

1919 FORD MODEL T ROADSTER

1919 Ford Model T Roadster

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$500.00

Number made: 48,867

Engine, etc.: 4 cyl. 2-speed; 1,390 lbs.

This was the first year for a battery and electric starter. Also available for the first time were dismountable rims.

An instrument panel was included for the first time with an ammeter as the instrument. The panel also included the choke knob and ignition/light switch. Speedometers were dealer-installed options.

In 1908 Ford built the first "Model T" which allowed most owners to do their own repairs. It was Henry Ford's attempt to create a "Universal Car" and, humble though it was, the Model T was able to literally put America on the wheels.

In the early 1900's automobiles were very new with steam, electricity, and gas as the three means of powering vehicles. Until about 1915 no one knew which of the three would win as the favored power source. Steam and electricity had their benefits but the gasoline engine had the most potential and offered options for increases in power. It was said that how a vehicle finished on the race track often determined the success of sales. With gasoline engines winning most of the races, other sources of power were eventually doomed.

Black was now the Ford color though it was never listed prior to 1914. Henry Ford preferred the black color because it dried the fastest. Black continued as the color for all models until 1925. Three Ford models were available in 1914: a runabout, a touring car, and a town car.

The first full year of work after the complete automation of the assembly line was in 1914. From 1908 until 1927 over 15 million cars were produced. By 1914, the time to build a Model T chassis had been reduced from 12 ½ hours to one hour and 33 minutes. This was also the year that Ford introduced his revolutionary \$5 a day wage. He paid workers a wage proportionate to the cost of the automobile so they would be able to buy what they produced. Ford found many ways to cut costs so it could offer the least-expensive product. He instructed his suppliers on how to assemble wood crates used to ship him parts. The crates were then disassembled and used within the bodies of the cars.

There were over 200 automobile manufacturers during the early 1900's with the average factory building a couple hundred vehicles a year. During the years 1917 through 1923 Ford did not do any advertising but sold 9 out of 10 cars – no advertising was necessary.

There were two classes of the Model T – those produced before 1919 and after 1919. The pre-1919 Model T's are known as veteran cars while the later models are called vintage cars. Open touring cars and roadsters were cheaper to produce and thus, produced in greater numbers.

The three-speed transmission was actually two speeds forward plus one reverse. With no clutch pedal, shifting was handled by floor pedals that did not require a clutch. A third floor pedal operated the reverse gear. A lever on the steering column controlled the throttle. Wood "artillery wheels" were standard until 1926 when they were replaced by steel wire wheels.

The Model T was described as having "a chassis of blessed simplicity and dogged reliability". It was called the "Tin Lizzie" and the "Flivver".

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

<http://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z14456/Ford-Model-T.aspx>

<http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Ford/1919%20Ford/index.html> (Link to three original brochures including general one, starting and lighting system manual, and user manual)