

Driving Through TIME

adapted by Jocelyn Piro

*Can
machines
have
birthdays?*



If machines can have birthdays, the car had one in 1996. That was when the car turned 100 years old.

It was 1896 when the brothers Frank and Charles Duryea started the first car company, the Duryea Motor Wagon Company. That year it built 13 cars.

Let's take an imaginary ride through time in the Duryea Motor Wagon and see what's happened to the car since then. Toot, toot! Off we go!

It's 1899. A New York taxi driver gets the first speeding ticket. He was going far too fast—12 miles an hour!

Now it's 1919. The First World War is just ending. This year, Detroit, Michigan, puts up the first traffic light.

It's 1922. Hold on, we're going faster. In this year, the Ford Motor Company introduces the "assembly line." That means each worker puts one or two parts on a car body as it moves past. This allows Ford to build more than a million cars a year.

It's 1935. The number of cars made in the United States has risen to more than 3 million.

It's 1942. We're in the Second World War. U.S. car companies stop building cars and turn out tanks, jeeps, and other war vehicles.

Set Your Purpose

Cruise through time as you read this article to learn about the history of the car.

It's 1968. The U.S. government requires front-seat shoulder belts in all new American cars. Thousands of lives are saved. By now, the car is an **essential** part of American life.

Now it's 1971. American astronauts on the moon go off-road with a car called the *Lunar Rover*. They drive it across the **surface** of the moon. They leave the *Rover* behind on the moon. That makes the moon the largest known parking lot!

But that's nothing. Guess what might be in your **driveway** someday? Cars of the future may obey your voice commands. Magnets may make your car hover over local **country** roads, replacing rubber tires. Whoo-ee! Let's go!

Think About It

What do you think were the most important events in car history? Why?

Name _____

Date _____

Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- Which came first?
 - (A) the assembly line
 - (B) the Duryea Motor Wagon
 - (C) the traffic light
 - (D) front-seat shoulder belts
- From all the changes we saw in cars from 1896 to the present, we can predict that cars of the future will be
 - (A) without drivers.
 - (B) about the same.
 - (C) different.
 - (D) without wheels.
- Which came after tanks, jeeps, and other war vehicles?
 - (A) front-seat shoulder belts
 - (B) the first car company
 - (C) the Second World War
 - (D) the first speeding ticket
- The United States could never have built millions of cars a year without
 - (A) the First World War.
 - (B) the Duryea Motor Wagon Company.
 - (C) the Second World War.
 - (D) the assembly line.
- Which came before the first traffic light?
 - (A) tanks and jeeps for the war
 - (B) electric cars
 - (C) a cab being ticketed for going 12 miles per hour
 - (D) cars with voice commands

Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- There are millions of vehicles on the road today.
 - (A) motors
 - (B) moving parts in a machine
 - (C) means of carrying people or things
 - (D) pieces of equipment
- It is essential for most people to own cars these days.
 - (A) very hard to find
 - (B) excellent
 - (C) not necessary
 - (D) very much needed
- The car they left is sitting somewhere on the surface of the moon.
 - (A) something that is very hot
 - (B) outside layer of something
 - (C) the breaking of waves on a beach
 - (D) rough, rocky ground
- A different car might be in your driveway someday.
 - (A) sidewalk
 - (B) private road
 - (C) street
 - (D) garage connected to a house
- Country roads are not meant for big cars.
 - (A) land away from towns or cities
 - (B) place with many people
 - (C) hilly
 - (D) along the ocean

Name _____ Date _____

Word Work

Adding the suffix **-ed** to the end of a base word that is a verb usually turns it into a **past-tense verb**.

report → **reported**

Sometimes the final e is dropped before adding the suffix **-ed**.

compare → **compared**

Add the suffix *-ed* to each verb. Write the new word.

1. park _____
2. happen _____
3. rake _____
4. turn _____
5. care _____

Read each sentence. Add the suffix *-ed* to the base word in dark type to complete the sentence.

6. A small crowd **assemble** _____ to look at the new car.
7. The company **start** _____ to put better safety belts in their cars.
8. These well-built cars have **save** _____ many lives.
9. Recently, many states have **require** _____ the use of safety belts.
10. This new vehicle is **call** _____ an "off-road car."

Write Now

In "Driving Through Time," you read about the history of the automobile. Cars have come a long way in their first 100 years, and they will go further still!

| 1896 | 1996 | Future

- Plan to make a timeline showing the history of cars in the United States. A timeline is a way of showing what happened when.
- Make your timeline. Mark the dates mentioned in this article on the line. Then label each date with the historic event that goes with it. Feel free to add any other important events you know and their dates. You can also add pictures to go with the events on the timeline.