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2021 Ford Bronco falls short of safety award

ARLINGTON, Va. — The new 2021 Ford Bronco 4-door, a midsize SUV, falls short of an award from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety because its head restraints fail to provide good protection against whiplash injuries and its headlights provide inadequate illumination on curves.

To qualify for either of the Institute's two awards, vehicles must earn good ratings in six IIHS crashworthiness evaluations, including the driver-side small overlap front, passenger-side small overlap front, moderate overlap front, original side, roof strength and head restraint tests. They must also be available with a front crash prevention system that earns advanced or superior ratings in both the vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian evaluations.

The Bronco earns good ratings for five out of six crashworthiness tests. However, it earns a lower rating of acceptable in the head restraint test because the neck of the test dummy was subject to moderate force in a simulated rear-end crash.

IIHS evaluates the geometry of head restraints in passenger vehicles based on the height and backset relative to an average-size male. A restraint should be at least as high as the head's center of gravity, or about 3.5 inches below the top of the head. The backset, or distance behind the head, should be as small as possible. The Bronco meets these criteria. However, in a test simulating a stationary vehicle being struck from behind by a vehicle of the same weight traveling 20 mph, the seat did not provide enough support for the occupant's head and neck to earn a good rating.

The Bronco's two available front crash prevention systems also meet the award criteria with superior and advanced ratings in the vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian tests. However, the two available headlight systems fall short.

For the lower-tier *TOP SAFETY PICK* award, at least one good or acceptable headlight system must be available. For the higher-tier *TOP SAFETY PICK+* good or acceptable headlights must be standard across all trims.

Both headlight systems available on the Bronco earn marginal ratings because their low beams do not illuminate the road to a far enough distance on curves.

For more information, go to iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing deaths, injuries and property damage from motor vehicle crashes through research and evaluation and through education of consumers, policymakers and safety professionals. IIHS is wholly supported by auto insurers.
