



Cars

From Polo to Porsche, there are over 1.4 billion cars on the roads around the world. If you lined them all up end to end, they would stretch from London to Sydney in Australia four times. That number has more than doubled since 1996 when there were roughly 670 million cars on the roads. In 1976, there were only 340 million. For a long time, the USA was home to the most cars, but it has recently been overtaken by China. However, the USA still has the most families with cars - nearly 90% of American families own a car. San Marino has the most cars when compared to the number of people - it has roughly 1,260 cars for every 1,000 people! The UK has 471 cars for every 1,000 people and China, despite having the most cars in total, only has 196 for every 1,000 people.

THE FIRST CAR

Karl Benz is credited with creating the first modern car in 1886. Before that, cars were powered by steam and were not very practical to use. During the 19th century, many steam-powered vehicles were invented, but none of them proved to be very popular and didn't take off as an idea. Karl Benz became the first person to build and patent a working motor vehicle that was useful and practical. However, it didn't sell very many, to begin with. Between 1888 and 1893, only 25 cars were sold. The original Benz car had only three spindly metal wheels. In 1893, he introduced a four-wheeled car along with a cheaper model. Sales shot up, and they sold over 500 cars in the next six years. In 1926, Benz's company joined with DMG to become Mercedes-Benz.

MASS PRODUCTIONS

For the first decade or so, cars took a long time to build, which made them very expensive. Building things on an assembly line - where each person builds a separate part which is then put together at the end - had been going on in England for nearly a century by this point. Isambard Brunel had pioneered the idea in 1802. It had taken off in the US by 1821 with the manufacture of Springfield rifles. It wasn't until 1913 that Henry Ford began to use the idea to make cars much more efficiently. This meant that cars began to come off the assembly line once every fifteen minutes, a huge improvement! Instead of taking 12 hours to build a car, it now took just over 90 minutes. They now had a new problem - they couldn't get the paint to dry quickly enough to keep the line moving. The only paint that would dry in time was a colour called Japan black and is the reason why all early Ford cars were black. It wasn't until 1926 that other colours became available.

This new, quicker system meant that cars could be made much more cheaply. For the first time, many workers could afford to own a car.

LUXURY

For most people, a car is a way of getting from one place to another. For some, luxury is the order of the day. From top-end technology to sleek good looks and exquisite comfort, luxury cars offer anybody who can afford them the ultimate driving experience. The most expensive new car in 2020 was the Bugatti La Voiture Noire - the Black Car - which could be yours for just \$18.7 million. If that's not quite enough, you could buy a 1963 Ferrari 250 GTO for only \$70 million. It may not be new, but it's the most expensive car in history.





1

What impression do you get about the number of cars in the world?
Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence
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_____ **3 marks**

2

Look at the section headed: **The first car.**
Which of the following **two** statements are **true**?

Tick **two**.

The first modern car was created in the 1880s.

Karl Benz sold a lot of his first car.

Cars have always had four wheels.

Karl Benz helped to create Mercedes-Benz.

_____ **2 marks**



3

How long did early cars take to build?

1 mark

4

a) Who created the idea of mass-producing cars?

1 mark

b) Why did this help to make cars cheaper? **Give two reasons.**

2 marks

5

Look at the section headed: **Luxury**.

Which of the following words would best describe how most people think of cars?

Tick **one**.

Functional

Luxurious

Non-essential

Decadent

1 mark

SATs Practice - Answers

- 1. Give 1 mark for two correct impressions. Give an extra 1 mark for each correct use of evidence from the text.**
There are more of them than ever.
There are over 1.4 billion in the world
Any reference to how many each country has per person
The number of cars is growing quickly
There are twice as many as there were in 1996
The number has risen from 340 million to 1.4 billion since 1976
- 2. Give 1 mark for each correct answer:**
The first modern car was created in the 1880s.
Karl Benz helped to create Mercedes-Benz.
3. 12 hours
4. a) Henry Ford
b) **1 mark for each correct answer from:**
They were much quicker to build
They were more efficient to build so cost less in materials
5. Functional