sensing wipers, adaptive cruise control, rear-seat DVD system (the wide-screen monitor described earlier), and "satnav" (satellite navigation systems)

with a back-up camera.

The 2011 Sienna is a far cry from the 1990s Toyota Previa minivan, a classic "nerd mobile" if there ever was one. With the popular and established Dodge Caravan, an all-new Honda Odyssey and improved models from Kia and Hyundai, the minivan segment is competitive; but Toyota's latest entry has the goods to back up its swagger. I think Ke\$ha would approve.

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