

Title:

Antenna - Mobile CB Antennas

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Summary:

A look at the CB craze of the mid 1970s and the popular mobile antennas that were used, from the cheap magnetized roof top mounts to the fancy fiberglass kind.

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Article Body:

If you were around in the mid 70s in the United States you'd have to have been living under a rock not to know about the great citizen band radio craze made popular by the smash hit "Convoy" by C.W. McCall. If you were into citizen band radio at all you knew that there was a certain prestige to having certain kinds of antennas, especially if you had a CB setup in your home.

For the mobile units, the ones that were installed in your motor vehicle, the antennas were rather simple and relatively weak. They could only send and receive a short distance depending on the time of day. In the afternoon, mobile CB antennas were lucky to reach a few miles, especially during sun spot time. At night, if you were lucky you could reach about 10 to 20 miles, maybe sometimes a little more.

Mobile antennas came in several types. One of the most popular antennas was the fiberglass model that hooked on the back bumper. These antennas were very good transmitters and receivers. Most were about 3/8 of an inch in diameter and about 2 feet tall. Some could handle up to 1000 watts of transmission power.

Another popular type of Mobile Antenna was the magnetic roof top antenna. These were not very powerful but they were real easy to hook up. Just pop the cable into your CB, which was installed usually under the dashboard in your car, and then just take the antenna, stick it out your window and pop it on your roof top. The magnet was strong enough that there would have to be a hurricane for that thing to blow off. These antennas could handle about 300 watts of power which made them a pretty low end antenna for CB use, but they were also very cheap.

Then we have the center load mirror mount antennas. The most popular of these were the Cobras. Don't let these small things fool you. They could handle up to 3000 watts of power, usually made of 24 carat gold-plated 8-gauge copper coil. These antennas were also very expensive and today go for as much as \$60 or more.

Of course one of the most common mobile antennas were the trunk mount CB antennas. These were very good antennas mostly because of the center placement on the vehicle towards the front of the trunk just before the back window. These antennas were not very expensive but usually were able to handle about 500 watts and because of their good ground, were very good for sending and receiving, even with a mobile unit that wasn't that powerful. A good trunk mount antenna wouldn't cost you more than \$35.

There were some other odd brands of antennas but for the most part, these were the most common. They were relatively easy to hook up. In some cases, some drilling was required through parts of the vehicle to run antenna wire but for the most part anybody could put one of these things together.

Next, we'll take a look at the most popular and powerful base antennas.