



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cox Automotive Forecast: New-Vehicle Sales Pace in May Expected to Increase, as Buyers Shake off High Fuel Prices, Low Consumer Sentiment

- May’s new-vehicle sales pace is expected to finish near 16.1 million, up from April’s 15.9 million level and up slightly from last May’s 15.6 million level.
- Sales volume is expected to rise to 1.48 million units, mostly unchanged from May 2025 but 7% higher than last month.
- The new-vehicle market is proving to be resilient, as affluent households shake off economic uncertainty and inflationary pressure of higher fuel costs.

ATLANTA, May 26, 2026 – New-vehicle sales in May are expected to show a market that remains relatively stable in the face of economic uncertainty and an ongoing war in the Middle East. The seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of sales is forecast by Cox Automotive to finish near 16.1 million. The expected sales pace is an improvement over last May’s 15.6 million level and a gain from last month’s 15.9 million pace.

New-vehicle sales volume in May is expected to be mostly flat from year-ago levels, increasing a modest 0.1%, but rising 7% over last month. There are 26 selling days this month, which is the same as last month, but one less than last year.

The market is being shaped by competing factors right now, and the forecast calls for the vehicle sales pace to remain in the high-15 million to low-16 million range this month, an improvement from earlier in the year and a pace similar to much of 2025. Although fuel prices are sharply higher and consumer sentiment is at historic lows, the stock market has returned to record highs, and the auto market is likely still benefitting some from this year’s larger tax refunds and tax benefits.

“May sales appear to be holding up despite significant economic uncertainty,” Cox Automotive Senior Economist [Charlie Chesbrough](#) noted. “New-vehicle buyers today are more affluent than ever, so they may not be as impacted by inflationary pressures as other consumers who are more acutely feeling the sharply higher fuel costs. If the economy and stock market can remain on this growing but volatile path, new-vehicle sales will likely follow. However, those are two large necessities during extremely volatile times.”

May 2026 New-Vehicles Sales Forecast

Segment	Sales Forecast					Market Share		
	May-25	Apr-26	May-26	YOY%	MOM%	Apr-26	May-26	MOM
Mid-Size Car	72,460	70,298	75,000	3.5%	6.7%	5.1%	5.1%	0.0%
Compact Car	109,957	104,677	110,000	0.0%	5.1%	7.6%	7.5%	-0.1%
Compact SUV/Crossover	246,312	238,727	255,000	3.5%	6.8%	17.3%	17.3%	0.0%
Full-Size Pickup Truck	215,511	189,330	205,000	-4.9%	8.3%	13.7%	13.9%	0.2%
Mid-Size SUV/Crossover	240,405	242,055	255,000	6.1%	5.3%	17.6%	17.3%	-0.3%
Other Segments	588,205	533,926	575,000	-2.2%	7.7%	38.7%	39.0%	0.3%
Grand Total	1,472,850	1,379,013	1,475,000	0.1%	7.0%			

Cox Automotive Economic and Industry Insights Estimates

About Cox Automotive

Cox Automotive is the world's largest automotive services and technology provider. Cox Automotive powers industry-leading solutions for car shoppers, auto manufacturers, dealers, lenders and fleets through proprietary technology and insights derived from billions of annual online interactions. The company has 29,000+ employees on five continents and a portfolio of industry-leading brands that include Autotrader[®], Kelley Blue Book[®], Manheim[®], vAuto[®], Dealertrack[®], NextGear Capital™, CentralDispatch[®] and Cox Fleet[®]. Cox Automotive is a subsidiary of Cox Enterprises Inc., a privately owned, Atlanta-based company with \$23 billion in annual revenue. Cox Automotive has been included on Glassdoor's [Best Companies in Tech & AI 2026](#) and [Best Place to Work in 2026](#) lists. Visit coxautoinc.com or connect via [@CoxAutomotive](#) on X, [CoxAutoInc](#) on Facebook or [Cox-Automotive-Inc](#) on LinkedIn.

Media Contact:

Mark Schirmer

734 883 6346

mark.schirmer@coxautoinc.com