

A slice of motorsports around the world – website

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The history of racing on dedicated tracks dates back to the early 20th century, when the need for safer and more controlled racing conditions led to the development of purpose-built circuits. Before this, early motor racing took place on public roads, often with little regulation, leading to frequent accidents and safety concerns. As automobiles became faster and racing grew in popularity, the transition to closed courses became a necessity.

One of the first dedicated race tracks was **Brooklands**, built in 1907 in England. It was an oval circuit with high-banked corners, allowing for greater speeds and reducing the risk of crashes compared to public road races. Brooklands set the stage for future race track design and hosted a variety of early motorsport events, including Grand Prix races and endurance competitions. However, racing was interrupted by World War II, and Brooklands eventually fell into disuse.

In the United States, **the Indianapolis Motor Speedway**, built in 1909, became one of the most iconic tracks in racing history. Originally constructed with crushed stone and tar, the surface was soon replaced with bricks after a series of dangerous accidents, earning it the nickname "The Brickyard." The track became the home of the **Indianapolis 500**, first held in 1911, which remains one of the most prestigious motorsport events in the world.

Meanwhile, in Europe, circuits such as **Le Mans (France)**, **Monza (Italy)**, and **Nürburgring (Germany)** emerged as legendary venues for endurance and Grand Prix racing. The **24 Hours of Le Mans**, first held in 1923, became the most famous endurance race, testing both driver stamina and vehicle reliability. **Monza**, built in 1922, became a cornerstone of Formula One, hosting the Italian Grand Prix and featuring high-speed straights and dramatic banking. **The Nürburgring**, constructed in 1927, was one of the most challenging circuits ever built, winding through the German countryside with treacherous elevation changes and blind corners, earning the nickname "The Green Hell."

The mid-20th century saw the rapid evolution of race tracks, spurred by advancements in technology and safety. The creation of **Formula One in 1950** as the premier international open-wheel racing championship led to the development of modern circuits with improved safety barriers, run-off areas, and grandstand facilities. Tracks like **Silverstone (UK)**, **Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium)**, and **Suzuka (Japan)** became legendary for their technical challenges and high-speed corners.

As motorsport continued to evolve, race track design focused more on driver safety. The 1970s and 1980s saw the introduction of stricter regulations, improved track surfaces, and innovations like gravel traps, tire barriers, and run-off zones to reduce fatal crashes. In modern times, circuits such as **Circuit of the Americas (USA)**, **Yas Marina (UAE)**, and **Bahrain International Circuit** have been built to meet the highest safety standards while providing thrilling racing action.

Today, race tracks remain the heart of motorsport, hosting everything from Formula One and NASCAR to endurance races, touring cars, and motorcycle racing. Each circuit carries a unique history, and their evolution reflects the ever-changing landscape of motorsports, blending tradition with cutting-edge innovation.

*The information provided is based on widely known historical records and general knowledge about motorsports

Drifting

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Drifting, a motorsport technique where drivers intentionally oversteer to slide through corners while maintaining control, has evolved from underground street racing into a globally recognized competition. Though the concept of sliding vehicles through turns dates back to the early days of motorsport, drifting as a distinct style and discipline emerged in **Japan during the 1970s**.

The origins of modern drifting are often credited to **Kunimitsu Takahashi**, a former motorcycle racer who transitioned to car racing and developed a unique cornering style in Japanese touring car races. He perfected the technique of braking late into corners and using throttle control to maintain high-speed slides, giving him an advantage over traditional racing lines. His aggressive yet precise driving style earned him victories and a dedicated following among Japanese street racers.

During the same era, **Keiichi Tsuchiya**, known as the "Drift King," brought drifting into the spotlight. Inspired by Takahashi, Tsuchiya refined drifting techniques and gained fame for his daring maneuvers on **mountain roads, or "touge"**, where street racers would push their cars to the limit on winding passes. His 1987 video, "**Pluspy**," showcased his drifting skills in a Toyota AE86, helping to popularize the sport and spread it beyond Japan.

As interest grew, organized drifting competitions began to emerge. In 2000, **the D1 Grand Prix (D1GP)** was founded in Japan as the first professional drifting series, providing a structured platform for skilled drifters to compete. The series established rules, judging criteria, and scoring systems based on speed, angle, style, and overall execution. D1GP's popularity quickly spread, inspiring international drifting competitions.

By the early 2000s, drifting had reached the United States and other parts of the world. Events such as **Formula Drift (Formula D)**, launched in 2004, brought professional drifting to North America, further elevating its status as a legitimate motorsport. Formula D introduced a mix of Japanese and American driving influences, with cars featuring high-horsepower builds and aggressive styling.

The rise of drifting culture was also fueled by media, particularly movies and video games. Films like *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006)* exposed a global audience to the underground drifting scene, while games such as *Gran Turismo*, *Need for Speed*, and *Forza Motorsport* allowed players to practice virtual drifting techniques, further increasing interest in the sport.

Today, drifting is a respected motorsport with professional leagues in **Japan, the United States, Europe, and Australia**, featuring high-performance cars built for extreme angles, tire smoke, and close tandem battles. The art of drifting continues to evolve, with new techniques, vehicle innovations, and global competitions keeping the sport fresh and exciting for drivers and fans alike.

Sources include:

Red Bull's History of Drifting

Wikipedia's Drifting (motorsport) Page

"The History of Drifting" by Top Speed

"Keiichi Tsuchiya - Story of The Real Drift King"

Drag racing, a high-speed motorsport where two competitors race in a straight line over a set distance, has deep roots in automotive history. It originated from informal street races in the early 20th century, where drivers tested their cars' acceleration and speed in head-to-head sprints. Over time, these impromptu races evolved into an organized motorsport with dedicated tracks, strict regulations, and professional championships.

Early Beginnings (1930s–1940s)

The origins of drag racing can be traced back to the dry lake beds of California in the 1930s and 1940s, where hot rodders modified their cars for maximum speed. Enthusiasts would race across vast, open lakebeds like El Mirage and Muroc, pushing the limits of early high-performance automobiles. Many of these early racers were returning World War II veterans, bringing mechanical knowledge and engineering skills that helped develop faster and more powerful race cars.

As these informal races gained popularity, safety concerns and law enforcement crackdowns on street racing led to the creation of dedicated drag strips. The first official drag strip in the United States, Santa Ana Drag Strip, opened in 1950 in Southern California. It provided a controlled environment with set distances and safety measures, allowing drag racing to grow as an organized sport.

The Rise of NHRA and Professional Drag Racing (1950s–1960s)

In 1951, Wally Parks founded the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA), which established official rules and safety standards for drag racing. The NHRA's goal was to legitimize the sport, promote safe racing, and provide an alternative to illegal street racing. The introduction of elapsed time (ET) and reaction time as key performance metrics standardized competition and made drag racing more structured.

During this era, Top Fuel dragsters and Funny Cars began to emerge, featuring powerful engines, lightweight bodies, and specialized fuel mixtures, such as nitromethane, to achieve record-breaking speeds. The introduction of the Christmas Tree starting system in the 1960s revolutionized drag racing, giving drivers a precise and fair method to launch their cars off the line.

The Golden Age and Technological Advancements (1970s–1980s)

The 1970s and 1980s saw a massive explosion in drag racing popularity, with high-profile events like the NHRA U.S. Nationals drawing large crowds. Manufacturers and sponsors took notice, leading to increased funding and competition between major racing teams. During this period, turbochargers, superchargers, and advanced aerodynamics became common, allowing dragsters to exceed 300 mph in just a quarter-mile.

Street racing culture also remained strong, influencing the development of Pro Street and Outlaw racing classes, where heavily modified street-legal cars competed in high-speed sprints. The emergence of bracket racing, where slower cars could compete fairly against faster ones using a handicap system, made the sport more accessible to amateur racers.

Modern Drag Racing (1990s–Present)

Today, drag racing is a highly professionalized motorsport with multiple classes, ranging from Top Fuel dragsters, capable of reaching 1,000 horsepower and covering a quarter-mile in under 4 seconds, to street-legal drag cars in grassroots events. Organizations such as NHRA, IHRA (International Hot Rod

Association), and the FIA Drag Racing Championship host international competitions, while street car drag racing remains popular through events like No Prep Kings and Underground Racing.

Advancements in electric drag racing are now shaping the future, with manufacturers like Tesla and Rimac producing high-performance EVs capable of competing with traditional gasoline-powered dragsters. As technology evolves, the core appeal of drag racing—raw speed, acceleration, and competition—continues to captivate racers and fans worldwide.

Sources include:

National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) History

"Drag Racing" on Britannica

"The Early Days of Drag Racing: 1950-1970" by MotorCities

As well as the wikipedia article for Drag Racing