



# Automotive Timeline

## 1900-2012



### 1900 - 1910

- 1900 - American manufacturers make 4,192 cars at a purchase price of \$1,000 each.
- 1901 - The Olds factory begins production in Detroit and produced 425 cars that year.
- 1902 - Louis Renault invents the standard drum brakes.
- 1903 - Henry Ford raises \$28,000 to found the Ford Motor Company and produces the Model A.
- 1904 - Ford starts exporting cars to Britain.
- 1905 - The installment finance plan for cars begins in America.
- 1906 - America produces 33,500 cars.
- 1907 - The price of the Ford Model N increases to \$600.
- 1908 - The first Model T is built and 8,000 are produced. GM is started by William Durant.
- 1909 - At the 5th "Indy Car Race" in Indianapolis, Indiana, Louis Chevrolet wins driving a Buick.
- 1910 - Automobile production reaches 181,000 in the U.S.A.

### 1911 - 1920

- 1911 - The electric starter was introduced to replace hand cranking.
- 1912 - Cadillac's come equipped with Delco electric self starters and electric lighting.
- 1913 - Ford develops the first moving assembly line for cars.
- 1914 - Dodge introduces the first car body made completely of steel & Ford production workers now make an industry record of \$5 per day.
- 1915 - Cadillac presents the first successful V8 engine in the U.S.A.
- 1916 - Manual windshield wipers (patented by Mary Anderson in 1903) are replaced by ones powered by vacuum from the engine's inlet manifold.
- 1917 - The first Oshkosh four wheel drive truck is introduced.
- 1918 - Car registrations in the U.S.A. exceed 5 million.
- 1919 - Henry Ford pays \$100 million to buy out all stock holders of the Ford Motor Company.
- 1920 - Model T Fords make up half of all motor vehicles in the world.

### 1921 - 1930

- 1921 - Lincoln introduces their V8.
- 1922 - Over one million Model T's are produced by Ford.
- 1923 - Over 2,000,000 Model T's leave the Ford production lines.
- 1924 - Walter P Chrysler begins to produce his own cars after leaving the position as General Motors Vice President.
- 1925 - General Motors Research Corp leaves Dayton, Ohio and moves to Detroit, Michigan.
- 1926 - Cadillac introduces shatter-resistant glass.
- 1927 - The Model T, after 19 years and fifteen million vehicles ends production.
- 1928 - Chrysler buys Dodge for \$175,000,000.
- 1929 - 26.5 million cars are registered in the U.S.A.
- 1930 - Economic depression causes car sales to drop.

### 1931 - 1940

- 1931 - Mercedes-Benz presents the first modern independent front suspension system.
- 1932 - Ford redesigns the Model A with a V8 engine and sells over 300,000 the first year.
- 1933 - Ford drops to third place behind General Motors and Chrysler.
- 1934 - Citroen Traction Avant is the first successfully mass-produced front-wheel drive car.
- 1935 - A thermal interrupter switch is used to create flashing turn signals.
- 1936 - 54% of US families now own cars.
- 1937 - Buick and Oldsmobile present the Automatic Safety Transmission.
- 1938 - The Volkswagen goes into production in Nazi Germany (The German People's Car).
- 1939 - The first air-conditioning system is added to cars.
- 1940 - Jeep is designed with more than 360,000 made for the Allied armed forces. It was the workhorse of WWII.

### 1941 - 1950

- 1941 - 1945 - 700,000 GP (General Purpose Vehicles) were built for WWII through 1945 by Ford and Wyllys-Overland. GP = Jeep!
- 1943 - US passenger car production falls to 139 vehicles because war production requirements took over.
- 1945 - The war ends. Henry Ford resigns and his grandson, Henry Ford II becomes the president of The Ford Motor Company.
- 1946 - Michelin patents the Radial-ply tyre.
- 1947 - Henry Ford dies at the age of 84.
- 1948 - The American motor industry produces its 100,000,000th car.
- 1949 - Michelin "X" radial-ply tyres go on sale.
- 1950 - Ford Motor goes from 3rd place to 2nd place, reducing Chrysler to the 3rd position.

### 1951 - 1960

- 1951 - Chrysler offer power steering.
- 1952 - Automatic transmission vehicles in the USA exceed 2 million.
- 1953 - General Motors introduces the Corvette & Porsche the 550 Spyder race-cars.
- 1954 - Tubeless tyres are now available for all new American cars.
- 1955 - American car sales hit a record 7,915,000.
- 1956 - Ford introduces seat-belts but it isn't met with enthusiasm by the public.
- 1957 - 80% of new cars in USA have a V-8 engine & Chrysler offers in-car record player.
- 1958 - Toyotas and Datsuns are imported to the USA.
- 1959 - Studebaker hopes its new compact car, The Lark, will compete with European imports.
- 1960 - 80% of US families own at least one car.

### 1961 - 1970

- 1961 - Jaguar E-type is shown at the Geneva Motor Show.
- 1962 - The Chevy Nova is introduced.
- 1963 - Porsche's W-RS Spyder wins again at Le Mans.
- 1964 - The Ford Mustang is released and sells over 500,000 in just 18 months.
- 1965 - The rear-engined Chevy Corvair is criticized by Ralph Nader as unsafe.
- 1966 - U.S. Congress passes an Auto Safety Act.
- 1967 - Energy-absorbing steering column introduced by General Motors.
- 1968 - Federal law requires front seat belts for all passenger cars.
- 1969 - Head restraints are required in U.S. vehicles.
- 1970 - Airbags become standard.

### 1971 - 1980

- 1971 - Chrysler introduces a brake-slip control system.
- 1972 - Federal law requires front bumpers meet 5 mph crash standard.
- 1973 - Arab-Israeli War causes fuel supply problems and pain at the pump as prices rise around the world.
- 1974 - Manufacturers try to look at ways to improve fuel economy in vehicles.
- 1975 - All American cars have catalytic converters to cut air pollution emissions.
- 1976 - The Ford Fiesta is launched with a front drive.
- 1977 - Volkswagen stops production of the "Beetle" in Germany after 40 years.
- 1978 - Tennessee is the first jurisdiction in the world to pass a child passenger safety law.
- 1979 - AMC produced the Eagle 4 x 4 car.

### 1980 - 1990

- 1981 - General Motors launches Saturn in the USA.
- 1982 - Honda starts production at its first US factory.
- 1983 - Toyota introduces Lexus as its luxury brand in USA.
- 1984 - First U.S. seat belt law is enacted in New York.
- 1985 - Every U.S. state passes the use of child safety seats.
- 1986 - General Motors announces the rear seat lap/shoulder safety belt will replace the lap safety belt.
- 1987 - The Ford Motor Company acquires 75% of shares in Aston Martin Lagonda.
- 1988 - Ford's first 6-cylinder car with front-wheel drive is the Lincoln Continental.
- 1989 - Honda starts Civic production in East Liberty, Ohio plant.
- 1990 - First accident with both cars equipped with airbags occurs and both drivers walk away.

### 1991 - 2000

- 1991 - The Cadillac comes standard with anti-lock brakes.
- 1992 - Chrysler minivan line has integrated child safety seats available.
- 1993 - Fiat buys Maserati
- 1994 - Volvo has side impact protection airbags.
- 1995 - Only one state in the USA doesn't have mandatory seat belt laws.
- 1996 - The new Jeep Wrangler has coil springs.
- 1997 - Cadillac offers automatic stability control.
- 1998 - Dual airbags become standard in passenger cars.
- 1999 - Ford buys Volvo.
- 2000 - Ford buys LandRover.

### 2001 - 2010

- 2001 - BMW releases the new Mini.
- 2002 - Rolls-Royce is all BMW and Bentley is all Volkswagen.
- 2003 - Rolls-Royce Phantom is ready for delivery.
- 2004 - Volkswagen's all-new Golf named Car of the Year
- 2005 - New car coating -polyurethane film - park car in sun and the scratch will be gone in an hour.
- 2006 - 30,000th Aston Martin is produced.
- 2007 - Manufacturers around the world more concerned with building eco-friendly vehicles.
- 2008 - Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems (TPMS) is required on new cars and light trucks.
- 2009 - GM announces 2007 losses of \$39 billion - the largest ever by a US car manufacturer.
- 2010 - Nissan will put a pure EV on the road in the U.S. and Japan in 2010 in small volumes.

## 2011 - 2012

2011 - With a groundbreaking combination of range, room and price, the Nissan Leaf is the first all-electric car for the masses.

2012 - People's Car Once Again: 2012 Volkswagen Beetle Attracting Both Sexes