Kelley Blue Book Report: Average New-Vehicle Transaction Price Moves Back Above $50,000 in August

ATLANTA, Sept. 10, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- The average transaction price (ATP) for a new vehicle in the U.S moved back above $50,000 in August, according to analysis by Kelley Blue Book. Transaction prices continued to be influenced by a richer mix of Midsize SUV sales and price increases across two of the most-popular, most-affordable segments: Subcompact SUVs and Compact Cars.

August marked the first month in 2026 that the industry ATP surpassed $50,000. New-vehicle prices typically increase as the calendar year progresses, particularly during the second half as next-model-year vehicles begin arriving at dealerships. New-vehicle prices peaked in December 2025, when ATPs hit $50,612.

- **Industry ATP:** The Kelley Blue Book new-vehicle ATP increased to $50,089 in August, up 0.5% from July, and 1.9% higher than August 2025. Prices increased across each of the five highest-volume vehicle segments, and the most affordable segments increased more than average, pushing the industry-wide ATP higher.

- **Industry MSRP:** The average manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP), commonly known as the sticker price, increased to $51,852 in August, up 0.4% from July and 2.2% higher than one year ago. Notably, the average MSRP has remained above $50,000 since April 2025, reflecting a market dominated by popular, higher-priced SUVs, pickups and premium models.

- **Incentives:** Incentive spending averaged 6.5% of ATP in August, down from 6.6% in July and 7.2% in August 2025. Lower incentive spending accompanied higher MSRPs in August, indicating that retail pricing support remained more restrained than it was a year earlier. In the Q3 Cox Automotive Dealer Sentiment Index, auto dealers reported feeling less pressure to lower prices as new-vehicle inventory levels remain at manageable levels.

- **Segments:** The five highest-volume vehicle segments accounted for approximately 65.1% of all new-vehicle sales in August, mostly unchanged from a year earlier when it was 64.7%. In 2026, the Midsize SUV segment moved to the top, as the once-leading Compact SUV segment fell to No. 2. Inventory constraints affecting the Toyota RAV4 and the discontinuation of the Ford Escape, two key products in the lower-priced Compact SUV segment, have likely contributed to the shift in segment dynamics. ATPs for the top-five segments:
  - **Midsize SUV:** ATP of $50,315**,** up 1.6% year over year.
  - **Compact SUV:** ATP of $37,722**,** up 1.1% year over year.
  - **Full-size Pickup Truck:** ATP of $67,446, up 2.1% year over year.
  - **Subcompact SUV:** ATP of $31,149, up 2.2% year over year.
  - **Compact Car:** ATP of $27,997, up 2.9% year over year.

Quote from Erin Keating, Executive Analyst, Cox Automotive.

"We expected transaction prices to move back above the $50,000 mark in 2026, as new-vehicle prices typically increase through the year and especially in the second half, when next-model-year vehicles begin arriving at dealerships. New-vehicle price inflation is real, but automotive price increases have been moderate in recent years and remain below the long-term average of roughly 3%. At the same time, many American households are under significant financial pressure, which is steering more shoppers toward lower price points. The continued strong growth of Subcompact SUVs highlights how important affordability remains in today's market."

Electric Vehicle Prices Continue to Ease

- **Electric Vehicle ATP:** The average transaction price for a new electric vehicle was $54,813 in August, 1.2% lower month over month and down 2.7% year over year. The premium paid for the average EV in August was 9.4%, down from more than 16% in August 2025, suggesting EV pricing continues to move toward parity with ICE+ pricing.
- **EV Incentive Spending:** EV incentive spending averaged 12% of ATP in August, down from 12.2% in July and 14.6% one year earlier. Despite declining incentive support, EV incentives remained substantially higher than the overall industry average of 6.5% in August.
- **Tesla ATPs:** Tesla remained the dominant brand in the U.S. EV market and continued to exert substantial influence on overall EV pricing. Tesla's average transaction price was $52,616 in August, down 2.4% from July and lower by 3.4% from August 2025. As Tesla prices move lower, the overall EV market ATP tends to follow, given Tesla's outsized share of EV sales.

Data tables are available for download.

SOURCE Kelley Blue Book

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