**The Enthusiasts Guide to the Corvette**

The [Chevy Corvette](http://www.npr.org/2013/01/15/169376822/with-redesigned-corvette-gm-ushers-in-new-era-of-american-muscle-car) is without a doubt one of the most sought after, dreamed about, sexy and stylish cars, ever made. Its [sleek design](http://www.rides-mag.com/news/2013/01/2014-chevrolet-corvette-stingray-check-it-its-the-c7/) resembles a race car and this is no coincidence. It can go from Zero to 60 miles per hour in 4.2 seconds and the [aluminum V-8 engine generates](http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/24/business/la-fi-mo-autos-corvette-engine-details-released-201210224) over 430 horse powers with 450 pounds/feet of torque. Despite the fact that it is race car ready and can reach speeds of over180 miles per hour, it is also a perfectly acceptable car for slower, controlled city driving. Unlike other types of cars, the Corvette has been in production for over 59 years.

[In 1951](http://www.caranddriver.com/features/the-first-corvette), car designer [Harley Earl](http://www.carofthecentury.com/the_real_corvette_story.htm) noticed that there was something missing from [General Motor's](http://www.mlive.com/business/index.ssf/2008/09/a_brief_history_of_general_mot.html) car line up. Although GM was very successful at selling bigger luxury vehicles such as Oldsmobile, Cadillac and Buicks, it had no [sports cars](http://web.bryant.edu/~ehu/h364proj/fall_97/tortora/History.html) available. England had produced the sporty Triumph and the Jaguar cars and Earl knew he could make a vehicle for GM similar to the English versions. After discussing his ideas with Robert F Mclean, they created a new sporty concept car using Chevy components. The Chevy sedan's chassis was used to construct the car but the engine was made with a higher compression ratio for faster speeds.

This [concept car](http://www.examiner.com/slideshow/corvette-concept-cars) was assembled in an inexpensive manner because it was at first; only supposed to be constructed for the [Motorama Exhibit](http://www.67stingray.com/history.htm) in the 1952 New York Auto Show. This all changed when engineer [Ed Cole](http://corvette-world.com/ed-cole-a-13.html) produced the small block V-8 engine. Cole knew that with the development of the engine and the new design, [production](http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-corvette-built) of the new concept car would have to begin immediately. He also knew the car would need a name, so he and advertising manager [Myron Scott](http://www.nytimes.com/1998/10/08/sports/myron-e-scott-91-ohioan-who-created-soap-box-derby.html) decided to call it a Corvette, which was actually a small, armed warship. In 1953, the first Motorama Corvette was constructed and since then different variations or [generations](http://www.jaylenosgarage.com/photos/gm-corvette-collection/12349/#item=272222) of the car have been produced.

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| Generation | Years | Specification |
| [C1](http://www.motorera.com/corvette/index.HTM) | 1953 - 1962 | Hand built in Flint Michigan, total production of 69,015, solid rear axle suspension,6 and 8 cylinder engines, 2 speed automatic powerglide, 3 and 4 speed manual transmissions, convertible only body style, wrap around windshield |
| [C2](http://www.corvettefever.com/) | 1963 - 1967 | Referred to as a Stingray, total production of 117,964, independent rear suspension, mark 4 big block engine, tapering rear deck, coupe body style, 4 wheel Disc brakes, AM FM radio, beginning of emission controls |
| [C3](http://www.popularmechanics.com/cars/news/4237615) | 1968 - 1982 | Built in St. Louis Missouri (until 1981), total production of 542,861, aluminum Z1 engine, catalytic converter, updated fender flares, aerodynamic design, T-top roof, urethane bumper covers, improved interior |
| [C4](http://www.coolc4.com/) | 1984 - 1996 | Built in Bowling Green Kentucky, total production of 358,180, Entirely new chassis, 2nd generation Lt1 engine, ZR-1 super car, 330 horsepower Lt4, liquid crystal displays, center high mounted signal light |
| [C5](http://corvette-concepts.tripod.com/id3.html) | 1997 - 2004 | Total production of 238,230, 3 body styles coupe, convertible and hardtop, LS series engines, rear trans axle, use of lighter weight materials-for better fuel efficiency, low drag body, rigid roof design |
| [C6](http://www.topgear.com/uk/corvette/c6) | 2005 - 2013 | Total production through 2012- 201,659, exposed headlamps, 635 horsepower ZR1 engine, expanded passenger area, leather interior, pulls 1G on skid pad, final production of the C6- February 2013 |
| [C7](http://www.corvettemuseum.org/specs/2014/index.shtml) | 2014 - | Bucket seats, LT1 6.2 Liter V-8 engine, direct injection fuel system, 7 speed manual transmission, 6 speed automatic transmission, run flat tires, 50/50 weight distribution, available carbon fiber roof panel |

Due to the Corvettes sleek design and powerful engines, they are often used as [racecars](http://www.corvette-mag.com/issues/55/articles/winning-streak). The first [Corvette racecar](http://registryofcorvetteracecars.com/ee/) was developed in 1956 and they continue to be used to this day in their current C6 configuration. Corvettes have been used at the [Indianapolis 500](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/One-Hundred-Years-of-the-Indy-500.html) as pace cars beginning in 1978 and as recently as 2012. Drivers that include, [Dale Earnhardt SR](http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Dale_Earnhardt.html), [Ron Fellows](http://www.corvetteracing.com/drivers/ronfellows/ronfellows.shtml) and Andy Pilgrim have competed in Corvettes. Many of these race cars have been built by Pratt and Miller, in Wixom Michigan.

There is no doubt that the American public is in love with and has a romantic obsession with the [Corvette](http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2013/01/13/2014-chevrolet-corvette-detroit-show-miracle/1823951/). It is the only genuine sports car manufactured in the United States. For the last 60 years, it has never lost its appeal and this is mainly because the car keeps evolving with the industry, worldwide. From the early days of Harley Earl and [Bill Mitchell](http://www.autolife.umd.umich.edu/Design/Mitchell/Mitchell.htm) to [Zora Arkus-Dontov](http://z16.org/peoplehis.php), [Larry Shinoda](http://corvetteactioncenter.com/history/shinoda1.html) and John Delorean, the design standards for this car have lead the automotive segment to new heights. Although other car companies have tried to incorporate similar features into their own vehicles, the Corvette has always stood alone as an iconic [symbol](http://articles.philly.com/1986-09-12/news/26071596_1_chevrolet-corvette-sports-car-space-frame) of exceptional engineering technology.

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