

1932 BUICK 4-DOOR SEDAN

1932 Buick 4-door Sedan, Series 32-80, 5-passenger, body by Fisher

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original price: \$1,570 (In 1932: average car cost \$610; average household income, \$1,650; average cost of a house, \$6,510; gallon of gas, 10 cents)

Number made: 4,089

Engine, etc.: 8 cyl.; 345 cu. in., 104 hp; 126 in. wheelbase; 4,450 lbs.

Buick is currently the oldest active North American automotive maker and one of the oldest automobiles brands in the world. It started as Buick Auto-Vim and Power Company in 1899 and was incorporated as the Buick Motor Company in 1903 by David Dunbar Buick in Detroit, Michigan. He invented the overhead valve engine which helped spur the company's success.

In 1911 Buick introduced the first closed-body car, four years ahead of Ford.

The overhead valve straight-8 engine and synchromesh transmission debuted in 1931.

Only two models were offered in the 1932 Buick 126 inch-wheelbase series 80: a club sedan and convertible coupe, the Victoria Coupe. (The Classic Car Collection has both models.) The series 80 and 90 were top-of-the line Buicks. Using the most advanced engines of the day, they were smooth and had a reliable five-main bearing unit designed by chief engineer F. A. Bower.

New styling in 1932 included new hood doors instead of louvers, a slanted windshield, and a tapered radiator. Buick introduced its all-new Wizard Control transmission in 1932. It meant drivers were no longer required to double-clutch while shifting and it provided better free-wheeling which improved fuel mileage. Drivers also didn't have to use the clutch to shift from second into third gear.

In 1932, a Buick powered car finished in 11th place in the Indianapolis 500, further reinforcing the company's pursuit of performance.

The first Buick made for sale, a 1904 Model B, was built in Flint, Michigan after James H. Whiting took over. He brought in William C. Durant in 1904 to manage the company. Buick soon became the largest car maker in America and Durant used its profits for corporate acquisitions. He called the new mega-corporation General Motors and, instead of the units competing with each other, wanted each division to target a segment of buyers. Buick was near the top with only the Cadillac brand having more prestige. Buyers were mostly upper middle-class professionals who moved up from a Chevrolet, Oakland, or Oldsmobile, earning the nickname "doctor's car" in Buick's early years.

Sources: Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 -1942. Beverly Rae Kimes, et al. 3rd ed. Krause Publications, 1996.

<http://www.classiccardatabase.com/specs.php?series=230&year=1932&model=2413>

<http://auto.howstuffworks.com/buick.htm>

<http://oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Buick/1932%20Buick/1932%20Buick%20Foldout/index1.html> (Original dealer brochure)

<http://oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Buick/1932%20Buick/1932%20Buick%20Reference%20Book/index1.html> (1932 Buick Reference Book – mechanical information, etc.)