

Chrysler 300 History

1955 - 2015

First Generation: 1955-1956

Officially offered for sale on February 10, 1955, the first Chrysler 300 was athletic-looking with 300 gross horsepower aboard, it was among the quickest cars of its time. It was able to achieve 60 mph in just 9.8 seconds, according to a test in *Mechanix Illustrated* by "Uncle Tom" McCahill. Uncle Tom also spurred the car up to a full 130 mph. Tom McCahill and others in the contemporary automotive press, used the term "Beautiful Brutes" to describe Chrysler 300 series cars.

Besides being the most powerful production car of its time, the first Chrysler 300 was also among the best handling, thanks to a heavy-duty suspension. It can very well be considered an ancestor of the later muscle cars, though much more expensive, luxurious and exclusive.

The most prominent display of the first 300's attributes did not come in any showroom, but on racetracks around the Southeast. Back in 1955, NASCAR stock cars were, in fact, stock production vehicles. Except for some crude safety equipment and numbers on the doors, they were almost indistinguishable from the cars the public could buy. With absolutely no financial support from Chrysler, Mercury Outboard founder Carl Kiekhaefer campaigned a fleet of white 300s during the 1955 NASCAR and AAA seasons with drivers like the Flock brothers (Tim, Fonty and Bob), Norm Nelson, Buck Baker, Speedy Thompson and Frank Mundy to name a few.

The Kiekhaefer 300s were spectacularly dominant and overwhelmed the factory-backed Chevrolets and Fords. Tim Flock took the driver's championship while winning 18 races. He finished in the top five an astounding 32 times. His brother, Fonty, took another three victories, while Chrysler campaigner Lee Petty took home three trophies. Suddenly, the 300 had a glorious racing heritage in addition to its advertised Hundred Million Dollar Looks.

Considering the short model year for that first 300, 1,725 were sold at an expensive \$4,109 base price.

C-300 (1955)



This was the car to start the legacy. It had Virgil Exner's distinctive styling and the 331 hemi. The 1955 300 had a two door coupe body and clean, simple Chrysler Windsor side and rear quarter trim. Up front were two large Imperial "egg crate" grilles. This first of the letter series cars did not actually bear a letter. Chrysler's original manuals named it the C-300, which was an appropriate name for the car. The "C-" designation was applied to all Chrysler models, and the 300 stood for the engine horsepower.

It was THE first modern American production car to achieve this output. Power came from an updated source already available; the fabled "Hemi" 331 cubic inch hemispherical head engine, modified with a "full race" cam, larger dual exhaust, and topped off with 2 4-barrel carburetors. The suspension was made firmer, allowing it to handle far better than most cars. It was given a special performance PowerFlite transmission, while the inside remained pure luxury.

Notably, it was fast. The battle lines would be drawn, when it did 127.58 mph in the flying mile at Daytona, and averaged 92 mph in the Daytona Grand National stock car race. This car dominated the stock car circuit, earning the NASCAR and AAA championships its first year out.

The car was only available in three exterior colors: Black, Tango Red and Platinum, combined with a luxurious tan leather interior.

Production: 1,725 units

300-B (1956)



From 1956 – through 1965, each year's model used a new letter of the alphabet as a suffix.

It was no surprise that the 1956 300 was pretty much a carryover machine. Actually, the easiest way to tell the '56 300-B from the '55 C-300 was Exner's new bigger fins. Of course, it now wore the name "300-B."

Beyond that name modification and new taillights, the 300-B also featured the latest version of the Hemi V8, now displacing 354 cubic inches and producing 340 hp. In addition, there was also an optional version featuring a 10.0:1 compression ratio that was rated at 355 hp, thereby achieving the long sought goal of one hp per cubic inch engine displacement. (One year before Chevrolet's 283/283 of 1957!) Standard for the 355 hp hemi was a special three inch exhaust system.

The 300-B transmission availability was a PowerFlite 2-speed automatic or a 3-speed manual. Later in the year, the 3-speed TorqueFlite would become available. Twin 4-barrel carburetors were still standard.

In the racing arena, the increased output helped the 300-B win the Daytona Flying Mile with a top speed of 139.373 mph, a new record. Again the 300-B dominated the Grand National circuit to take its second Grand National Championship. The 300's accomplishments, from 1955 and 1956, would give it legendary status in the car world.

Success on the racetrack continued, but sales softened a bit.

Production: 1,102 units

Second Generation: 1957-1959

Virgil Exner, then Chrysler's design chief, called his new styling direction the "Forward Look." Upswept tailfins adorned the car's rear flanks. The car that best exemplified the new look was the 300-C. This car was glamorous. From its Ferrari-like grille to the bold rear fins, the 300-C exuded sex appeal in a way no domestic car had before it. The original 300-C is still considered by many to be among the most beautiful and desirable 300s of them all.

More than just the sheet metal was new, as Chrysler put a whole new chassis under its cars for '57-'59, featuring a torsion bar front suspension.

300-C (1957)



The first two years of the 300 may have established the marque's performance credentials, but it was the 300-C that added to the 300 aura of greatness. The 300-C was also the first 300 available as a convertible. This car featured a massive cross based frame, so it handled as well as its stiffer bodied coupes. The 300-C received 6 red, white and blue "300" badges of a totally new circular design. Brake cooling ducts (probably a first) were also standard.

The hemi engine grew to a final size of 392 cubic inches and a standard output of 375 hp. The 300-C advertising boasted that it had America's Most Powerful Production Engine. For even more performance, a more radical cam, and 10.0:1 compression, raised the output to 390 hp. These very limited production higher hp engines also had larger diameter exhaust pipes. The standard motor received the newly upgraded 3-speed TorqueFlight, an outstanding and responsive automatic transmission.

Three-speed manual transmissions were included in and only available in the 18 special high performance chassis package 300-Cs that also included the 390 hp engine, special cam and exhaust. To go with the new higher performance 300-C Hemis, there was also a new torsion bar based front suspension. It featured angled upper and lower control arms to reduce dive under braking. There were twin leading shoe front brakes, with 9.00 x 14 inch Goodyear Blue Streak Nylon race tires on wider rims.

Fins were now the Industry wide rage, and the 1957 300-Cs took fins to a new, yet pure level. They started at the rear edge of the door opening, and continued in one near straight simple line up to the top of each tail light tip. The only chrome on the clean side styling was a simple spear-like trim on the rear quarters, which included a proud 300-C in a simple chrome ring medallion. This red, white, and blue 300 medallion design was also featured on the grille, glove box door, trunk and steering wheel center. Virgil Exner continued the stunningly successful development of his "Forward Look" with fins and a bold grille that filled the front of the car. This would remain both the 300 and Exner's trademarks for five 300 models.

The 300-C again won The Flying Mile at Daytona, making it the fastest American car for the third straight year in Class 7.

Along with excellent engineering and record setting performance, the 300-C had a high luxury level, including standard leather seats, making these the most desirable cars in Chrysler's line up, and a powerful "Halo" car drawing customers into Chrysler showrooms.

Despite a sticker price higher than most US Luxury Cars, sales were strong.

Production of 1,767 Coupes; 484 Convertibles

300-D (1958)



The 392 Hemi carried over from 1957, as did the majority of styling with upgrades to interior and ornamentation. The engine received another horsepower bump to

380. This was accomplished through 10.0:1 compression, new camshaft, and piston modifications.

Available, for the first time for Chrysler Corporation cars was electronic fuel injection, which added another 10 horses to the base motor. This system, although ahead of its time, proved unreliable with the electronics then available. Most of the 21 300-Ds built with the system were recalled and retrofitted with the stock 2 4-barrel carburetors. The TorqueFlite 3-speed automatic was continued from 1957. The 2 known 300-Ds with manual transmissions, were carburetor equipped.

Styling was little changed for 1958. Why mess with a good thing?

During Proving Grounds testing, Chrysler found that Exner's "Forward jutting" chrome "eyebrow" header on top of the front windscreen cost 5 mph in top speed. So in a massive tooling change, for 1958 models, the convertible's compound curved type "bubble windshield" was adopted on all models to become 1958's biggest body change.

Other main changes included taillights that were shorter and did not reach the top of the fin; wheel covers with the 300 medallions, and redesigned leather interior patterns.

Performance was still world class and best demonstrated when a modified 300-D was driven to a new Class E record of 156.387 at the Bonneville Salt Flats. However, production was down, and the Hemi would disappear in the next model year.

Production: 619 Coupes; 191 Convertibles

300-E (1959)



The big news for the 300-E was the introduction of the new "Golden Lion" V8 that replaced the tried and true Hemi. This engine had a wedge-shaped combustion chamber, 413 ci displacement and was lighter and less expensive than the 392 it was replacing. The 2 4-barrel carbs remained, and compression was slightly higher (10.1:1 vs. 10.0:1). Horsepower was unchanged, but torque was up from 1958 with the new engine. The 3-speed TorqueFlite transmission was the only transmission offered. The tires remained the same 9.00 X 14 Goodyear Bluestreak Nylons as in the previous two years.

The exterior was similar to the previous year, with the most significant changes being the use of narrow red horizontal bars, highlighted by 4 aluminum bars in

place of the last year's egg crate grill. The rear bumper and tail lights were updated considerably from the '57/'58 styling. The side 300 emblems were moved from behind to in front of the rear tire. Inside the car, swivel front seats were standard, finished in perforated leather upholstery embossed in a basket weave pattern. This allowed the circulation of air in warm weather. The seats could swivel through a 60 degree angle to ease entry and exit from the car.

However, it was not all good news. With the loss of the hemi, came the loss of sales as production reached a low that would not be seen again until 1963.

Production: 550 Coupes; 140 Convertibles

Third Generation: 1960-1962

All the new 1960 Chryslers looked different from their predecessors. They truly were different as the corporation adopted uni-body construction techniques for all its full size cars except the Imperial line. So the 300-F would be the first 300 to lack a traditional ladder frame underneath it.

The 300-F adopted an elegant styling adding even more beauty to the powerful 300 beasts. The tail fins were now canted out and ended in a point. Up front, there was a spectacular, yet tastefully simple, grille with just two thin chrome bars intersecting at the grille's center adorned with a red, white and blue 300-F medallion.

Matching the elegant exterior, the 300-F's leather interior featured four individual bucket seats with a center console running the length of the cockpit between them. The "Astradome" instrumentation put a 150 mph speedometer and gauges under a large, clear plastic dome.

300-F (1960)



The 413 ci wedge continued to take the place of the old hemi, but it was improved for 1960. In standard trim, it was good for 375 hp, but optional goodies could bring out 400 ponies from this motor. "Ram Induction" was used with a new, and completely unique, "Cross Ram" manifold, placing 4-barrel carbs on opposite sides of the engine. The design provided a "supercharging" effect in the heart of the rpm range. Low range performance was helped with the design, but at some cost of performance in the higher ranges.

To solve that problem, engineers removed a section of the inner walls to create the 400 hp versions. Externally, the 30 inch "short rams" looked similar to the 30 inch

“long rams”, but the internal runners were in effect half the length. At least 8 of these “short ram” cars were built, mostly for Daytona or Flying Mile racecars that were dubbed “Gran Turismos.” Six of them captured the first 6 places at the Flying Mile event, with speeds ranging from 140 mph-145 mph. Four of the 8 still exist and are among the most rare of the post war collectable cars.

The “short ram” option also included the French made Pont-a-Mousson 4-speed manual transmission, which was made for the Facel Vega, a Chrysler powered French luxury car. The standard “long ram” 375 hp engines received the 3-speed automatic. The car was lightened with the use of uni-body construction, which also helped performance.

Production: 964 Coupes; 248 Convertibles

300-G (1961)



This would be the last year for Virgil Exner’s fins. A major exterior redesign gave the 300-G a new, inverted grille shape and canted headlights. The taillights were moved down from the fins to just above the rear bumper. Numerous options, available in 1960, were again available including A/C, remote control outside mirror, six-way power seats, power door locks, and the “Sure-Grip” differential.

Both engine variations were continued from 1960, but the standard axle for ’61 was changed from 3.31:1 to 3.23:1 ratio giving the 300-G a higher top speed potential than the 300-F. The high output engine also received a heavy duty Chrysler 3-speed transmission replacing the more expensive 4-speed French unit. The standard engine was available with either the 3-speed automatic or the 3-speed manual transmission.

Other performance enhancements included stiffer torsion bars, 60 inch leaf springs that were stiffer than standard, and 8.00 x 15 inch Goodyear Blue Streak Nylon white sidewall tires. An alternator was standard, replacing the generator of previous models.

A GT 300-G won the Daytona Flying Mile and a stock 300-G won the One Mile Acceleration Run.

Production: 1,280 Coupes; 337 Convertibles

300-H (1962)



Gone this year were the fins. New management at Chrysler decided that it was time to remove Virgil Exner's styling cues from the lineup. The 300-H also now shared the shorter wheelbase platform of the Newport line. The 413's 5hp boost, and the 300 pound weight savings of the smaller wheelbase combined to give the 300-H the best power to weight ratio of any letter cars to that point. There was also an optional 405 hp short ram engine (most if not all were dealer installed).

Available for the 300-H were the 3-speed automatic and 3-speed manual transmissions. Colors were limited to Festival Red, Oyster White, Formal Black, and Caramel.

Another change for 1962 was the addition of a non-letter 300 series car. This was in the form of the 300 Sport Series, which replaced the Windsor series and was priced and equipped between the Newport and New Yorker. This car was available in 2-door hardtop and convertible, as well as a 4-door hardtop. There was even a non-letter 300 4-door sedan sold in Canada. The standard engine for non-letter cars was a 305 hp 383 ci V8, with a 340hp/413 and the 380hp/413 available. The Sport Series looked like the 300-H, and could be equipped with much of the equipment found on the 300-H, but not the 4 bucket seat tan leather interior, nor the little chrome letter "H" after the "300" on the deck lid.

Although the 300-H was an outstanding performer, the ability to equip the Sport Series with most of the 300-H's features, and the relatively high price of the 300-H, made 1962 the worst selling year for the letter car to that point.

The 3-speed automatic or 3-speed manual transmissions were available for the base 383 ci engine, 340 hp/413 ci and 380 hp/413 or optional 405 hp short ram engine. The 300 designations and its similar appearance allowed it to assume some of the letter car mystique without letter car performance or price tag. The non-letter series continued through 1971.

Letter Series

Production: 435 Coupes; 123 Convertibles

Non-letter Series

Production: 2-Door HT 11,341

2-Door Convertible 1,848

4-Door HT 10,030

4-Door Sedan 1,801 (Canada Only)

Fourth Generation: 1963-1964

A major restyling came to all Chryslers for 1963 with an all new outer shell, designed by the Elwood Engel design team, that carried the last of Virgil Exner's styling influences. The styling carried over into 1964 with a few minor changes. The major change between 1963 and 1964 was the expansion of the rear window in both height and width, and the addition of small fins to the top of the quarter panels. This change allowed the driver of a 1964 model Chrysler to actually see where the rear corners of the car were while backing up. Minor changes for 1964 included redesigned taillights and a redesigned front bumper and grill.

300-J (1963)



For the Letter Series 300 in 1963, Chrysler skipped over the letter "I" and named the letter series model 300-J. Perhaps the letter (I) was not used, as it probably would look too much like the number (1). It was available only as a 2-door hardtop with a 390 hp 413 ci wedge engine. Sales shrank to a total of just 400 300-J's, making it the lowest production letter car. At the same time, 24,665 non-letter 300 models were produced.

The 390 horsepower twin 4-barrel cross ram 413 wedge engine was a special design that included the "short ram» style cross ram manifolds, special cast iron headers, a lower 9.6:1 compression ratio, and solid lifters. This was the most powerful standard equipment engine ever supplied in a letter car and it provided spectacular performance. Motor Trend magazine recorded a ¼ mile time of 15.8 seconds with a speed of 89 mph using the standard 3.23:1 axle ratio.

A heavy duty TorqueFlite 3-speed automatic transmission was standard, and a 3-speed manual was optional, with only seven cars so equipped. The new Bendix brake system provided better stopping ability. Gone was the letter car convertible for this year. The non-letter 300 cars had two engines to choose from, the base 305 hp 383 2- bbl engine and an optional high performance single 4-barrel 360 horsepower 413.

The 300-J featured a unique "square" deluxe steering wheel that some found uncomfortable. However, it allowed an unobstructed view of the redesigned instrument cluster for 1963, and easier ingress and egress for the driver. A new

wiper was used on the 300-J too. Airfoils were designed into the blade to press it harder against the windshield at higher speeds.

Five colors were available: Alabaster, Formal Black, Oyster White, Madison Grey, and Claret. A claret leather interior was standard with all exterior colors. Two pinstripes ran the length of the body, and the redesigned "J" medallions were placed on the C pillars, the rear deck lid, and rear speaker grill.

The 1963 Chrysler non-letter 300 was chosen as the official pace car for the Indianapolis 500. A non-letter 300 convertible equipped with the 390 horsepower cross ram engine and fitted with 300-J wheels and tires was the actual pace car. After the race, a special 300 Pacesetter trim package was offered for both 2-door hardtop and convertible. The majority of these cars were painted Pace Car Blue with special checkered flag emblems and a "300 Pace Car" emblem on the center console.

Letter Cars:

Production: 400 Coupes

Non-Letter Cars:

Production: 2-Door HT 9,423

2-Door Convertible 1,535

4-Door HT 9,915

4-Door Sedan 1,625 (These were Saratoga's built for Canada)

2-Door HT "Pace Setter" 306

2-Door Convertible "Pace Setter" 1,861

300-K (1964)



The corporate reaction to car sales in 1963 brought about changes in 1964. After a one year absence, the convertible returned to the Letter car line up. Luxury appointments such as leather trim and power accessories were now extra cost options. The 413 was still the base engine for the letter cars, but for the first time a single 4-barrel version rated at 360 horsepower was offered as standard equipment. The previous year's base engine, the 390 horsepower, twin four barrel cross ram 413, was now a \$375 option. This cost cutting effort knocked almost \$1,000 off of last year's base price and priced the 300-K \$600 more than the Sport 300.

The non-letter 300 was still equipped with the 305 horsepower 383 2-barrel engine as standard equipment, with the 360 horsepower 413 available as an

option. The 3-speed manual transmission was standard on the non-letter 300 with 4-speed manual and 3-speed automatic available at extra cost. The 3-speed automatic transmission was standard on the 300-K with the 4-speed manual available. 1964 marked the introduction of the console mounted automatic transmission selector on all 300-Ks and console-equipped non-letter 300s. In the spring of 1964, Chrysler offered the Silver 300 promotional trim package on both the non-letter 300 and 300-K for the 2-door hardtops only. This package consisted of special silver metallic paint, a black canopy style vinyl top with special roof molding, and black interior color only. 1964 marked the high point in letter car sales.

Letter Cars:

Production: 3,022 Coupes (including 255 Silver 300-Ks); 625 Convertibles

Non-Letter Cars:

Production: 2-Door HT 13,401 (includes 2,152 Silver 300s)

2-Door Convertible 1,401

4-Door HT 11,460

Fifth Generation: 1965

For 1965, the 300s got a sleeker body. For the first time, dual carbs were not available and the output of the 413 dropped to 360 hp in the 300-L. There were only barely discernible differences between the 300-L and the "Sport Series" 300s. It was obvious that the Letter Series was doomed even though 2,405 hardtops and 440 convertibles were sold in 1965.

With the Letter Series 300 cancelled for 1966. The 1966 300 was available in four different body styles: 2-door hardtop, four-door hardtop, convertible and four-door sedan. All were built on the same 124 inch wheelbase of other Chryslers and shared the same basic styling. The standard engine in the 300 was the 383 V8 with a single four-barrel carburetor making a relatively modest 325 hp. A 365-hp 440 engine was optional.

300-L (1965)



This would be the last year for the Letter Series cars, although the non-letter 300 would remain in production. The body style was all new and mimicked the square

lines of the 1964 Imperial. A truly unique feature of the 300-L was a medallion in the center of the grille that illuminated when the ignition was turned on. With nearly every feature of the 300-L available as either standard equipment or an option on the "Sport Series" 300, there was little reason to justify a separate model line. The base engines were unchanged from last year, with a 360 horse 413 for the letter car, and a 305 horse 383 for the 300. The 383's were equipped with a 3-speed manual as standard equipment, with a 3-speed auto available, while the 413 powered cars received a 3-speed auto as standard equipment and a 4-speed floor shifted manual was optional.

Letter Cars:

Production: 2,405 Coupes; 440 Convertibles

Non-Letter Cars:

Production: 2-Door HT (5 Pass.) 11,621
2-Door Convertible (5 Pass.) 1,418
4-Door HT (5 Pass.) 12,452
4-Door Sedan (6 Pass.) 2,187

300 (1966)

There were minor body changes for 1966, with the big news being the absence of the Letter series. Letter car sales were not going well, and Chrysler decided to abandon it. However, the 300 series cars would live on, at least for now.

The 383 was still the standard issue engine, but it was now rated at 325 horsepower. A new Chrysler power plant arrived, and was an optional engine for the line. The 440 ci V8 debuted, with two power levels, 350hp and 365hp. The 3-speed manual was standard on the 383, with the TorqueFlite 3-speed optional, while the 440 powered cars received the TorqueFlite standard, and a 4-speed manual was optional. There also was a 440 TNT engine option, including disc brakes (front only), twin snorkels, twin exhausts among other options.

Production: 2-Door HT 24,103
2-Door Convertible 2,500
4-Door HT 20,642
4-Door Sedan 2,353 (all exports to Canada)

Sixth Generation: 1970

A new roof and pointed grille distinguished the 1967 300 from the '66 model, and the 4-door sedan was gone from the lineup. However, the biggest change was a move up to Chrysler's 440 cubic inch (7.2-liter) V8 which, inhaling through a single four-barrel, was rated at 350 hp. For just \$79, buyers could have the "TNT" version of the 440 making 375 hp.

Hidden headlamps were added to the 1968 300's bag of styling tricks to create a unique look similar to the 300-X show car Chrysler had displayed in 1966. But there really was not much else changed, and a total of 34,621 300s were built with 2,161 of those being convertibles.

300 (1967)

An extensive facelift took place for 1967, including newly designed rear quarters, bumpers and taillights to distinguish it from the Newport. It could be well equipped with optional power windows, leather, auto pilot (cruise control), air conditioning, front disc brakes, six-way power seat, electric door locks, 15 inch wheels, and more.

The base engine was no longer the 383. Instead, a 350hp, 440 V8 filled the engine compartment of all models, with the higher rated 375hp variant available. The TorqueFlite, and 4-speed manual continued to be available for either engine.

Production: 2-Door HT 11,556
2-Door Convertible 1,594
4-Door HT 8,744

300 (1968)

There was very little change in 1968, the most noticeable being the concealed headlights. The 3 body styles used the previous year were still in production, and the same engines and transmissions were used once again. No improvements were made to increase horsepower with either engine. The biggest change was the increase in sales for the 300.

Production: 2-Door HT 16,953
2-Door Convertible 2,161
4-Door HT 15,507

Seventh Generation: 1969-1971

The 300 had always been a big car, but in 1969 it grew even larger. The 300 had a new slab-sided body it shared with the lower line Newport and luxury leader Imperial. The available engines and body styles stayed the same, and sales dipped slightly to 32,472 cars.

Nothing was new about the 1970 300, except for revised taillights. However, the Hurst Corporation took matters into its own hands when it made 501 special Chrysler 300-Hurst models during the year. Featuring a special white and gold paint scheme and a Hurst shifter controlling the 3-speed TorqueFlite automatic, power for the Hurst model came from the 375-hp TNT 440. While this model is not generally considered part of the 300 letter car series, it is considered collectible.

300 (1969)

A major facelift occurred for 1969, with a “fuselage” body introduced. In 1969 there were two engine options; 440 ci, and the 440-TNT.

Concealed headlights continued with the 300, and the creature comforts from the previous year were carried over as well. The designation Three Hundred was spelled out, with chrome block letters, on the rear quarter panels. A grille with a variation of traditional Chrysler 300 themes was placed in the bumper/grille surround, just as it had been for previous years. It had a blacked out insert, featuring a cross bar combination with a circular medallion in its center. The rear deck featured a thin, horizontal panel with blacked-out finish, long horizontal tail lamps and 300 lettering at its center. Again, the drive train was carried over from 1968 without change, making the body/interior the only revisions.

Production: 2-Door HT 16,075

2-Door Convertible 1,933

4-Door HT 14,464

300 (1970)

Minor changes continued with the 300 again, but it kept its concealed headlights, and unique “300” badges continued to adorn the grill insert. The convertible disappeared from the 300 line up, leaving only the 2-door and 4-door hardtops as the regular models. This would also be the last year of the 350hp and 375hp engines. In addition, the 4-speed manual transmission was gone. In essence, this was the beginning of the end of the 300.

300 Hurst (1970)



In 1970, a limited production, special edition 300 would be produced. This car was assembled by Chrysler and refined by the Hurst company with special striping and two tone paint treatment, deck lid spoiler, wheels, and the like to approximate the panache of the 300 letter car. The high performance 300-Hurst was a Chrysler 300 modified by Hurst Performance Corporation. Built in Detroit by Chrysler as a Spinnaker White coupe and shipped to Warminster, PA, where it was modified by the Hurst Corporation in their plant.

It was offered with saddle color leather bucket seats that was an Imperial interior brought over from the Imperial plant and installed on the Chrysler factory line. There were fiberglass power bulge hood (with functional air scoop); dual, depressed, rotary hood latches and fiberglass deck with rear end caps. The car was

built with a factory hood and Hurst took the metal skin off and installed a fiberglass skin.

Factory deck lid was removed and an all fiberglass one installed along with the spoiler extensions. Some had spoiler supports installed at dealers later as they were starting to crack from people using them to close the lid. There was special paint (Spinnaker White) and Satin Tan color accents with special striping and an integrated wing type rear spoiler. This Tan was in reality a Cadillac color, done at the Hurst plant.

Stripe colors were actually Chocolate and Orange. Often thought to be black. The Chrysler 300 Club International, Inc. had them reproduced. The Stripe kit is still available from vendors.

Other standard features included: 440-TNT engine; TorqueFlite automatic transmission; heavy duty suspension with sway bar; styled road wheels with a matching stripe circle around the center and raised white letter tires. This was Chrysler's last attempt to make the 300 something special and the 300-Hurst is considered in the same Class as the Chrysler Letter Car Series.

Note: Limited production was due to Chrysler and Hurst taking so long to decide and then each thought the other would advertise it. The cars just showed up on the transporters without a dealer order.

Production: 2-Door HT 9,589
2-Door Convertible 1,077
4-Door HT 9,846
2-Door HT/Hurst Special 502
2-Door Convertible/Hurst Special 1

300 (1971)

In 1971, the convertible was no longer offered, as Chrysler halted production of convertibles across the entire lineup in 1970.

This would be the final consecutive year of production for the 300. Sales of the model line were falling, and engine power was now dropping. Its own distinctive headlights (hidden) were retained, and body colored side molding would help set it apart, but it was on its last breath. Engines were now rated at 335 hp baseline, and 370hp in performance trim. The TorqueFlite automatic transmission was the only gearbox available. The mystique of the 300 was gone, and the nameplate died.

Production: 2-Door HT 7,256
4-Door HT 6,683

Eighth Generation: 1979

300 (1979)

The nameplate received a brief resurrection in 1979, but not as its own model. For the 1979 model year Chrysler produced a limited edition (3,811 built) 300 based on its Cordoba platform. The appearance changes to the Cordoba were the following: a cross hair grill with a '300' emblem in the middle, front fender gills, special 7" x 15" road wheels (also with a 300 emblem in the center cap) and wide white, lettered Goodyear radial tires. Almost all the 300s were Spinnaker White with a few painted Rallye Red with a red interior for export. The interiors were Corinthian red leather, a console shift automatic transmission, and a Rallye instrument cluster with a tachometer. The cars were outfitted with a strong (for the era) 195 net hp, 360 cu in (5.9 liter) V8, a 3.23 axle ratio, and an extra stiff suspension set up. It received positive reviews from the automotive press for its handling and respectable (again, for the day) acceleration.

Ninth Generation: 1999-2004

300-M (1999-2004)

The Chrysler 300-M is a full sized luxury sports sedan. Chrysler Corporation revived the 300 name on the 300-M. This time it was a front wheel drive, 235 net hp (190 kW; 259 PS) V6 engined car using the Chrysler LH platform. While not technically part of the famous "letter series" that was built from 1955 to 1965, Chrysler did use the next letter after the last of the series, the 300-L, but did not have 300 net hp. However, it is estimated, that its gross horsepower would exceed the 300 mark, which is how the series received its name, and it is a luxury car with very good handling and general performance.

300-M Special

Offered beginning midyear 2002. It featured a 255 hp 3.5 liter engine designed to use premium (91+ octane) gasoline and producing 258 foot pound force/feet of torque, with a 3.89 final drive ratio. The car has no speed limiter and will go over 140 MPH if the rear spoiler is removed. Performance type dual exhaust, high performance brakes, and 18 inch Z rated tires were standard, with Michelin Pilot Sport 245/45R18 performance tires optional. Other standard features of the Special included premium "Waterfall" leather seats, signal mirrors, body cladding, and slightly lower ride height. This model also included high intensity discharge headlamps, and imitation carbon fiber interior trim panels that replaced the standard wood grain trim panels.

A limited number of 300-M "Pro-Am" models were marketed during 2002. These versions included an Infinity audio system with subwoofers as well as two toned

leather interiors. 300-Ms continue to have a strong following, and hold their own against the original 300 Letter Cars on the quarter mile racetrack.

Tenth Generation: 2005-Present

The reintroduced Chrysler 300 is nothing short of sensational. Except for the fact that it's built in the same plant and can be had with the same 3.5 liter V6 engine in lower end models (there's also a base model with a 2.7 liter V6), the new 300 shares practically nothing with the outgoing 300M. The new uni-body structure mounts a rear drive drivetrain and incorporates suspension components originally developed for the Mercedes Benz E-Class. Chrysler has reintroduced the idea of rear wheel drive and V8 power to buyers shopping for a premium family sedan and/or entry-level luxury car.

Chrysler 300C Heritage Edition

Contemporizing its illustrious past, the Heritage Edition had a chromed body side molding with a distinctive tri-color 300C badge that is modeled after the badge on the 1957 Chrysler 300C, a vehicle described in its day as the "Beautiful Brute." The Chrysler 300C Heritage Edition honors the long line of beautiful Chrysler 300 vehicles by combining power and fuel economy in a sporty, stylish package.

Chrysler 300 SRT

The basic formula Chrysler used to create the second generation 300 SRT8 is simple: take the company's full size 300C sedan, stuff the most powerful HEMI V8 the automaker has ever produced under the hood, and enjoy. Of course, there are a host of other changes to the exterior, interior, and suspension that make it worthy of wearing the SRT8 badge, but nothing is as central to the car's identity as its 6.4 liter HEMI V8. It produces 470 horsepower, 470 lb/ft of torque and rumbles like thunder. A five speed automatic transmission handles shifting duties.

Chrysler 300 (2015)

All available with a 5.7L HEMI V8 with 363 Horsepower and 392 lb/ft of torque.

2015 Chrysler 300

Boasts spacious sedan luxury with a high quality interior, a standard 3.6L Pentastar V6 engine, a refined ride, and abundant amenities. Forward momentum is powered by traditional values.

2015 Chrysler 300S

A driver feels empowered by a sophistication of movement and sport inspired design. These are vehicles for visionaries with a certain uncompromising conviction and determination to succeed.

2015 Chrysler 300C

This car has advanced interior and exterior safety and security features as well as the optional power of a 5.7L HEMI V8 with Fuel Saver Technology. This is dynamic engineering and solid Chrysler brand craftsmanship delivered. The Chrysler 300C comes standard with an eight speed automatic transmission.

2015 Chrysler 300SRT

The high torque output of the 6.4-liter HEMI® V-8 delivers inspired acceleration and straight-line performance that belies the sophisticated luxury and comfort of the 300 SRT®. It is a rare breed indeed offering smooth sailing and adrenaline-pumping 470 horsepower.

2015 Chrysler 300C John Varvatos Luxury Edition

A vehicle that redefines design and style. A man's no-nonsense attitude meets Chrysler pedigree to give the Chrysler 300C a distinctive style all its own.