

The history of cars dates back to the late 19th century, though the idea of self-propelled vehicles existed much earlier. The first practical automobile was developed in the 1880s when Karl Benz built the Benz Patent-Motorwagen in 1885, considered the world's first true car powered by an internal combustion engine. Around the same time, Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach developed another gasoline-powered vehicle.

In the early 20th century, mass production revolutionized the automotive industry. Henry Ford introduced the Model T in 1908, making cars affordable for the general public through assembly line manufacturing. This significantly increased car ownership, especially in the United States.

Throughout the 20th century, car design and technology advanced rapidly. The 1920s and 1930s saw the introduction of luxury brands like Rolls-Royce and Bugatti. Post-World War II, the industry boomed with innovations such as automatic transmissions, power steering, and improved safety features.

The 1970s and 1980s brought concerns over fuel efficiency and environmental impact, leading to the development of more fuel-efficient and compact cars. The 1990s and 2000s saw advancements in hybrid and electric vehicle technology, pioneered by models like the Toyota Prius and Tesla Roadster.

Today, the automotive industry is shifting toward electric and autonomous vehicles, with major brands investing in sustainable and self-driving technologies. The history of cars reflects not only technological progress but also changes in society, infrastructure, and the global economy.