

Chrysler 300 History

First Generation: 1955-1956

Officially offered for sale on February 10, 1955, the first Chrysler 300 was athletic-looking, but it didn't have a letter at the end of its name. With 300 horsepower aboard, it was among the quickest cars of its time, getting to 60 mph in just 9.8 seconds, according to a test in *Mechanix Illustrated* by "Uncle Tom" McCahill, who 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. But beyond 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 and can be considered one of the muscle car's ancestors, though much more expensive and exclusive. It was also very luxurious and handsome in a bulky linebacker sort of way.

But the most prominent display of the first 300's attributes didn't come in any showroom, but on racetracks around the Southeast. Back in '55, NASCAR stock cars were in fact stock production vehicles and, except for some crude safety equipment and numbers on the doors, almost indistinguishable from the cars the public could buy. With absolutely no support from Chrysler, Mercury Outboard founder Carl Kiekhaefer campaigned a fleet of white 300s during the 1955 NASCAR Grand National season with drivers like the Flock brothers (Tim, Fonty and Bob) and Norm Nelson behind the wheel.

The Kiekhaefer 300s were spectacularly dominant and overwhelmed the factory-backed Chevrolets and Fords. Tim Flock took the driver's championship while winning 18 of the 38 races he entered and finishing 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 (only 1,725 were sold at a thick \$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 Chrysler New Yorker coupe body and smooth Chrysler Windsor side and rear-quarter body panels. Up front was a large Chrysler

Imperial “egg crate” grille. Chrysler’s original manuals named it the C-300, which was an appropriate name for the car. This first of the letter series cars didn't actually bear a letter. The “C-” designation was applied to all Chrysler models, however for marketing purposes the numerical series skipped 229 numbers forward in their numbering sequence (from the Crown Imperial’s C-71 to C-300).

The 300 originally stood for the 300 hp engine. It was THE first modern American production car to do so. Power came from an updated source already available; the 331 CI hemispherical head engine, the fabled “Hemi”, a “full race” cam, special manifolds, larger-than-usual exhaust dual exhaust, and topped off with 2 four-barrel carburetors. The suspension was made firmer, allowing it to sit lower thus allowing it to handle far better most cars, it was given a special performance PowerFlite transmission, but the inside was pure luxury. This caused it to be known as “The Gentleman’s Hot Rod.”

And 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 (when stock car racing actually meant racing a stock car). It had dominated the stock car circuit, earning the Grand National championship its first year out.

Initially, it was only available in three exterior colors: black, red and white, with a tan leather interior, and this was just the beginning giving way to special order exterior and interior colors to expanded standard colors.

Production: 1,725 units

300-B (1956)

From 1956–1965, each year's model used a new letter of the alphabet as a suffix {skipping the letter (i) which looked too much like the number one (1)}. Starting with (B) and reaching (L) by 1965, after which the “Letter Series” 300 model was discontinued in favor of “Sport 300s.”

It was no surprise that the 1956 300 was pretty much a carryover machine. Actually, the easiest way to tell the ‘56 300 from the ‘55 was that it now wore the name “300-B” as the tradition of labeling each subsequent model year with the next letter of the alphabet began.

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 making 340 hp. Plus, there was now an optional version featuring a 10.0-to-1 compression ratio that was rated at an almost unfathomable 355 hp.

With that, Chrysler achieved in 1956 what Chevrolet “claimed” as an American “first” in 1957: the magical one horsepower per cubic inch. So much for “truth in advertising”. A standard for the 355hp hemi was a special three-inch exhaust system, and a choice of transmissions was available in the form of the PowerFlite two-speed automatic, and a three-speed manual. Later in the year, the three-speed TorqueFlite would become available. Twin four-barrel carburetors were still standard.

In the racing arena, the increased output helped the 300 B again win the Daytona Flying Mile, with a new average speed of 139.373, a new record, as well as again, averaging over 90mph at the Daytona GN race. In fact, the 300 B dominated much of the Grand Nation circuit that year to take its second Grand National Championship. Its accomplishments from 1955 and 1956 would give it “legendary” status in the car world.

The 1956 Chrysler 300B won both events that year as well. In fact, the 300s dominated NASCAR tracks in 1955 and 1956, taking the overall championship both years. Those triumphs created the legend.

Success on the racetrack continued, but sales actually 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. And the car that best exemplified the new look was the new 300-C. This car wasn’t just gorgeous, but 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 300 of them all.

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

300-C (1957)

Not being content on leaving well enough alone, Chrysler again upped the ante for 1957. The first two years of the 300 may have established the marque’s

performance credentials, but it was the 300-C that gave the car an aura of greatness. The 300-C was also the first 300 available as a convertible.

Another hemi engine appeared. In standard trim put out 375 horses, and for even more performance, a more radical cam and 10.1:1 compression raised output to 390 ponies. The latter engines also got fatter exhaust pipes, and the manual transmission, while the standard motor received the automatic. Engine size was now at 392 CI. 375 horse engines were backed up by 3-speed automatic transmissions, and 390 horse engines got the 3-speed manual.

Fins were the rage, and the 300s were not exempt. A convertible also appeared this year, while the 300 received 6 red, white and blue "300" badges, as well as a red finish in the depressed outer layers of the wheel covers and on the front brake cooling vents.

The 1957 300-C did not compete in NASCAR track events, but, with its 375 hp hemi engine, again won the Daytona Beach flying mile, making the Chrysler 300 the fastest American car for the third straight year.

The strong lines, excellent engineering, high luxury level, and record setting performance were making these the most desirable cars in Chrysler's lineup, and a powerful "Halo" car for Chrysler showrooms.

Production: 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 380HP. This was accomplished through 10.0:1 compression, new valve timing, new camshaft, and heavier pistons.

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 available at the time. Most of the 21 300-Ds built with the system were recalled and retrofitted with the stock 2 4bbl carburetors. The TorqueFlite 3 speed automatic was continued from 1957. Two carbureted Ds are known to have had manual transmissions.

Performance was still world class, demonstrated when a 300-D was driven to a new Class E record of 156.387 at the Bonneville Salt Flats, and at Daytona, one was driven to an et of 16 seconds with a 94mph trap speed. But production was down, and the Hemi would disappear.

Production: 618 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 new wedge-shaped combustion chamber, 413 CI displacement, was lighter and less expensive than the 392 it was replacing. The two four-barrel carbs remained, and compression was slightly higher (10.1:1 vs. 10.0:1). Horsepower was unchanged, but torque was up for 1958 with the new engine. The three-speed TorqueFlite transmission was the only transmission offered. Goodyear Blue Streak 9.00x14 were a new addition. These tires were constructed of nylon, low cord angle, and a unique tread design.

The exterior was similar to the previous year, with the most significant changes being the use of narrow red horizontal bars, highlighted by 4 chrome bars in place of last years egg crate grill. The rear bumper and tail lights were updated considerably from the '57/'58 styling. Inside the car, swivel front seats were standard, finished in “Living Breathable Leather” upholstery that was perforated with fine holes and embossed in a basket weave pattern. This was to allow the circulation of air in warm weather. The seats could swivel through a 60-degree angle to ease entry and exit of the car.

But 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, and they truly were as the corporation adopted unibody construction techniques for all its full-size cars. So the 300-F would be the first 300 to lack a traditional ladder frame underneath it.

The relatively elegant styling of the 300-C, -D and -E was tossed aside with the 300-F, as it adopted some of the most flamboyant styling. The tail fins were now razor-thin and ended in a point that looked ready to impale pedestrians. And up front, there was a spectacular, yet tastefully simple, grille with just two thin chrome bars intersecting at the grille's center.

Matching the over-the-top exterior, the 300-F's 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 under a large, clear plastic dome with subordinate gauges in their own smaller domes.

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 horsepower, but optional goodies could bring out 400 ponies from this motor. A new, and completely unique "Cross Ram" manifold was used, placing the carbs on each side of the engine. The design was to have a "supercharging" effect in the heart of the rpm range. Low range performance was helped with the design, but at the cost of performance over 4,000 RPM.

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. Only 7 or 8 of these "short ram" cars were built, mostly for Daytona or Flying Mile race cars and were dubbed "Specials". Six of them captured the first 6 places at the Flying Mile event, with speeds ranging from 140 mph-145 mph. It is believed 4 of these still exist, and they are among the most valuable 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, while the standard "long ram" engines received the 3-speed automatic. The car was also lightened with the use of unit-body construction, which also helped performance.

Production: 964 Coupes; 248 Convertibles

300-G (1961)

This would be the last year to see Virgil Exner's fins on the 300. A major exterior redesign gave the 300 a new, inverted grill shape, canted headlights, and the taillights were moved from the fins to above the rear bumper. Numerous options were available, including A/C, remote control outside mirrors, six-way power seat, 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 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, or the 3-speed automatic, as did the standard engine. Other performance enhancements included stiffer torsion bars, 60-inch leaf springs that were 9% stiffer than standard, and 8.00x15 inch Goodyear Blue Streak Super Sport white sidewall tires.

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 smaller platform of the Newport line. Both 413's received a 5HP boost, and the 300-pound weight savings of the smaller wheelbase gave the 300-H the best power to weight ratio of any of the letter cars.

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 was priced and equipped between the Newport and New Yorker, a 2 door sedan and coupe, and, for the first time for the series, a 4 door coupe and sedan. The standard engine for non-letter cars was a 305hp 383CI V8, with a 340hp/413 and the 380hp 413 available. The Sport Series looked like the 300 H, and could have most of the equipment found on the 300 H. 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. Colors were limited to Festival Red, Oyster White, Formal Black, and Caramel.

Transmissions available were the 3-speed auto for the "H", 3-speed auto or manual for the base 383, and 340hp/413, and 3-speed auto for the 380hp/413. There was an optional 405 HP short ram engine.

In 1962, Chrysler offered a 300 Sport series in addition to the 300-H. This 300 series was priced and equipped between the Newport and New Yorker. 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

Fourth Generation: 1963-1964

Fourth Generation: 1963-1964

A major restyling came to all Chryslers for 1963, and the Letter Series 300 was no Exception. However, the company decided to skip over the letter “I” and named this car the 300-J. And it was available only as a two-door hardtop with a 390-hp version of the 413 Wedge under its hood. Sales shrank to a total of just 400 300-Js, making it the lowest production letter car produced.

At the same time, 24,665 300 Sport Series models were shipped — including 1,861 replicas of the 300 convertible that paced that year’s Indianapolis 500. The convertible returned to the Letter Series for 1964, but the 300-K was otherwise identical to the 300-J. Still, Letter Series sales rebounded to 3,022 hardtops and 625 convertibles, while 26,887 Sport Series cars found homes.

300-J (1963)

Chrysler skipped over “I”, going straight to “J” in its continuing production of the letter car. Its line up was also simplified somewhat this year. Only one engine was offered this year, the dual 4 bbl 413 V8 with short rams and 390hp with cast iron exhaust headers producing 390 hp. This was the most powerful standard equipment engine ever supplied in a letter car and it provided spectacular performance, with quarter mile speeds up to 97mph or higher in under 16 seconds and a top speed of 140mph or greater.

A heavy duty TorqueFlite 3-speed automatic transmission was standard, and a 3-speed manual was optional, with only seven cars so equipped. A new Bendix brake system provided better stopping ability. Gone was the “letter car” convertible for this year. The Sport Series non-letter cars had two engines to choose from: the base 383/305hp V8 and an optional high performance single 4bbl 413 V8 with 360hp.

The 300-J featured a unique “square” deluxe steering wheel that some found uncomfortable, but 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. This was important since the “J” could now reach over 140 mph.

Five colors were available: Alabaster, Formal Black, Oyster White, Madison Grey, and Claret. A claret red leather interior was standard with all exterior colors. Two pinstripes ran the length of the body, and “J” medallions were placed on the C-pillar and rear deck. Chrysler was selected to pace the Indianapolis 500 race in 1963 and a 300 Sport Series convertible was used fitted with 300-J wheels and tires as the actual pace car. In commemoration of that event a special run of “Pace Setter” Sport Series 300's were produced. The majority were convertibles 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 four barrel version rated at 360 horsepower was offered as standard equipment. Last 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 two-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 as a no cost option. 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 hardtop 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: 1965-1966

For 1965, the 300s got a sleeker body. For the first time, dual carbs weren't available and output of the 413 dropped to 360 hp on the 300-L. There were only barely discernable differences between the 300-L and lesser 300s. It was obvious — the Letter Series was doomed...even though 2,405 hardtops and 440 convertibles were sold that year.

With the Letter Series terminated for 1966, the 300 became, well, merely an ordinary Chrysler. The 1966 300 was available in four different body styles: two-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 version of the same engine was optional.

300-L (1965)

This would be the last year for the Letter cars, although the 300 would remain in production. The body style was all new, but there was little difference between the 300 and 300-L. A truly unique feature of the 300-L was a medallion in the center of the grill 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 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. But 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 440CI 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.

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: 1967-1968

A new roof and pointed grille distinguished the 1967 300 from the '66 model, and the four-door sedan was gone from the lineup. But 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 wasn't 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 was well equipped with 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 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 with 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. But 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 three-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. 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, with 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. And the 4 speed manual transmission was gone. In essence, this was the beginning of the end of the 300.

In 1970 The 300 would have one last hurrah, however. 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 modified Chrysler 300 built 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 there.

It was offered with saddle color leather bucket seats that was actually 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 a completely 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 actually a Cadillac color, done at the Hurst plant.

Stripe colors were actually Chocolate and orange. Often thought to be black. The Chrysler 300 Int'l. Club Inc. had them reproduced. The Stripe kit is still available from vendors.

Other standard features included: 440 TNT engine; heavy-duty suspension with sway bar; styled road wheels with a matching strip circle around the center and raised white letter tires. This was Chrysler's last attempt to make the 300 something special.

Note: Limited production 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 with out a dealer order.

Production: 2 Door HT 9,589
 2 Door Convertible 1,077
 4 Door HT 9,846
 2 Door HT/Hurst Special 500
 2 Door Convertible/Hurst Special 1

1969 was first year for "fuselage styling", there were two engine options; 440 and 440 TNT.

For 1970, taking a cue from Oldsmobile, a Hurst 300 was offered in Spinnaker White trimmed in Satin Tan with leather interior, powered by a 375 hp 440 cu in (7.2 l) TNT V8, as a limited edition of 485.

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

300 (1971)

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. There was no convertible, and the engines were now rated at 335hp 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 cars were Spinnaker White (though a few were built to special order and painted rallye red), with a red interior. 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 hp, 360 cu in (5.9 litre) 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)

The 300-M was released in 1999, ending a 20+ silence of the letter car. Unlike the heritage of the letter cars, this was a front wheel drive, 6 cylinder, 4 door car. In some aspects, it met the tradition of the letter cars. 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, but unlike the original cars, it does fall short of dominating its vehicle class. Technology allows it to surpass its predecessors in performance, but in a worldwide market competition, there are better cars.

Engine: 215CI V6 - 253BHP @ 6400 RPM - 255ft/lbs @ 3,950 RPM

Transmission: 4 Speed Automatic

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 unibody 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 bodyside 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 (2015)

All available with 5.7L HEMI® V8 With 363 Horsepower and 392 Pound-Feet 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 powered by traditional values.

2015 Chrysler 300S Feel 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 With 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 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.