

More than 100 years of pioneering spirit

Ingolstadt, September 1, 2026 – From the first mid-engine Grand Prix car to quattro all-wheel drive in rallying to diesel, hybrid, and electric powertrains at Le Mans and the Dakar Rally: Audi has led every motorsport project to success with determination, courage, and team spirit. For Audi, simply participating was never enough, innovation was a matter of course. The company wants to continue this tradition in Formula 1. Here is an overview of the most important milestones.

Success with electric drive concepts

The regulatory focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies does not only play an important role in the pinnacle of motorsport. The company began electrifying its motorsport program in endurance racing in 2012. With the first victory of a hybrid racing car at the Le Mans 24 Hours, Audi achieved a pioneering feat at the world's most important endurance race in 2012. The Audi R18 e-tron quattro remained unbeaten three times in a row at Le Mans in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Many other innovations such as the Audi laser light complement the pioneering technical achievements. Drivers and manufacturers titles with the hybrid sports car in the 2012 and 2013 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) complete the Audi sports car era, which ended in 2016. Following the LMP program with the R18 hybrid sports car, Audi was the first German car manufacturer to compete in the all-electric Formula E racing series in the 2017/2018 season. With four victories and a total of eleven podium finishes, Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler clinched the team championship after twelve races. Things continued to go electric after that: the brand with the four rings competed in the famous Dakar Rally from 2022 with an innovative prototype. Audi made history in January 2024: the Audi RS Q e-tron was the first low-emission prototype with an electric drive, high-voltage battery and energy converter to win the world's toughest desert rally.

Audi Sport customer racing for the brand's customers

Since 2009, Audi has used its most competitive products to hunt for trophies worldwide in customer racing with production-based technology. In its second generation, the Audi R8 LMS was available in variants for the GT2, GT3 and GT4 categories. The Audi RS 3 LMS TCR touring car also existed in two generations for racing and competed on five continents. Since the start of the program, customers have won several hundred racing titles worldwide. Outstanding individual successes include two class victories for the GT3 sports car at the Daytona 24 Hours, three overall victories at the Bathurst 12 Hour, four triumphs in the city street race in Macau and in the Spa 24 Hours and seven times at the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

Pioneering performance with TDI technology

Audi demonstrated a pioneering achievement with TDI technology: the newly designed Audi R10 TDI was the first racing sports car with a diesel engine to triumph in the legendary Le Mans 24 Hours in 2006. In total, TDI technology prevailed eight times at Le Mans. Audi won again at the Sarthe in 2007 and 2008 with the R10 TDI. In addition, Audi won the American Le Mans Series

three times in a row with the diesel racing car and the European Le Mans Series in 2008. With the R15 TDI, Audi celebrated a one-two-three victory in the fastest Le Mans race of all time in 2010, setting a new distance record that still stands today. Audi TDI power also prevailed at Le Mans in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. In 2014, the brand celebrated its 13th victory in just 16 participations. Audi also demonstrated “Vorsprung durch Technik” in terms of energy efficiency: throughout the TDI era, Audi reduced diesel consumption by 46 percent within a decade.

Title wins in the modern DTM

Following Laurent Aiello’s victory in 2002 with the Abt-Audi TT-R, Audi returned to the DTM as a factory in 2004 after a twelve-year absence and won the title at the first attempt with Mattias Ekström. The Swede also triumphed in 2007, followed by Timo Scheider in 2008 and 2009 – making Audi the first and so far only car manufacturer in DTM history to achieve a title hat-trick. Martin Tomczyk completed the success story of the Audi A4 DTM in the 2011 season with another title win – the fifth for the Audi A4 DTM. In 2013, Mike Rockenfeller clinched Audi’s ninth DTM title in total with the Audi RS 5 DTM. In his rookie year, René Rast caused a sensation with another title in 2017. Audi also won the manufacturers championship. Rast won the prestigious title two more times in 2019 and 2020. This means that Audi drivers have already won the DTM twelve times. There are also six manufacturers and eight team titles. In terms of technology, Audi has mastered one of the biggest upheavals in the history of the racing series with flying colors: In the two concluding years of the era of turbocharged engines, the Audi RS 5 DTM with its highly efficient two-liter turbo engine was the measure of all things with 28 victories, 95 podium finishes, 29 pole positions, 28 fastest race laps and all six championship titles. Since 2021, the DTM has been exclusively for GT3 sports cars.

Audi R8 most successful Le Mans sports car of the modern era

At the end of the nineties, Audi opened a new chapter when the brand turned its attention to the challenge of sports prototypes. As before in the other disciplines, the aim here was to assert the claim of “Vorsprung durch Technik.” At its debut in Le Mans, the world’s toughest endurance race, Audi immediately made it onto the podium in 1999 with third place. In the following years, the Audi R8 was in a class of its own. From 2000 to 2002, Audi achieved a historic hat-trick, also thanks to the TFSI technology that was used for the first time in 2001 and later found its way into large scale production. In 2004 and 2005, customer teams clinched two more overall victories for Audi at Le Mans. The R8 secured its place in motorsport history with a total of 63 victories in 80 sports car races.

quattro for the racetrack

Making quattro all-wheel drive ready for the racetrack was Audi’s major task in the second half of the 1980s. The series of successes began in 1988 with the Audi 200 quattro and in 1989 with the Audi 90 quattro IMSA GTO in the USA. In 1990 and 1991, the Audi V8 quattro won two championship titles in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM). Subsequently, the 80 and A4 models continued the successes in the category of production-based super touring cars. In 1996, the Audi A4 quattro won the championship titles in seven countries before the FIA banned all-wheel drive in circuit races. It was not until 2012 that all-wheel drive returned to the

racetrack as the e-tron quattro at Le Mans.

The modern success story began with the Audi quattro

After the company revived the Audi brand in 1965 with its first new product series, a wide range of private racing initiatives developed in the 1970s, not least thanks to sports sponsorship. Motorsport activities received a major boost when Audi entered the World Rally Championship as a factory. From the 1981 season onwards, Audi competed with the quattro model and its legendary permanent four-wheel drive. The superior victories as well as two brand and two driver's titles with the "original quattro" in the World Rally Championship between 1982 and 1984 were an important factor in the market success of the quattro drive. This also spurred Audi's rise into the premium manufacturer segment.

A broad base in the post-war period

Auto Union products were particularly popular with private drivers after the Second World War. The sporty customers, as well as factory drivers such as Heinz Meier, Gustav Menz and Hubert Brand, competed in touring car competitions, rallies and hill climbs. In 1954, the DKW Sonderklasse won the European Rally Championship with Walter Schlüter and the German Championship for Touring Cars with Heinz Meier. In 1956, the DKW Monza set several endurance records on the eponymous Italian racetrack. From 1954 to 1964, DKW drivers celebrated over 100 championship titles, 150 overall victories and 2,500 class victories in motorsport. Added to this was the factory's involvement in motorcycle racing, motocross and off-road racing. In addition to the four Auto Union brands, another traditional company contributed its motorsport record: The NSU brand merged with Auto Union GmbH in 1969 to form Audi NSU Auto Union AG. Even before the war, factory entries of solo and sidecar motorcycles shaped the brand's sports program. With the NSU 6/60 Kompressor sports car, the brand achieved a quadruple class victory on the Avus in 1926. Models such as the Wankel Spider or the TT touring car further enhanced the sporting record in the sixties and into the early seventies.

Pioneering achievements in the first half of the century

The Horch brand achieved an early success by winning the Herkomer-Fahrt in 1906. Audi then proved its long-distance qualities on the most adventurous mountain passes in Europe at the time. Conquering the Alps was a great challenge in the early days of the automobile. From 1912 to 1914, Audi won a total of eleven first prizes over the course of three editions of the International Austrian Alpine Rally and thus also the coveted Alpine Challenge Cup. A heyday followed the founding of Auto Union in 1932 from the Audi, DKW, Horch and Wanderer brands. The spectrum was diverse and ranged from long-distance driving and off-road sports to solo and sidecar motorcycles, off-road sports bikes and record-breaking machines. In 1938, Ewald Kluge was the first German to win the legendary Tourist Trophy motorcycle race with DKW. The Auto Union racing cars from the Type A to the Type D revolutionized Grand Prix racing between 1934 and 1939 with their mid-engine concept. The single-seaters from Zwickau achieved 24 victories, 23 second places and 17 third places in 61 circuit races. The popular hill climbs and world record races completed the program. In addition to the engine layout, the lightweight construction, the optional streamlined bodywork and engine charging systems and thus up to 520 hp of power

stood for extreme technology.

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About Audi

Audi drives transformation and shapes the mobility of tomorrow – with intelligent, electric products.

The premium automotive brand is available in more than 100 markets. Its global production network spans 21 sites in 12 countries. **Vorsprung durch Technik** unites more than 88,000 employees. With courage, passion, responsibility, and trust, they are reinterpreting more than 100 years of automaking tradition for the future. In 2026, Audi is entering Formula 1 with a factory team in a bold expression of its motorsports DNA.

The Audi Group also includes the supercar manufacturer Lamborghini, the luxury brand Bentley Motors, and the motorcycle maker Ducati.

Learn more about the Audi Group [here](#).

Audi is entering Formula 1 for the first time in 2026 with its own factory team and a hybrid drive system ("power unit") developed in Germany. The F1 project from Audi is based at three locations: Audi Formula Racing GmbH, which was founded specifically for the project, is developing the power unit in Neuburg an der Donau. Audi Revolut F1 Team is based in Hinwil in Switzerland. This is where the development of the race car and the planning and execution of race operations are located. In addition, the UK Technology Centre in Bicester provides a foothold in the heart of "Motorsport Valley," offering direct access to top F1 talent and key strategic partners.

Formula 1 is regarded as the pinnacle of motorsport and, with its global reach, is one of the most important sports platforms in the world. Thanks to open competition, Formula 1 provides an environment for the development and testing of electrified powertrain technologies and for novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources.

The Audi Environmental Foundation is an active supporter of research in new technologies and scientific methods for a livable future. Its declared aim is to help protect the environment and to create and promote opportunities for sustainable action. The foundation focuses in particular on the support and development of environmentally compatible technologies, on measures for environmental education, and on the protection of the natural resources for humans, animals, and plants. Established by AUDI AG in 2009 as a fully owned subsidiary, the foundation is a part of the company's social and environmental policy involvement.
