

# Mid-engine sports cars — the ultimate in driving dynamics

**The first Porsche was a mid-engine sports car, and the brand continues to follow this concept today in the construction of superior racing cars, supercars and production two-seaters.**

When Ferry Porsche designed his first-ever sports car, he positioned the engine in front of the rear axle in his efforts to attain the supreme driving dynamics of a mid-engine sports car. Thanks to the arrangement of the heavy masses of the engine and gearbox, which are located between the axles and as centrally as possible within the car, mid-engine models handle in a more neutral manner than other sports cars. This makes them easier to control right up to the limit, ensuring more than any other car concept that the driver feels at one with the car and can react more quickly and intuitively.

Ferry Porsche had first-hand knowledge of the benefits provided by this design. In 1933, his father Ferdinand Porsche developed a sixteen-cylinder mid-engine racing car for Auto Union. This car went on to set three world records, win multiple mountain races and triumph in three international Grands Prix, all in its first season of racing. Its mid-engine technical concept proved to be the way forward. In 1948, Ferry Porsche deployed it in his racing car design for Cisitalia – and in his 356 No. 1.

Almost all Porsche racing cars continue to follow this principle, except for the motorsport variants based on the 911. In the 1950s and 1960s, the agility of the 550 Spyder and 904 Carrera GTS mid-engine sports cars enabled them to defeat rivals featuring far greater engine power. This advantage was especially pronounced on circuits featuring a large number of corners. In 1970, the 917 took Porsche to its first-ever overall victory in the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The 956 sports car prototype subsequently helped Porsche win every title in the FIA World Supercar Championship from 1982 to 1984. Porsche continues to follow the mid-engine concept to this day, implementing it in cars such as the current 919 Hybrid.

In the field of production cars, the VW-Porsche 914 made its debut in 1969 as the first mid-engine sports car in Germany. Returning to the concept in 1996, Porsche unveiled two mid-engine models: the Boxster, which was launched on the market as a production sports car, and the 911 GT1 supercar. Porsche has remained loyal to the mid-engine in both segments. After the ten-cylinder mid-engine Carrera GT had its world premiere in 2003, the Cayman followed suit in 2005 as a coupé based on the Boxster. The 918 Spyder was then unveiled in 2013, and the 718 Boxster and Cayman models subsequently celebrated their debut in 2016.