

Video game players can check out Toyota concept (Update)

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The Toyota FT-1 concept is unveiled during media previews during the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Monday, Jan. 13, 2014. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

Video game players will get a chance to try out a virtual version of Toyota's new concept sports car that was unveiled in Detroit as a symbol of the automaker's design future, the company said Monday.

The Japanese automaker took the wraps off the FT-1 during press previews at the North American International Auto Show. The company said the "FT" in the red, rear-wheel-drive FT-1 stands for "Future Toyota" and the number represents "the ultimate."

Technical details of the vehicle aren't being released, but it's billed as a powerhouse. The prototype's engine is in the front, with a window in the hood to showcase what's underneath.

"This provocative concept truly captures the passion, excitement and energy of the Toyota we are evolving into," said Kevin Hunter, president of Toyota's Caltex Design Research facility in Newport Beach, California, "and embodies elements of the emotion and performance."

The vehicle's development started two years ago, and the car was devised first in the Sony PlayStation Gran Turismo game environment. Starting Tuesday, the automaker says FT-1 will be available as a downloadable vehicle for PlayStation 3 Gran Turismo 6.



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With a free online update, an event featuring the FT-1 will be made available to players. With a bronze or better in the FT-1 challenge at Laguna Seca, players get the virtual car. Drivers also will be able to purchase the virtual vehicle without completing the event.



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The physical car, meanwhile, represents a change in Toyota's product development strategy from heavy reliance on consumer studies with an aim at pleasing everyone and taking fewer risks. Hunter said. The car is designed to stir emotions and push limits with Toyota design.

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