



# Toyota Turns Hilux into the Ultimate Tonka Toy for Grown-ups

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Toyota has reimagined its “unbreakable” Hilux as full-scale Tonka toy, bringing together two world famous brands in a celebration of their shared reputations for lasting toughness.

The Hilux\* Tonka Concept has been created by Toyota Australia to help mark the high-riding off-roader’s breakthrough in becoming the country’s best-selling vehicle in 2016. Tonka is a household name, celebrating its 70th anniversary this year, while Toyota is in its 80th year of incorporation.

*A gallery of Hilux Tonka Concept photographs [can be viewed here](#).*

The unveiling coincides with the release of Toyota’s GB’s [series of short films](#) which show Hilux going to head-to-head with its tiny Tamiya radio-controlled model counterpart in a series of off-road and performance challenges.

The new concept was designed, assembled and tested by designers and engineers from Toyota Australia’s 150-strong product planning and development division. Product design chief Nicolas Hogios said the extreme style and capability of the Hilux Tonka Concept would capture the imagination of kids and adults alike. “We have taken Tonka out of the sand pit and reinvented Hilux from top to bottom and from nose to tail,” he said.

“Inspired by the Tonka trucks that kids play with in their backyards, it goes way beyond the already huge abilities of Hilux to traverse rocks and other rugged terrain,” he said.

“It is also dramatic evidence that our local team loves to have fun, we’re keen to explore new ideas and we’re always looking to push the boundaries of what’s possible,” he said.

Underneath the dramatic black-and-yellow livery is a top-of-the-range production Hilux – an SR5 double cab with a powerful 2.8-litre turbodiesel engine. The extensive makeover starts with substantially higher ground clearance – an increase in ride height of 150mm. Combined with a high-riding axle, heavy-duty suspension and 35-inch diameter tyres, the Hilux Tonka Concept is equipped to power over rugged terrain that would be off-limits to conventional off-roaders.

A new front bar is compatible with the vehicle’s safety systems while the bonnet has a carbon-fibre skin and features a “power bulge” and air scoops. High-performance off-road LED lighting in the bar and roof pod provide extra night vision for off-road trails, while a rugged bash plate made from 6mm-thick alloy guards the sump and other vital parts. Tubular side rails protect the body and chassis.

Behind the cabin the transformation includes a new carbon fibre-wrapped tailgate (released by a lightweight strap rather than handle), with an integrated spoiler and air vents. In the load deck, a removable tubular frame keeps all the gear in place, including fuel cans, while storage boxes house the recovery gear needed for extreme off-road driving. A fire extinguisher, axe, shovel and high-lift jack are also fitted.

To the end of February this year, Australians have bought more than 920,000 Hilux; globally, the model's sales have topped 16 million. In 2016 Hilux became the first vehicle other than a passenger car to be Australia's best-selling vehicle.

Toyota Australia's product design and engineering capabilities have global reach, supporting the development of vehicles manufactured for Australia, the Asia-Pacific region and other markets. While the Hilux Tonka Concept is not destined for dealer showrooms, adults and children alike will have the opportunity to share the dream as it tours 4WD shows, field days and expos around the country.

[https://youtu.be/LVHxDHyD\\_JM](https://youtu.be/LVHxDHyD_JM)

*\* Hilux marketed as HiLux in Australia.*