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# 1895-2015

120 YEARS OF ŠKODA

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**THE STORY**

**1895-2015**  
120 YEARS OF ŠKODA

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Complete customer focus was the guiding principle; 'only the best we can do is good enough for our customers' was the motto.

**1895-2015**  
120 YEARS OF ŠKODA

## OVERVIEW

### 120 YEARS OF SUCCESS STEEPED IN TRADITION

With 120 years of history, ŠKODA is one of the oldest automotive manufacturers in the world. From modest beginnings, the brand has produced a vast range of products over the last 12 decades, from bicycles to racing cars, with the original factory in Mladá Boleslav, Czech Republic always at the heart of operations.

The ŠKODA story began in 1895, when cycling fanatics Václav Laurin (a mechanic) and Václav Klement (a bookseller) started designing and manufacturing bicycles under the name Slavia. The bicycles sold well, so Laurin and Klement decided to take the next step - and add motors. The pair started making motorbikes in 1899, and changed the name of their company to the Laurin & Klement Co. While making nearly 4,000 motorbikes of various types, the pair started experimenting with a new phenomenon - the motor car - which began to gradually replace motorbikes from 1905 on.

During the early 1900s, Laurin and Klement could do no wrong and their first car, the

Voiturette A, was a huge success, becoming a classic in Czech motoring history. When war began in 1914, the company started manufacturing for the armed forces too. However, due to the challenging economic conditions in Czechoslovakia at the time, Laurin and Klement needed a strong industrial partner to strengthen and modernise their company. They were now not only producing a range of cars, but also trucks, buses, aeroplane engines and agricultural machinery, such as motorised ploughs. To help realise their dream of building an even bigger company, they merged with engineering firm Pízen Škodovka Co in 1925 and became ŠKODA.

The early 1930s were difficult times for ŠKODA as it wrestled with a large range and a market greatly affected by the Great Depression. Luckily, the brand made a breakthrough with the Type A ŠKODA Popular, which was to become a legend in the second half of the decade.



L&K Slavia bicycle - 1895

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The ŠKODA 125 L, type 742 was produced between 1976-1990. A total 2,011,044 units of all 742 series models were built

Weighing only 650kg, the ŠKODA 420 Popular could reach 50mph and was offered at a fantastic price. It was a true car of the people and adaptable enough to be converted into a range utility vehicles, such as ambulances and delivery vans. The Popular also empowered owners to venture far afield. In what would prove to be a great piece of product marketing for the brand, national hero and Czechoslovakian international footballer František Plánička embarked on a four-month trip to India in a factory-prepared model, while the roadster version performed heroics on the 1936 Monte Carlo rally.

In 1939 came World War II and another period of turmoil for the brand. During the conflict, Czechoslovakia was occupied by Germany and the civilian car production programme was very limited. During this time, the majority of manufacturing supported the German war effort.

After World War II – which took a huge toll on ŠKODA's manufacturing capacity – the company became a national enterprise. This period saw the ŠKODA Tudor successfully exported as far as Australia and the introduction of the mould-breaking ŠKODA 1200. This innovative model was updated several times before finally ceasing production in 1973.

The 1950s also saw the launch of the ŠKODA

440 which, in 1959, evolved into the first Octavia, named because it was the eighth model to be produced after the end of World War II.

The Czech economy performed well up until the 1960s, then began to suffer as new technology advanced rapidly in the western world. ŠKODA continued to make new and improved cars – in the form of the Octavia, the Felicia, the MB range and the Rapid – but production really only grew again with the arrival of the Favorit model range in 1987.

The political landscape of Eastern Europe shifted again in 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell and the new free market economy arrived. The government of the Czech Republic and the management of ŠKODA began to search for a strong foreign partner in an effort to secure the company's long term international competitiveness.

In December 1990, they decided on Volkswagen and a joint venture began the following year. ŠKODA became the fourth brand in the Volkswagen group, alongside Volkswagen, Audi and SEAT.

Since then, ŠKODA has gone from strength to strength, manufacturing not only many excellent cars but many happy drivers. The brand's 2015 range is its biggest ever in the modern era with seven product lines.



ŠKODA founding fathers: the bicycle mechanic Václav Laurin (left) and the bookseller Václav Klement founded the Laurin & Klement bicycle factory in 1895

The ŠKODA Museum in Mladá Boleslav celebrates 12 decades of design, engineering and style with iconic cars that shaped the brand's development



## 1895-2015

### THE PIONEERS

#### 1905 VOITURETTE TYPE A

With a modest 7PS and a top speed of 25mph, the Voiturette Type A was an open two-seater that offered the driver little more speed or protection from the elements than the brand's acclaimed motorbikes. Despite this, buyers clamoured to get their hands on the new machine.



Laurin and Klement's passion for mobility meant that its cycle range included lightweight models designed specifically for women



ŠKODA has been an official partner of the Tour de France since 2004 and has an ongoing commitment to cycling at grassroots level

## IN THE GENES A PASSION FOR CYCLING

ŠKODA has enjoyed a special relationship with cycling for 120 years. From the first Slavia-badged bicycles to the brand's ongoing support for the Tour de France and other great races, ŠKODA's passion for two-wheelers is as strong now as it was 12 decades ago.

The firm's founding fathers, Václav Laurin and Václav Klement laid the foundations for success in 1895, when the pair agreed on a plan to build the best bicycle on the market.

Although their first efforts were merely improved versions of existing designs, the duo swiftly came to the conclusion that the best way forward was to design a new bicycle from scratch. Operating under the patriotic brand name 'Slavia', Laurin and Klement started production in 1895, and soon developed a range of five models that included a lady's bike and a hybrid bike. Step by step, the bicycle range was expanded. There were tandem bikes

'for two gentlemen' and 'for a gentleman and a lady', children's bikes for boys and girls, delivery tricycles and speciality bicycles with a drive shaft.

The products from Mladá Boleslav inspired people with their innovative technology. For example, the bikes had tyres with an air-filled inner tube and valve – a revolutionary idea at the time. On the downside, the bicycles were rather expensive with a typical Slavia model costing around two to three months' wages of a Bohemian craftsman.

The high level of reliability and excellent-quality finish of the Slavia bicycles led to growing commercial success. For quality control, comprehensive endurance tests were carried out before the sale. These included tests where the wheels were immersed in water three meters deep for 24 hours without any trace of water penetrating into the bearings. Easy maintenance routines also

contributed to Slavia's growing reputation.

With sales rising, the range continued to expand. In 1899, L&K presented the next engineering milestone: a bicycle with an auxiliary motor – the so-called Motocyclette. Although L&K's first motorcycle achieved a top speed of just 20mph, it was a huge success with buyers who were happy to trade leg power for horsepower.

ŠKODA has never lost its passion for cycling. The brand still sells its own range of two-wheelers and is deeply involved at all levels of cycling. Since 2004, ŠKODA has supported the Tour de France, the most famous bicycle race in the world, as official sponsor and vehicle partner. It also sponsors other renowned national and international cycling events as well as maintaining comprehensive involvement in cycling as a grassroots sport.

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## BETTER, FASTER, FURTHER MOTORCYCLES DRIVE EXPANSION

With bicycle production running at full capacity, Laurin & Klement turned to motorcycles as a way of diversifying their business. Using one of their bicycles as a prototype, the pair added a motor and created the first Motorcycllette. The technology set new benchmarks for motorbike engineering: the motor was mounted in the lower frame area to improve stability, there was an electro-magnetic ignition and the control elements were positioned in a user-friendly fashion on the handlebars.

Thanks to their innovative technology, L&K motorcycles won acclaim in the key German and British markets: with substantial orders flooding in just days after they were unveiled. At its motor show premiere in Frankfurt and at media presentations in Prague, Vienna and Hamburg the brand's first Motorcycllette won first prizes and gold medals from the press.

Shortly after the start of motorcycle

production, Laurin and Klement made a decision to get involved in motor sport — a smart and brave step. With fearless Czech rider Narcis Podsedník in the saddle, a specially built L&K motorcycle completed the 1901 Paris-Berlin race — a distance of 750 miles. Unfortunately for the team, he reached the finishing line unexpectedly early, turning up before the timekeeper. As a result, his finish was never officially recognised and the team returned with just the moral victory.

In 1903, the company took part in 34 motorcycle races and won 32 of them. Then, in the summer of 1905, came a result that made headlines around the world. Factory rider Václav Vondřích won the most demanding race in the world, the unofficial world championship, 'Coupe International' in Dourdan, France.

Riding an L&K two-cylinder racing motorbike with a capacity of 700cc, Vondřích reached

a top speed of more than 60mph, with an average speed over the entire course of 51mph. As a comparison, during the car race on the same course, the winner only managed 45mph with an engine that was 15 times more powerful.

Laurin and Klement introduced new technology as soon as they could get it off the drawing board. The early air-cooled models were swiftly joined by more powerful water-cooled versions in 1904, while a new inline four-cylinder model – the Type CCCC – was one of the first of its kind anywhere in the world.

At the same time, L&K motorcycles with sidecars were also successful, despite an unusual layout that put the passenger seat behind the rider on many models. A variant for commercial use was also available. It featured closed storage space – a feature that appealed to the Mexican postal service, who ordered a fleet of them.

L&K type CCD Slavia motorcycle (1906) The factory's most popular two-cylinder motorcycle. 675 units were produced between 1904-1907



L&K type L motorcycle (1904) A sporting model with a lowered frame in the seat area.



Václav Vondřích on an L&K motorcycle – winner of the Gordon Bennett Cup in France in 1905

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### THE PIONEERS

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#### 1911 L&K TYPE LW MOTOR TRICYCLE

Although car production was already underway by 1911, L&K still enjoyed high demand for its more affordable motorcycles and motor tricycles – often from far afield. A commercial design with a closed storage space at the front caught the eye of the Mexican postal service, who promptly ordered a special fleet and had them shipped to South America.





The 2003 Fabia WRC was a spectacular sight on the World Rally Championship, with heroes such as Colin McRae at the wheel



▲ The 1000 MB started a tradition of rear-engined ŠKODA competition cars that would run for more than 20 years



▲ Artur Porro celebrates winning the 1948 '1,000 miles of Montevideo' in his ŠKODA 1101

## MOTOR SPORT

### A DESIRE FOR SPEED AND SUCCESS

Laurin and Klement kick-started the brand's passion for motor sport in 1901. Just two years after the pair had unveiled their first motorised L&K bicycle, fearless factory rider Narcis Podsedniček took part in the Paris-Berlin long-distance race on an L&K one-cylinder motorcycle. He was the first to get to the finish, but in a cruel twist of fate was disqualified due to a lack of official timing. Despite the result's absence from the history books, participation in this race is considered the foundation of ŠKODA's involvement in motor sport.

Over the following years, L&K shaped the international motorcycle racing scene. L&K motorcycles were among the most successful racing bikes of the early 20th century, winning countless races. In 1905, another L&K factory rider - Václav Vondřich - won the renowned 'Coupe International' in Dourdan, France on an L&K bike. This victory in what was effectively the unofficial motorcycle world championship,

marked the end of L&K's involvement in motorcycle racing.

In the 1930s, the company — now operating under the ŠKODA name — made a return to motor sport. With the focus now on car racing, ŠKODA campaigned the 1934 Popular model, fully utilising its modern central tube frame construction to create a light but strong racer.

In 1936, Zdeněk Pohl and Jaroslav Hausman finished in second in their class in a two-seater Popular Sport at the Monte Carlo rally - considered at the time to be one of the toughest challenges in the sport.

To celebrate this success, ŠKODA produced a run of Popular Sport Monte Carlo special editions, complete with smooth aerodynamic bodywork and swooping profile.

Following the end of the World War II, ŠKODA resumed its motor sports activities. Using a 1101 model modified for extra performance and handling, the factory team continued to



The 1974 ŠKODA 200RS featured a highly tuned 2.0-litre, 163PS engine and tipped the scales at just 850kg

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record incredible results on some of the world's toughest and fastest events. These included endurance races at Spa in Belgium, the Monte Carlo rally and the Tour d'Europe.

More success followed in the late 1950s, when factory campaigned Octavias achieved notable results in the 1.3-litre touring car class – then one of the most fiercely contested categories.

A new chapter began in the 1960s with the arrival of the 1000 MB. The first rear-engined ŠKODA signalled a technological leap forward – and provided the brand with a layout that would reap considerable rewards in the years to come. While the 1000 MB proved to be the perfect race and rally car, it was the 110 R Sport Coupe and legendary 130 RS Coupe that really moved ŠKODA into the top echelons of the sport. Thanks to its exceptional handling, the 130 RS became one of the most successful rally cars of its time, recording a double class victory

on the Monte Carlo rally and even winning the European Touring Car Championship in 1981.

The arrival of Volkswagen Group in 1991 helped relaunch ŠKODA's motor sport programme and saw the brand return to the world of rallying. Campaigning a new Favorit, ŠKODA won the 1994 FIA World Championship for 2.0-litre cars, proving that Czech engineering was still a force to be reckoned with. A step up to the sports highest level followed in 1999 when ŠKODA entered the World Rally Championship (WRC) with an Octavia WRC and latterly a Fabia WRC – both of which proved highly competitive.

However, it wasn't until the late 2000s that ŠKODA returned to the top step of the podium. The Fabia S2000 – designed and engineered in-house at Mladá Boleslav – was an instant winner and soon racked up an impressive tally of rally and championship wins. By the time it

was replaced in 2015, it had become the most successful rally car of its generation.

Between 2010 and 2012, ŠKODA won the manufacturer and driver titles in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC) three times in a row. Another success came in 2011 with the victory in the Super 2000 World Rally Championship (SWRC). Other hat tricks followed in the European Rally Championship (ERC) and Asia-Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) series between 2012 and 2014. Between 2009 and 2014, the factory and customer ŠKODA Fabia Super 2000 won almost 50 national and international titles.

The current 2015 season marks another step forward for ŠKODA. The new 1.6-litre turbocharged Fabia R5 has already proved itself to be a winner at both national and world level, and is currently being campaigned in the high-profile WRC2 world championship.

ŠKODA's latest factory car – the Fabia R5 – continues the brand's rich tradition of rallying success



The rear-engined 130 RS was one of the most successful competition cars of its generation, recording countless race and rally wins



Pushing to the max: a ŠKODA 1500 OHC heading for more silverware in 1970

## 1950 966 SUPERSPORT

Built in 1950, the 966 Supersport featured a lightweight aluminium body and made its debut at the Grand Prix of Czechoslovakia. Factory driver Miroslav Fousek took it to second place in the 1,100cc category and in the process set a new national speed record of 124mph.



Spreading the word: ŠKODA's 1960s marketing drive promoted the car's dynamic styling everywhere from Paris to the Swiss Alps



▲ Selling the dream: ŠKODA's drive to increase overseas sales saw its cars photographed and advertised in glamorous locations

## SPREADING THE WORD HOW ŠKODA TOOK ON THE WORLD

ŠKODA founders Laurin and Klement always knew that the key to success and growth depended on finding new markets for its products. The pair's export drive started with its motorcycle range which had developed a loyal following in the UK and Germany following L&K's early motor racing successes. The first products to be shipped overseas left the Mladá Boleslav factory gates in 1900 and started an export success story that would run for the next 115 years.

Unlike many manufacturers of the time, Laurin and Klement dared to cross borders and revelled in the opportunity to sell to new customers. By the beginning of the 20th century there were several importers in Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Italy and Russia. Before the First World War, around one third of the entire L&K production went to the Russian market. There was also success outside of Europe. L&K vehicles went to Japan, where

the Japanese Prince and the mayor of Tokyo were among the brand's best customers. The company even exported to Brazil, Australia, Egypt, Mexico and New Zealand.

The mid-war years proved more of a challenge for ŠKODA - with export trade greatly restricted by the ongoing political situation. Despite this, innovative ŠKODA models such as the Popular and Rapid, attracted countless overseas customers and the company soon worked out ways of getting products to those who wanted them.

After World War II and the transformation into a nationally owned company, ŠKODA slowly restarted sales activities abroad. Although trade was still logistically challenging, the brand built an international network that, by 1960 had risen to more than 60 territories. The elegant ŠKODA Felicia convertible, for example, was exported to the USA, while around 93 per cent of ŠKODA 110 R coupé production went to

countries outside of Czechoslovakia. Off-road vehicles such as the Skopak and Trekka were built in New Zealand, Pakistan and Turkey. The parts were sent from Mladá Boleslav and assembled locally by ŠKODA engineers.

The introduction of new rear-engined models in 1964 further boosted overseas success for the brand. By the end of the 1980s, around 17,000 units were sold in the UK alone - a record high at the time.

The arrival of Volkswagen Group in 1991 and change in the political landscape of Eastern Europe helped ŠKODA realise its true export potential. With free trade and the financial security of a new owner, ŠKODA transformed from a domestic manufacturer with limited export opportunities to a global brand. Today, ŠKODA is established globally in more than 100 markets with the proportion of vehicles delivered outside of Europe now standing at more than 40 per cent.



1895-2015  
ADVERTISING



ŠKODA *Felicia*

Schönheit • Eleganz • Geschwindigkeit • Natur • Freude • Flucht aus dem grauen Alltag



ŠKODA *Felicia* wird Ihnen sicherlich bei Ihren Fahrten ein schneller, treuer und zuverlässiger Gefährte werden und Ihnen an Werk- und Feiertagen viel Freude bereiten.

Gute Fahrt!

In 1936, Stanislav Skulina and his wife journeyed across Africa in their Rapid - collecting some questionable souvenirs along the way



▲ Marital bliss behind the wheel: on their journey across the USA and Central America in the 1930s, the Elstners drove an average of more than 300 miles per day



## ADVENTUROUS ŠKODA A HISTORY OF WORLD EXPLORATION

At the start of the 20th century, the car became a symbol for freedom, speed and individual independence. Even in the early days, brave adventurers on four wheels made their way to faraway destinations in search of special challenges and extreme conditions. L&K and ŠKODA vehicles became reliable companions for countless enthusiasts who demanded reliability, longevity and long-distance comfort.

ŠKODA quickly realised that great motoring adventures represented the best possible form of advertising. At the time, epic overland journeys enjoyed huge popularity with newspaper readers, and ŠKODA was quick to realise the marketing potential of putting its cars to the test. Given the brand's reputation for high quality engineering and exceptional reliability, it was the perfect platform to drive export sales.

In October 1907, the luxurious L&K Type FF

convertible completed a successful journey across Europe from Bohemia to Paris and back powered by the first eight-cylinder engine in central Europe. Count Alexander Kolowrat – an American-born film producer who pioneered film-making in Austria – provided even more positive publicity with numerous victories in the gruelling Alpine rallies at the wheel of L&K cars.

In May 1934, seven students made their way from Prague to Calcutta with four ŠKODA Populars. The route went across high mountain passes and desert regions, through mud and rough terrain. Despite being stranded in a sandstorm in the Registan desert for five days, the students covered a total of 9,000 miles without any mechanical problems. Four months after setting off, they were greeted with a heroes' welcome on their return to Prague.

Two years later, a Popular driven by Mr and Mrs Elstner completed a huge round-trip

through the USA, continuing from there to Mexico. The pair successfully covered almost 18,000 miles in just 47 days.

In the same year Stanislav Skulina and his wife embarked on a journey that few modern explorers would be brave enough to tackle. With a mission to collect specimens for the natural history museum in Prague, Mr Skulina and his wife drove 20,000 miles across Africa in their Rapid. Their route took them from Dakar in Senegal to Johannesburg in South Africa, and took a year to complete. The Skulina's ŠKODA proved to be the perfect companion, requiring only basic running repairs along the way.

In the summer of 1936, adventurer Břetislav Jan Procházka went one step further, circumnavigating the globe with a ŠKODA Rapid in just 97 days. As part of the journey, he travelled from San Francisco to New York in 100 hours – a feat that would be impressive today...

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### THE PIONEERS

#### 1959 OCTAVIA

Launched in 1959, the Octavia was the eighth post-war model to be built at Mladá Boleslav, hence the latin-derived name. As with its predecessors, the new Octavia introduced a raft of technical advances, including independent suspension and coil springs for the front axle. Around 285,000 Octavia models were produced in total, with many built for export





## 1895-2015 MODEL TIMELINE



### 1895—1905: Slavia Bicycles

As enthusiastic cyclists, Václav Laurin and Václav Klement decided to turn their passion into a career by producing bicycles under the brand name 'Slavia'. The new brand rapidly became synonymous with quality and Czech innovation. As a result, the pair's various bike models soon attracted a loyal following among buyers and fellow bicycle fanatics.



### 1899—1910: Laurin & Klement Motorcycles

From 1899, motorcycles became the second pillar of the growing L&K empire. Production was expanded with one, two and four-cylinder motorcycles that swiftly earned a reputation in overseas markets for reliability and performance. Recognising a need for commercial variants, L&K also developed a number of motorcycles and motor tricycles with secure goods storage compartments.



### 1905: Laurin & Klement Voiturette A

Spurred by their rapid rise, L&K launched the company's first car in 1905 - the two-seater Voiturette Type A. The vehicle impressed with its low price (3,600 CSK - around £100), practicality and robustness. The 1,005cc, V-twin engine developed a modest 7PS, but could hit a top speed of 25mph. Both the three-speed gearbox and carburettor were designed in-house at Mladá Boleslav.



### 1911: Laurin & Klement Type S

Just a few years after the debut of the Voiturette A, the L&K car range was expanded with a range of more powerful and more comfortable four-cylinder models. The S series developed into a highly popular model between 1911 and 1925 with various versions on offer. These included the 'Carlsbad' saloon, the 'Cavalier' double saloon, the 'Doctor' or 'Lady' coupé, and the 'Progress' pick-up van.



### 1917: Laurin & Klement Type MF

Always looking at ways to broaden the appeal of its products, L&K constantly developed commercial versions of its best-sellers. The 1917 L&K Type MF fire engine is representative of the many trade vehicles produced throughout the early years of the marque. Like their passenger car counterparts, they all featured exceptional attention to detail, reliable drivetrains and attractive exterior design.



### 1925: Laurin & Klement — ŠKODA 110

The last L&K model was also the first ŠKODA. In 1925, L&K merged with engineering company Pízen Skodovka from Pilsen in western Bohemia. The popular four-cylinder Type 110 had both companies' logos on its radiator. It featured a host of cutting edge technologies and a range of design features - including bumpers and side-mounted spare wheels that were being adopted by all car makers at the time.

## 1895-2015 MODEL TIMELINE

## 1895-2015 MODEL TIMELINE



## 1895-2015 MODEL TIMELINE

### 1929: ŠKODA 860

Although the market for premium cars was modest, it was a lucrative one for the brand. As few as 50 units of the luxurious ŠKODA 860 were made from 1929 to 1933. The number 860 stood for the number of cylinders and for the performance of the engine respectively.

The '8' identified the water-cooled in-line eight-cylinder engine while the number 60 represented the performance of 60PS. This majestic vehicle was 5,424 millimetres long.

### 1934: ŠKODA Popular

1934 saw the debut of the ŠKODA Popular, the first ŠKODA model to have its own name. The light and affordable Popular launched with a compact four-cylinder engine and central tube frame structure and rapidly became a true 'car for the people'. Numerous variants of the Popular were produced during its successful 12-year production run. In total, ŠKODA sold more than 20,000 units, including more than 6,000 in 50 foreign markets.

### 1934: ŠKODA Rapid

As the big brother of the ŠKODA Popular, the ŠKODA Rapid was one of the most accomplished medium-class vehicles in Europe at the time. The car of choice for long-distance adventurers and sporting drivers, the Popular's excellent performance and strong construction further boosted ŠKODA's growing reputation in both Czechoslovakia - where it was now the biggest carmaker - and across Europe.

### 1934: ŠKODA Superb

Starting a tradition of luxury flagship models that continues today, the six-cylinder Superb added to the ŠKODA four-cylinder Popular, Rapid and Favorit models. From 1939, the Superb was even available with a range-topping four-litre V8 engine. As it does today, the name ŠKODA Superb represented the highest possible level of comfort, practicality, quality and unbeatable reliability.

### 1946: ŠKODA 1101

The ŠKODA 1101 was launched as the brand's first post-war model. The first cars were introduced onto the market as a four-seater with a two-door body (Tudor). Over the course of the next five years, more than 66,000 ŠKODA 1101s were produced in various versions, including convertible, roadster, delivery van and ambulance. A special racing version even took part in the 1950 24-hour race at Le Mans.

### 1959: ŠKODA Octavia

The ŠKODA Octavia premiered in 1959 and wowed the buying public with its high quality finish and exceptional interior space. Thanks to its sophisticated suspension system that featured coil springs on the front axle, the new Octavia also offered increased comfort. ŠKODA added an Estate in 1960 - starting a tradition that continues today. A total 285,000 Octavia models were sold, including a significant share abroad.

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### 1959: ŠKODA Felicia

By the late 1950s, a fully recovered ŠKODA started to add to its range with a host of special models. With its elegant design and the distinctive tail fins, the Felicia convertible was one of the most attractive ŠKODA models to be introduced in the post-war years. The Felicia developed into a real export hit — including significant sales in the USA. Today, the Felicia is considered to be one of the most treasured classics of the ŠKODA brand.



### 1964: ŠKODA 1000 MB

With a completely new plant, a radically new layout and the most state-of-the-art engine in its class, the 1000 MB was a revolution for ŠKODA. The first ŠKODA with a rear engine and self supporting body, the 1000 MB was considered to be one of the best vehicles in the 1.0-litre class and set standards for comfort, performance and technology. Around 443,000 units were produced between 1964 to 1969, more than half of which were exported.



### 1970: ŠKODA 110 R

ŠKODA developed with the rear-engined layout into the 1970s – an approach that spawned classics such as the ŠKODA 110 R coupe. More than 57,000 models were produced, with 90 per cent built for export. The 110 R provided the base for a range of sporting specials and was quickly adopted by the motor sport fraternity. It's successor, the legendary ŠKODA 130 RS, remains one of the most successful competition cars of all time.



### 1976: ŠKODA 105

With development funds seriously restricted, the 100-series models were effectively facelifted versions of the 1000 MB. The 100 range featured numerous models that offered different engines and outputs and sold well in the Czechoslovakian domestic market. Sportier ŠKODA Garde and Rapid coupe models followed as the brand expanded the range. In total, ŠKODA produced more than two million units of the 100 series between 1976 and 1990.



### 1987: ŠKODA Favorit

ŠKODA returned to a traditional front-engined layout with the introduction of the ŠKODA Favorit — a modern compact car that appealed to a broad European audience. Developed with a range of outside companies including Porsche and Bertone, the Favorit reflected a new approach from ŠKODA as it took advantage of the new political climate in Eastern Europe. The hatchback version was joined later by an Estate variant.



### 1994: ŠKODA Felicia

Three years after the merger with the Volkswagen Group, the Favorit was replaced by the new ŠKODA Felicia model. The new vehicle met international standards in terms of quality, technology and styling, and helped ŠKODA re-establish itself in key markets such as the UK. Comfort and safety equipment were state-of-the-art. The Felicia was the first ŠKODA ever to be offered with luxuries such as air conditioning and airbags.

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### 1996: ŠKODA Octavia

The first ŠKODA model to be developed completely from scratch after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the merger with Volkswagen, the Octavia kick-started a design and engineering renaissance at the brand. Since 1996, the Octavia has accounted for more than 40 per cent of ŠKODA sales, with more than four million examples built to date. Landmark models include the first-generation vRS variant that arrived in 2001.

### 2000: ŠKODA Fabia

Unveiled at the 1999 Frankfurt Motor Show, the new Fabia was a replacement for the Felicia and built on the brand's growing reputation for bold design and value for money. Launched in the UK in 2000, the first-generation Fabia was a hit with critics and the public and was named 'Car of the Year' by *What Car?* magazine. A total of 130,000 units were sold in the UK before it was replaced by the Mk2 version in 2007.

### 2009: ŠKODA Yeti

Having established itself in key European markets, ŠKODA embarked on an ambitious expansion plan. One of the first models to appear was the Yeti. Launched into the emerging crossover market, the Yeti showcased ŠKODA's bold design and engineering skills as never before. The first ŠKODA to have real-world off-road ability, the Yeti took the brand, and its customers, into exciting new territories.

### 2015: ŠKODA Superb

The third Superb model to be launched in the modern era, the 2015 Superb is the most advanced and sophisticated car to ever to wear the ŠKODA badge. Available in Hatch and Estate forms, the Superb fully utilises the Volkswagen Group's MQB platform architecture, and combines exceptional interior space with a host of advanced technologies and a range of new safety and protection systems.

## 1895-2015 MODEL TIMELINE

## 1895-2015

### THE ONE-OFFS

#### 1971 110 "FERAT" SUPER SPORT, TYPE 724

Based on the 110R Coupe, the Super Sport was a concept car created in 1971. Incorporating a number of unusual features, such as the single door / canopy, it was unveiled at the 1972 Brussels Motor Show. Years later, the car took the starring role in two Czech movies: *Tomorrow I'll Wake Up and Scald Myself with Tea*. (1977) and horror film *The Vampire from Ferat* (1981).



Engine production has become a ŠKODA speciality over the course of the last 20 years



▲ The ŠKODA 1000 MB introduced new technology in the form of an aluminium engine block – the first of its kind to go into mass production



▲ Today, Mladá Boleslav is busier than ever, building a range of ŠKODA models, including the new Fabia

## BUILDING HISTORY ŠKODA PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The art of engineering at the highest level has formed a central pillar of ŠKODA's success over the course of the last 120 years. The latest technology with the highest customer benefit has been the driving force for the development of new models from Mladá Boleslav since the first Slavia bicycles left the factory gates in 1895.

The history of the company is dominated by technological milestones. In the early years, these included one of the world's first four-cylinder motorcycles (Laurin & Klement CCCC, 1904), and the first central European eight-cylinder engine L&K FF (1907). In 1934 the brand's Popular, Rapid and Superb models set new standards for construction thanks to their central tube frames that delivered exceptional rigidity with no added weight penalty. In 1932, ŠKODA developed an air-cooled rear engine that removed the need for bulky radiators, and in 1939 created a compact eight-cylinder V

engine for its range-topping models.

The ŠKODA 1000 MB set another technological milestone in 1964 with its innovative engine technology. ŠKODA was the first European car manufacturer to introduce cylinder and crankcase production using an aluminium die casting process. The production utilised an original Czech patent, meaning that ŠKODA's process remained unique.

Today, ŠKODA's research and development projects employ around 1,700 qualified specialists, engineers, designers and constructors. This makes ŠKODA the only car manufacturer that not only produces but also develops cars in the Czech Republic. In 2013 alone, ŠKODA invested CZK 8.7 billion (€234m) in technical development. The manufacturer has the fourth-largest development centre in Volkswagen Group, and one of the most modern of its type in the automotive industry.



The new Fabia is built at the Mlada Boleslav plant alongside the Rapid and Octavia ranges

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**Pietro Panarisi**

Head of Press and PR

Tel 01908 548042

Mob 07814 674661

[pietro.panarisi@SKODA.co.uk](mailto:pietro.panarisi@SKODA.co.uk)

**Amy Allen**

Press Fleet Executive

Tel 01908 548915

Mob 07983 535 116

[amy.allen@SKODA.co.uk](mailto:amy.allen@SKODA.co.uk)

**UK press website**

[www.SKODAMedia.com](http://www.SKODAMedia.com)

**Michelle Henniker**

Media Relations Manager

Tel 01908 548062

Mob 07738 896676

[michelle.henniker@SKODA.co.uk](mailto:michelle.henniker@SKODA.co.uk)

**Krystyna Perry**

Media Relations Manager

Tel 01908 548060

Mob 07760 551214

[krystyna.perry@SKODA.co.uk](mailto:krystyna.perry@SKODA.co.uk)

**Twitter**

@SKODAUK\_Media

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