

**Formula One**, commonly known as **Formula 1** or **F1**, is the highest class of international [racing](#) for [open-wheel single-seater](#) formula racing cars sanctioned by the [Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile](#) (FIA). The FIA Formula One World Championship has been one of the world's premier forms of racing since its inaugural running in [1950](#). The word *formula* in the name refers to [the set of rules](#) all participants' cars must follow. A Formula One season consists of a series of races, known as *Grands Prix*. Grands Prix take place in multiple countries and continents on either purpose-built [circuits](#) or closed public roads.

A [point-system](#) is used at Grands Prix to determine two annual World Championships: [one for the drivers](#), and [one for the constructors](#) (the teams). Each driver must hold a valid [Super Licence](#), the highest class of racing licence the FIA issues, and the races must be held on [grade one tracks](#), the highest grade rating the FIA issues for tracks.

[Formula One cars](#) are the world's fastest regulated [road-course racing cars](#), owing to very high cornering speeds achieved by generating large amounts of aerodynamic [downforce](#). Much of this downforce is generated by front and rear wings, which have the side effect of causing severe [turbulence](#) behind each car. The turbulence reduces the downforce the cars following directly behind generate, making it hard to overtake. Major changes made to the cars for the [2022](#) season have resulted in greater use of [ground effect](#) aerodynamics and modified wings to reduce the turbulence behind the cars, with the goal of making overtaking easier.<sup>[1]</sup> The cars depend on electronics, [aerodynamics](#), [suspension](#), and [tyres](#). [Traction control](#), [launch control](#), and [automatic shifting](#), and other [electronic driving aids](#) were first banned in [1994](#). They were briefly reintroduced in [2001](#), and have more recently been banned since [2004](#) and [2008](#), respectively.<sup>[2]</sup>

With the average annual cost of running a team—designing, building, and maintaining cars, pay, transport—at approximately £220,000,000 (or \$265,000,000),<sup>[3]</sup> Formula One's financial and political battles are widely reported. The [Formula One Group](#) is owned by [Liberty Media](#), which acquired it in 2017 from private-equity firm [CVC Capital Partners](#) for £6.4 billion (\$8 billion).<sup>[4][5]</sup>

## History<sup>[edit]</sup>

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*Main article: [History of Formula One](#)*

Formula One originated from the [European Motor Racing Championships](#) of the 1920s and 1930s. The *formula* is a set of rules that all participants' cars must follow. Formula One was a formula agreed upon in 1946 to officially become effective in 1947. The first Grand Prix in accordance with the new regulations was the [1946 Turin Grand Prix](#), anticipating the formula's official start.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Before [World War II](#), a number of Grand Prix racing organisations made suggestions for a new championship to replace the European Championship, but due to the suspension of racing during the conflict, the new International Formula for cars did not become formalised until 1946, to become effective in 1947. The new World Championship was instituted to commence in 1950.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

The first world championship race took place at [Silverstone Circuit](#) in the United Kingdom on 13 May 1950.<sup>[6]</sup> [Giuseppe Farina](#), competing for [Alfa Romeo](#), won the first Drivers' World Championship, narrowly defeating his teammate [Juan Manuel Fangio](#). Fangio won the championship in [1951](#), [1954](#), [1955](#), [1956](#), and [1957](#).<sup>[7]</sup> This set the record for the most World Championships won by a single driver, a record that stood for 46 years until [Michael Schumacher](#) won his sixth championship in 2003.<sup>[7]</sup>



Juan Manuel Fangio's 1951 title-winning Alfa

### Romeo 159

A Constructors' Championship was added in the [1958 season](#). [Stirling Moss](#), despite being regarded as one of the greatest Formula One drivers in the 1950s and 1960s, never won the Formula One championship.<sup>[8]</sup> Between 1955 and 1961, Moss finished second in the championship four times and third the other three times.<sup>[9][10]</sup> Fangio won 24 of the 52 races he entered—still the record for the highest Formula One winning percentage by an individual driver.<sup>[11]</sup> National championships existed in South Africa and the UK in the 1960s and 1970s. Promoters held non-championship Formula One events for many years. Due to the increasing cost of competition, the last of these was held in 1983.<sup>[12]</sup>

This era featured teams managed by road-car manufacturers, such as Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, [Mercedes-Benz](#) and [Maserati](#). The first seasons featured prewar cars like Alfa Romeo's [158](#), which were [front-engined](#), with narrow tyres and 1.5-litre supercharged or 4.5-litre naturally aspirated engines. The [1952](#) and [1953](#) seasons were run to [Formula Two](#) regulations, for smaller, less powerful cars, due to concerns over the dearth of Formula One cars.<sup>[13][14]</sup> When a new Formula One formula for engines limited to 2.5 litres was reinstated for the 1954 world championship, [Mercedes-Benz](#) introduced its [W196](#), which featured things never seen on Formula One cars before, such as [desmodromic valves](#), [fuel injection](#), and enclosed streamlined bodywork. Mercedes drivers won the championship for the next two years, before the team withdrew from all motorsport competitions due to the [1955 Le Mans disaster](#).<sup>1</sup>