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Dodge Charger: Legendary Power, Styling And Performance

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The Dodge Charger is an American icon. From its muscle-car performance roots, legendary styling, racing heritage, to its modern-day performance with world-class engineering and technology-the Dodge Charger has, and continues to be, one of the most competitive performance cars both on and off the track. And with the best powertrains in the business, including the fearsome "Elephant Motor" - the 426 HEMI® and the modern 6.1-liter HEMI, Dodge Charger continues to add to one of the most storied nameplates in automotive history.

Dodge Charger's legacy includes:

1964 DODGE CHARGER CONCEPT VEHICLE

Based on a two-door Dodge Polara, the 1964 Dodge Charger Concept Vehicle was a one-off, open air roadster built to help introduce the company's new hemispherical head performance engine, the 426 HEMI. With its low windshield line, separate driver and passenger cabins, integrated sport bar with headrest and bumper-less body, the handcrafted Dodge Charger Concept Vehicle was stunning.

At the time very few concept vehicles could actually be driven. Most were used as static design studies to gauge consumer reactions on the auto show circuit. However, the Dodge brand insisted on making the 1964 Dodge Charger a runner. With the company co-developing the HEMI engine with racing teams, very few hand-built HEMI prototypes were available. Due to an unfortunate incident with one race team's engine blowing up, the Dodge Charger Concept Vehicle's engine was given away. The actual engine powering the futuristic Dodge Charger was the original 383 cubic-inch V-8 heart from the donor Dodge Polara.

1965 DODGE CHARGER II CONCEPT VEHICLE (1965 CHICAGO AUTO SHOW)

Designed to illustrate the advanced design direction of the Dodge brand, the 1965 Dodge Charger II Concept Vehicle debuted at the 1965 Chicago Auto Show. Foreshadowing the 1966 production model's design cues, this one-off show car featured a clean fastback design with very pronounced rear fins and rear overhang. While the car featured a pillar-less daylight opening, the prominent C-pillar extended rearward toward the taillamps. Other key design features included pop-up headlights hidden behind a full-width radiator grill, four bucket seats and full-width rear taillamps.

1966 TO 1967 (GENERATION: I)

The Dodge Charger was introduced on Jan. 1, 1966. Built off of the Dodge Coronet chassis but using its own body, the new Charger was the Dodge brand's first production fastback, high-speed street racer. It featured many styling cues from the Charger II concept car, like a fastback roof design and full-width taillamps. The interior featured four bucket seats and a full-length center console.

The first-generation Dodge Charger came with a standard 318 cubic-inch V-8 engine that delivered 230 horsepower. Other available engines included a 361 cubic-inch V-8 engine that delivered 265 horsepower or a 383 cubic-inch V-8 engine that delivered 325 horsepower. However, it was the availability of the massive 426 cubic-inch "Street" HEMI V-8 engine that provided 425 horsepower and 490 lb.-ft. of torque that forever defined Dodge Charger as a performance car.

The HEMI V-8 engine was already a legend in the mid-1960s as Chrysler Corporation cars dominated NASCAR. However, in 1965 NASCAR banned the HEMI engine, as it did not follow the new guidelines mandating that engines had to be available for serial production. The company boycotted the racing season.

Minor updates were added to the Dodge Charger in 1967, including the addition of small front fender turn indicators and a vinyl roof option. Underneath the crisp two-door styling, a collapsible steering column and dual-system master cylinder became standard equipment to meet the arrival of U.S. Federal Safety regulations.

From the marketing perspective, the Dodge brand abandoned its "Join the Rebellion" theme and moved forward with a performance-oriented "Road & Track" theme.

1968 TO 1970 (GENERATION: II)

The second-generation Dodge Charger arrived in 1968 with all-new styling. Dodge designers and engineers were tasked to create and develop a performance coupe that looked ready to race on Daytona's high banks, but still be driven on the streets.

The result was an exterior design with a "double diamond" or horizontal "Coke bottle" silhouette, a reference to the new design's muscular bulges above the front- and rear-wheel wells. Further enhancing the sleek design was a "flying buttress" or swept-back tunneled roof lines around the rear glass. Sculptural twin scallops on the hood and doors created more dramatic surfaces than most slab-sided vehicles of the era. Other notable design features included a contrasting vinyl roof and flip-top gas cap.

Inside, the 1968 Dodge Charger's all-new interior featured front bucket seats with an optional cushioned center console. Improvement in passenger safety and comfort included the addition of an energy-absorbing instrument panel and seats.

The new second-generation Dodge Charger was a sales success, with a 343 percent sales increase compared with the 1967 model. With this success also came fame, and in 1968 the Dodge Charger made its film debut in the movie "Bullitt" starring Steve McQueen. The movie featured a black Dodge Charger R/T with a black vinyl top and the powerful 440 Magnum V-8 engine with a four-speed transmission.

Extensive use of wind tunnel testing and advanced research allowed Dodge Charger engineers to have a leg-up in NASCAR competition. As a consequence of aerodynamic testing—a first by any auto manufacturer in NASCAR—development and implementation of a rear spoiler and front air dam were added to Dodge Charger race cars to increase down force on the track.

Keeping the second-generation Dodge Charger fresh, the 1969 model year featured several evolutionary styling changes, including a revised front grille with a center divider, which created two smaller symmetric rectangular grilles. Round turn signals and taillamps were replaced with rectangle units.

In an effort to give 1969 Dodge Charger more personality, the Special Edition (SE) package was brought to market. This package included leather and vinyl seating options, wood grain trim, deep-dish wheel covers, hood-mounted turn indicators, and "Special Edition" badging on the C-pillars. This package was available on all models and would be the only year it would also be available on the base vehicle.

A late 1969 model year introduction was the Performance Hood option that consisted of bold graphics that clearly called out a "426 HEMI" or "440 Six-pack" engine under the hood. (Later model year Dodge Chargers featured performance hoods with functional hood scoops and air dams that allowed cool air to be drawn into the engine. The result was an improvement in performance and horsepower. These functional performance hoods featured manual controls often located on the instrument panel, allowing the driver to manually open and close the baffles as needed.) From a powertrain perspective, the 225 cubic-inch "Slant Six" became the standard engine. It delivered 145 horsepower. During the 1969 model year, fewer than 2 percent of all Dodge Chargers were produced with the 426 HEMI V-8 engine, yet it contributed immensely to the lineup's performance image.

The 1969 Dodge Charger gained fame as the tire-squealing getaway car driven by Bo and Luke Duke for seven seasons on the TV series, Dukes of Hazzard.

Continuing to pioneer aerodynamic development, the new 1969 Dodge Charger 500 model was introduced solely for NASCAR with a flush rear window to a reduced drag coefficient. Taking aerodynamic design and engineering to new heights, Dodge introduced the Charger Daytona model. The Dodge Charger Daytona featured a large aerodynamic nosepiece along with a huge winged spoiler that stood 58 inches above the base of the trunk. All Dodge Charger

Daytona models were powered by the 440 Magnum or 426 HEMI engine. Dodge Charger Daytona won its first NASCAR Grand National race at Talladega (Ala.) followed by a win at Texas International Speedway. From September 1969 into the following year, Dodge Charger 500 and Charger Daytona race cars combined to win 45 out of the next 59 races in NASCAR.

The Dodge Charger 500 and Charger Daytona eventually forced NASCAR to implement power restrictions on HEMI-equipped Dodge Charger race cars. To restrict engine power, NASCAR used carburetor restrictor plates on the HEMI engine and limited its engine displacement to a maximum of 305 cubic-inches on Charger Daytona models. NASCAR was not the only force curbing the performance of muscle cars. By 1970, government and insurance companies regarded muscle cars as "high risk" vehicles.

Dodge Charger received another set of minor styling changes for 1970. The coupe now sported a full-width single opening grille, accented by a scripted "Charger" badge. Driver and passenger door scallops continued on all models, while the R/T model received rearward facing fiber glass scoops with a large "R/T" emblem. Additional customization options included a redesigned rear Bumble-Bee stripe that was changed to a single solid line design available in 18 accent colors.

New for the 1970 Dodge Charger base model was a split-back vinyl bench seat, while the Charger R/T and 500 models continued with sport bucket seats. Minor modifications were also made to interior door panels and included the "Charger" script badging.

Only three Dodge Charger trim levels were offered in 1970 - base, R/T and 500 - which was now only related to its racing ancestor through name.

On the track in 1970, race car driver Buddy Baker became the first to top the 200 mph mark behind the wheel of a HEMI-powered Dodge Charger. The feat was accomplished on a closed-circuit course.

Bobby Issac won the NASCAR championship driving a Charger 500 and Daytona, including 27 records at Bonneville using the Daytona.

1971 TO 1974 (GENERATION: III)

The all-new third-generation Dodge Charger featured a 2-inch shorter wheelbase, while its overall length decreased by 3 inches. With two unique floor pans, the 1971 Dodge Charger created the basis for the replacement of the Dodge Coronet coupe. Designers and product planners believed combining both nameplates with a common architecture would provide four-door customers better legroom, while delivering sporty coupe styling enthusiasts craved. Dodge enthusiasts worried that this third-generation Dodge Charger would have ruined the legendary nameplate, but the 1971 model went on to outsell the original version.

The restyled 1971 Dodge Charger featured many design cues from the original model, while the overall appearance was more contemporary. Its coupe design evolved into an integrated and sleek look with a semi-fastback roofline and body-color wrap-around bumpers available on new Dodge Charger R/T and performance Super Bee models.

High-performance cars were becoming less popular, and 1971 would be the last model year for a hardcore performance-equipped Dodge Charger. In response to stricter government regulations on insurance, fuel economy and emissions, the Dodge brand offered the Charger with the respectable performing 340 cubic-inch engine, the 225 cubic-inch Slant Six, a 318 cubic-inch V-8 and a 383 cubic-inch engine available in two- or four-barrel configurations. In keeping with the Dodge Charger's performance tradition, a new "Ramcharger" vacuum-operated hood scoop was available and provided cooler ambient air into the engine for improved power and performance.

Due to increasing emissions and insurance regulations, the automotive industry moved to low-lead gasoline, and the HEMI engine was phased out in 1971. This was the last year customers could order a factory-built Dodge Charger equipped with a HEMI.

The 1971 Dodge Charger model lineup was expanded to six models: base, hardtop, 500, SE, R/T, Super Bee and a Road Runner imitation that was positioned as a Dodge Charger street racer.

Since there was no longer a unique Dodge Coronet model, a de-contented entry-level model Dodge Charger was

added and featured a basic instrument panel and vinyl bench seats.

Aligning with changing customer demands, the 1971 Dodge Charger 500 was repositioned in the lineup to deliver more performance styling than actual performance. This would be the final year of the Dodge Charger 500.

Dodge brand's biggest seller in 1971 was the Charger SE. This model was equipped with many of the features from the previous Dodge Charger SE, but replaced bucket seats with cloth and vinyl split-back bench seats. Other features that were added to the vehicle included an ignition lock, chromed pedals and an inside hood release. Available powertrain options for this volume model included the 318 cubic-inch V-8 engine all the way up to the 440 Magnum V-8 engine (The 440 Six Pack and HEMI V-8 engines were not available on the SE model).

The 1971 model year would also be the last appearance of the Dodge Charger R/T model. The Dodge Charger R/T was distinguished by its louvered dome hood with flat black accent paint and "R/T" logo decal. Additional features included bold horizontal bodyside stripes, heavy-duty suspension and 440 Magnum V-8 engine with a column-mounted shifter (a manual floor mounted shifter was available as a no-cost option).

On the track in 1971, the Dodge Charger Daytona entered the Daytona 500 with a 305-cubic-inch engine with driver Dick Brooks at the wheel. The vehicle qualified for the race and even led for a time, but in the end, managed to place only seventh. This would be the last Dodge Daytona model to race at Daytona.

As muscle cars were falling in popularity, the high-performance Dodge Charger R/T and Super Bee models were dropped, while a new Rallye package was added for 1972. The new Rallye package continued to position the Dodge Charger as a muscle car with its sculpted grille, scalloped doors, black-out tape and multi-louvered taillamps (inspired by earlier Dodge Charger models) but lacked the hardcore performance muscle-car enthusiasts craved. In reality, the new Dodge Charger Rallye package delivered better handling than the previous year's Dodge Charger R/T.

Exterior updates for the 1972 model year included the addition of hidden flip-up headlamps on the Dodge Charger SE and a new vinyl-covered roof. This model year also offered up to 18 exterior colors, including high-impact colors: Hemi Orange and Top Banana.

Finishing the 1972 model year, three specialty packages were added to the Dodge Charger SE lineup as a dealer incentive. The popular and highly contented "A07" package included power steering, power front-disc brakes, AM radio with rear speakers, variable-speed wipers, air conditioning, electrical clock, tinted glass, rear-window defogger and the Brougham package. These "luxury Chargers" were far more popular than the Dodge Charger SE Topper and Topper X packages that also were available.

By 1973, Dodge Charger was the brand's second best selling model (behind the Dodge Dart). Important model updates included an increase in overall length by 7 inches (mostly gained in the rear quarter panels), a new crosshatched-pattern front grille and multi-louvered taillamps. A new roof design with movable rear-quarter windows allowed for new canted louvers to give Dodge Charger a sportier look. At the end of the model year, a no-cost "halo roof" option featured a vinyl roof that did not extend as far down the body side of the coupe.

Powertrain options for the 1973 Dodge Charger models were similar to the previous year. The entry-level Dodge Charger continued with the 225 cubic-inch six-cylinder engine that delivered 105 horsepower. The Dodge Charger SE and Rallye package coupes featured the 318 cubic-inch V-8 engine. Engine options included the 340 cubic-inch V-8, the 400 cubic-inch V-8 available with a two- or four-barrel carburetor and the de-tuned 440 cubic-inch four barrel V-8 (which lost its Magnum status for 1973).

The 1974 Dodge Charger would be the last model year that had any enthusiast appeal or performance. The success of the luxurious Dodge Charger SE of late 1972 and 1973 caused the Dodge brand to neglect marketing models like the Dodge Charger Rallye.

No longer a powerful and nimble performance coupe, the 1974 Dodge Charger grew one more time to implement new federally mandated 5 mph impact standards, while its powertrain options carried over from the previous year. Matching the now comfort-over-performance coupe was the introduction of Dodge Charger "Spring Special," which included earthtone paint colors like Sienna Metallic, Black Parchment and Dark Moonstone. Topping off the more luxurious look was an elegant body-side stripe in Parchment Brown. Inside these special models received unique

interior surfaces in cloth and vinyl.

1975 TO 1978 (GENERATION: IV)

With the oil embargo and fuel shortages, fuel economy took priority over performance, and the all-new fourth-generation Dodge Charger was far from the aggressive coupes offered in the late 1960s.

With more than 55 percent of Dodge Chargers sold in 1974 as SE models, the 1975 Dodge Charger was completely restyled and featured a more formal and elegant appearance. Based on the Chrysler Cordoba, the new Dodge Charger SE (only model available in 1975) shared nearly identical styling cues. The face of the new coupe featured two single headlamps set into the body with corresponding hood-forms for an integrated look. Overall design elements focused on luxury and included a vinyl roof, wire-spoke hubcaps, plush vinyl bucket seats, center armrest and the availability of premium cloth seats for an upscale look and feel.

Powertrain choices for the 1975 Dodge Charger SE consisted of a 360 cubic-inch V-8 engine, a 318 cubic-inch V-8 engine and, later, a 400 cubic-inch V-8 engine with either two- or four-barrel carburetor.

Hoping to revive the Dodge brand and Charger nameplate with more excitement, the Daytona model returned for the 1976 model year. While the Dodge Charger Daytona was a NASCAR legend, the new model was more like a two-toned Dodge Charger SE.

Minimal interior and exterior changes made the 1976 Dodge Charger a carry-over model. One additional change to the lineup included new Dodge Charger base and Sport models, which in reality fused the Dodge Coronet models back into the Dodge Charger lineup again.

The Midnight Charger Special was the highlight of the 1977 model year and featured an array of different design elements, including a unique plastic front fascia with body-color grille, body-color exterior racing mirrors and open air T-top roof with removable roof panels. Leather-trimmed seating was standard inside this special edition Dodge Charger.

Dodge Charger SE and the two-tone Dodge Charger Daytona, now with large body-side decals, were the only two models left. The Dodge Charger base and Sport models were replaced with the new Dodge Monaco, simply a renamed Dodge Coronet-based coupe.

The last year for a rear-wheel-drive Dodge Charger was 1978. The Dodge Charger Daytona was dropped from the lineup and minimal changes were made to the Dodge Charger SE. But the Dodge brand gave one last effort with the introduction of a new sporty model dubbed the Dodge Magnum XE. This new Dodge Charger-based coupe featured a slightly flared body side, horizontal three bar grille and rectangular flip-up quad headlamps.

1981 TO 1987 (GENERATION: V)

Based on the efficient and economical front-wheel-drive Dodge Omni and Dodge Omni 024 coupe, the fifth-generation Dodge Charger (now a 2+2 hatchback) appeared for the 1981 model year. Designed by Chrysler Corporation's European design and engineering team, this fifth-generation coupe was far removed from its large rear-wheel-drive predecessors.

The standard powertrain in this new fuel-efficient Dodge Charger was a transverse-mounted 1.7-liter four-cylinder engine built by Volkswagen (a Peugeot-built 1.6-liter four cylinder would replace it in 1984). The more powerful Dodge Charger 2.2 model featured a 2.2-liter four-cylinder engine with a five-speed manual transmission.

The Dodge Charger 2.2 model marked the return of unique performance graphics and body work. The Dodge Charger 2.2 featured a performance hood with simulated hood scoop, front fender vents, integrated rear-lip spoiler, blacked-out daylight-opening trim, steel-belted tires with outlined white lettering and special "Charger 2.2" horizontal body-side graphics.

Adding more performance and excitement, the mid-1982 model year Dodge Shelby Charger was built with performance-tuned know-how from racing veteran Carroll Shelby. Starting with the Dodge Charger 2.2 model, the vehicle featured performance enhancements, including an aggressive front fascia with lip spoiler, lower body-side sills, large 15-inch aluminum wheels with wide Goodyear Eagle GT tires, heavy-duty shocks, sport springs, one-piece rear-quarter window, color-keyed bucket seats with Carroll Shelby's famed "CS" logo, center floor console and

repositioned brake and accelerator pedals for heel-toe shifting. Under the hood, the 2.2-liter engine featured a higher compression ratio, wider cam, free-flow exhaust system and an optimized engine controller good for 13 more horsepower (107 compared to 94) and 10 more lb.-ft. of torque (127 compared to 117). Finishing off this special model was Carroll Shelby's race colors: silver exterior paint with blue accent decals or blue exterior paint with silver accent decals.

For the 1985 model year, the Dodge Shelby Turbo Charger featured more athletic exterior styling, multi-port fuel injection, low-restriction performance exhaust and the availability of a 2.2-liter turbocharged engine with 7.5 psi of boost. The Dodge Charger 2.2 also received more power as its 2.2-liter normally aspirated four-cylinder was boosted to 110 horsepower.

The last year of the hatchback-based Dodge Charger was the 1987 model year. Similar to the five-door Dodge Omni GLHS models (Goes Like Hell, Some-more); Carroll Shelby purchased the last 1,000 Dodge Turbo Chargers and converted them into Dodge Shelby Charger GLHS models. These final front-wheel-drive models delivered 175 horsepower, 175 lb.-ft. of torque and performed 0-to-60 mph runs in less than 7 seconds.

1999 DODGE CHARGER R/T CONCEPT VEHICLE (1999 NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW)

After a 12-year hiatus, the Dodge brand would pay homage to the performance Dodge Chargers of the muscle-car era and debuted a completely modern, rear-wheel-drive Dodge Charger at the 1999 North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Due to the overall proportions of the concept vehicle, Dodge designers took the opportunity to develop the concept vehicle into a fastback four-door performance coupe.

Design elements of this one-off Dodge Charger R/T were inspired by second-generation models and included exaggerated muscular "Coke bottle" bodysides and flying buttress around the rear window. Modern performance cues included big offset shoulders over the rear wheels, a low-to-the-ground menacing front fascia, functional door scallops (inspired by the 1970 Dodge Charger R/T and 1990s Dodge Viper models) and wide rear fascia with two center-mounted exhaust tips.

Inside, the Dodge Charger Concept Vehicle was inspired by fighter jets. With a focus on performance driving, a unique cockpit design included a pistol-grip shifter (similar to a fighter pilot's joystick) and an instrument panel wrapped around the driver. Some late-1960 Dodge Charger cues included the large rotary radio dials, three-spoke steering wheel and "R/T" badge over the glove compartment. Functional lightweight materials included carbon-fiber constructed performance seats, while accelerator, brake and clutch pedals featured machined aluminum. Completing the performance look was an integrated roll cage and rear bucket seats.

The 1999 Dodge Charger R/T Concept Vehicle showcased an environmentally friendly, high-performance Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) powertrain. An advanced storage tank design allowed the concept vehicle to achieve a 300-mile range through its longitudinal-mounted 4.7-liter V-8 engine. Adding to the former Chrysler Corporation's list of CNG-firsts, the Dodge Charger R/T concept vehicle featured an integrated three-cell CNG storage system lined with advanced gas-impermeable high density polyurethane thermoplastic in a hybrid mix of high-strength carbon and super-tough glass filaments. With pressure topping 3,600 psi, the three-cell storage system featured unique egg-crate style foam to absorb energy in the event of a possible impact.

Returning to the nameplate's performance history, the Dodge Charger Concept Vehicle was 15 inches shorter than the current full-sized Dodge Intrepid sedan, for a tight, aggressive and athletic look. With its five-spoke aluminum 19-inch front and wider 20-inch rear wheels, this Dodge street machine looked track-ready. And at 3,000 lbs., the concept was 650 lbs. lighter than the original 1966 Dodge Charger. Keeping the car grounded were modified upper- and lower-control arms from the iconic Plymouth Prowler and four-piston front and two-piston rear brakes from the race-proven Dodge Viper.

2006 TO 2010 (GENERATION: VI)

The Dodge Charger - one of the most legendary names from the muscle-car era - powered its way out of its storied past and onto the stage at the 2005 North American International Auto Show in Detroit. The new sixth-generation Dodge Charger led the way for the Dodge brand with aggressive styling in a modern coupe and integrated the 1999 concept vehicle's four-door functionality. With its bold front, strong shoulders and fastback D-pillars, the new Dodge Charger excited muscle-car enthusiasts, while the car's modern performance, handling and power completed the package.

The 2006 Dodge Charger's interior featured a driver-oriented cockpit designed for performance. A sleek and simple instrument panel featured Viper-inspired tunneled gauges highlighted by white faces and satin-silver accent rings. A silver trim bezel surrounding the shifter and additional silver accents in the center stack added contrast.

The new four-door Dodge Charger created a new reputation for the Dodge legend. Loaded with 21st century performance, safety and security, and technologies, the new 2006 Dodge Charger raised the bar in the large-car segment. Moving back to rear-wheel drive allowed the Dodge Charger to have near 50/50 weight distribution and superb ride and responsive handling in all surface and traction conditions. Making rear-wheel drive perform well in all seasons was Dodge Charger's standard electronic stability control (ESC). This enhanced electronic driver control system maintained the Dodge Charger's directional stability in adverse driving conditions automatically. ESC, combined with an anti-lock brake system (ABS) and all-speed traction control with emergency Brake Assist, improved the Dodge Charger's traction, maneuverability and stability in all weather conditions.

Dodge Charger's powertrain lineup delivered substance without sacrificing the convenience and efficiency needed in a modern sedan. A 250-horsepower High Output 3.5-liter V-6 engine and five-speed Auto Stick transmission was available on Dodge Charger SE and SXT models. Returning to its muscle-car roots was an all-new 340-horsepower HEMI V-8 engine available in Dodge Charger R/T models. This new HEMI featured an advanced multi-displacement system (MDS), which seamlessly deactivated the engine's eight cylinders to four cylinders when full V-8 power was not needed. As a result, MDS technology improved overall fuel economy by 20 percent.

Later in the 2006 model year, the Dodge Charger R/T Daytona returned, this time with performance to backup its storied nameplate. In addition to high-impact paint colors "Go ManGo!", "Top Banana" and "TorRed," the 2006 Dodge Daytona R/T limited-edition model featured a performance exhaust with a 350 horsepower HEMI V-8 engine with HEMI orange engine cover, performance seating with perforated suede, performance-tuned suspension with height control, 18-inch polished aluminum wheels with black-painted pockets, front fascia with chin spoiler, rear air diffuser, black honeycomb grille, unique black "Daytona" and "HEMI" decals, black rear deck-lid spoiler and signature heritage R/T badge in red.

Riding the waves of Dodge's success in NASCAR Nextel Cup Series racing since returning to the sport in 2001, the new Dodge Charger race car made its NASCAR Nextel Cup Series debut at the 2006 Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway. Four Dodge factory backed teams, including 10 drivers, competed in the 2006 Daytona 500. Next-level performance made the 2007 Dodge Charger model year the most exciting since the days of the legendary 426 HEMI V-8. The all-new Dodge Charger SRT8 offered a complete performance approach with its infusion of Street and Racing Technology (SRT) DNA into the Dodge formula of "bold, powerful and capable."

With the Dodge Charger R/T as its starting point, the SRT8 model added a 6.1-liter, 425-horsepower HEMI V-8 engine delivering more horsepower-per-liter than any vehicle Dodge had offered before it. Add in its world-class ride and handling, Brembo® brake system with benchmark performance, functional and aggressive-looking exterior enhancements and a race-inspired interior and the Dodge Charger SRT8 delivered all-around remarkable performance in a muscle sedan: 0-60 mph in the low 5-second range, quarter-mile time in under 14 seconds, braking distance from 60 mph in approximately 110 feet and 0.89 g on the skid pad. The Dodge Charger SRT8 was also capable of accomplishing SRT's signature performance test of 0-100-0 mph in less than 17 seconds.

Taking the all-new Dodge Charger SRT8 to the extreme was another blast-from-the-past name, the Super Bee. In addition to the standard features on the Dodge Charger SRT8, the limited-production run of 1,000 Super Bee special-edition models added unique Detonator Yellow exterior paint, flat-black SRT hood accents, flat-black rear deck-lid accent, dual-zone climate control, heated front seats, automatic headlights, one-touch power front windows, cabin air filtration, Detonator Yellow body-color accent stitching on steering wheel and shift knob, "Super Bee" graphic on doors, rear quarters and rear fascia, "Super Bee" emblem on front fenders, body-color HEMI decal on hood bulge and fully-polished SRT8 performance wheels. Following Detonator Yellow, a limited production run of 300 Super Bee models in Plum Crazy exterior paint arrived at the end of the 2007 model year.

The Dodge Charger SE, SXT and R/T lineup was mostly unchanged in its second model year. The Dodge Charger SE now offered a lower priced 2.7-liter V-6 engine with 190 horsepower and a fuel economy rating of 21 city and 28 highway miles per gallon (mpg). This engine featured a four-speed automatic transmission.

Available on 2007 Dodge Charger SXT and R/T models was an all-wheel-drive (AWD) system for maximum traction in all-weather driving. The AWD models added 18-inch polished-aluminum wheels, 19-gallon fuel tank, front differential and transfer case, performance disc brakes and unique all-wheel-drive suspension.

An available Road/Track Performance Group elevated performance for the rear-wheel-drive Dodge Charger R/T and brought the model closer to its Daytona sibling. The new package included perforated seats with suede inserts, automatic temperature control, heated front seats, eight-way power passenger seat, express up-down front windows, automatic headlamps, rear-deck lid and front-fascia spoilers, performance steering and suspension with load-leveling and height-control, 20-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels with 245/45ZR20 Goodyear RS-A all-season performance tires, performance brakes and performance exhaust and induction system and 10 additional horsepower to the HEMI V-8 engine.

High-impact paint colors for the 2007 model year included 1,650 Sublime and 1,520 Plum Crazy Dodge Charger R/T Daytona limited-edition models.

The Dodge brand added many interior improvements to the 2008 Dodge Charger for even more driver and passenger comfort. These changes included soft-touch surfaces on the arm rests, center console and door trim and a newly designed instrument panel and instrument cluster. The center console also was redesigned with satin accents and optional LED lighting in the front cupholders. LED lighting also was available in the front and rear door-map pockets.

New infotainment and connectivity features were added to the 2008 Dodge Charger, including Media Center 730N with 30-gigabyte hard drive, GPS navigation, touch-screen monitor and real-time traffic. In addition to Uconnect[®] Phone with Bluetooth[®] connectivity now added iPod Control with steering wheel mounted audio controls. Other entertainment features included a rear-seat Video Entertainment System (VES[®]) with segment-exclusive SIRIUS Backseat TV[™].

High-impact paint colors for the 2008 Dodge Charger R/T Daytona included 1,750 vehicles in vivid HEMI Orange, while 1,000 Dodge Charger SRT8 Super Bee models were painted in nostalgic B5 Blue.

For the 2009 model year, the all-wheel-drive Dodge Charger models added an active transfer case and front-axle disconnect. No other major manufacturer offered these two independent technologies together. The world-class driveline system seamlessly transitioned between rear-wheel drive and all-wheel drive with no driver intervention. When all-wheel drive was not required, the system automatically disconnected the front axle and opened the transfer case to reduce friction and rotational mass. In addition, this automatic all-wheel-drive system could be activated by cold outside temperatures, wheel slip or other predetermined conditions.

Improved fuel efficiency and increased horsepower came from a new-generation 5.7-liter HEMI[®] V-8 engine. With the new-generation 5.7-liter HEMI V-8 engine, the 2009 Dodge Charger R/T models produced 368 horsepower and 395 lb.-ft. of torque. Fuel-saving MDS was still included. To inform the driver when he or she was driving in four-cylinder mode, the instrument cluster now displayed "ECO" when the switch was made.

The taillamps of the 2009 Dodge Charger were refreshed with a bold, retro-style design that was distinctively Dodge. Recessed circle cutouts gave the taillamps added dimension over the previous design and provided enhanced definition to each taillamps' two circular lamps.

Only 475 copies of the 2009 Dodge Charger R/T Daytona in Stone White and 425 Dodge Charger SRT8 Super Bees in HEMI Orange were produced. This would be the last year of both high-performance models.

The Super Track Pak was announced in late 2009 for the 2010 model year. Available only on the Dodge Charger R/T with Road/Track Performance Group, this track-ready performance package featured more driving excitement with 20-inch Goodyear Eagle F1 Super Car tires, front and rear Nivomat self-leveling shock absorbers, a larger rear stabilizer bar, a 3.06 rear-axle ratio and three-mode ESC with full "ESC-off."

Delivering more excitement, functionality and value, the late-2010 Dodge Charger lineup was repositioned to offer all-new models and packages targeted at individual customer lifestyles. Gone were the Dodge Charger SE and SXT stacking price class models. These all-new Dodge Charger packages featured upgraded equipment with popular customer features, including available all-wheel drive, at a more affordable price.

The new entry-level Dodge Charger 3.5 model gave customers looking for style, convenience and affordability a slew of standard features, including a 24-valve 3.5-liter V-6 engine, ESC, ABS, all-speed traction control, SIRIUS Satellite Radio and chromed crosshair grille. For customers looking for more all-weather capability and value, the 2010 Dodge Charger 3.5 AWD included all the standard features of the rear-wheel-drive model and added an advance all-wheel-drive system.

Delivering solid performance, handling and utility, the new 2010 Dodge Charger Rallye model delivered more aggressive styling and improved on-road handling than the old SXT model. The Dodge Charger Rallye included a 3.5-liter V-6 engine, touring-tuned suspension, 18-inch aluminum wheels, rear sway bar and rear deck-lid spoiler. For even more style and feel-of-the-road, 20-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels with P245/45R20 Goodyear Eagle RS-A all-season performance tires were optional. A new Chrome & Leather package available on Dodge Charger Rallye added Royale leather seats, 18-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels, power leather-trimmed heated front seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, dual-zone automatic temperature control, automatic headlamps, express-up/down front windows and Boston Acoustics six-speaker system with 276-watt digital signal processing (DSP) amplifier.

Keeping the performance heritage in the lineup, the Dodge Charger R/T name remained, but added the Media Center 430 touchscreen radio with 30-gigabyte hard drive for media storage, iPod Control, Uconnect Phone for handsfree calling, auto-dimming rearview mirror and rear deck-lid spoiler. A new R/T Chrome & Tunes package available on the Dodge Charger R/T added 18-inch chrome-clad wheels, security alarm, Electronic Vehicle Information Center (EVIC), "fuel-saver mode" display, steering-wheel-mounted audio controls, HomeLink universal transceiver, remote start, LED-illuminated cupholders and door map pockets and a 5.1-channel Boston Acoustics eight-speaker audio system with 368-watt Digital Signal Processing (DSP) amp.

PRESENT (GENERATION: VII)

With its iconic character, contemporary fastback four-door coupe proportions, world-class performance, craftsmanship and refinement, and state-of-the-art connectivity features, the all-new 2011 Charger is the Dodge brand's flagship that proudly delivers premium, world-class E-segment sedan precision at an incredible value.

The efficient and aerodynamic exterior of the 2011 Dodge Charger is spiritually inspired by the iconic second-generation Charger from the late 1960s, featuring a design that is sure to strike an emotional chord with Dodge performance enthusiasts of all generations.

With its sinister "ready-to-attack-the-road" face, the all-new Dodge Charger puts the world's best E-segment sedan competitors between its new "split crosshair" signature grille. Its sculpted all-new body is a conscious nod to its deep heritage and muscle-car roots. The Charger's profile is also a modern affair, a result of countless hours in the wind tunnel, from its lower hood line, faster windshield and radically raked back light, to its tighter wheel openings, lower sill and race-car-like flat underbody, the Charger effortlessly cuts through the air with its attitude intact. The aluminum hood features dual "scallops" that bring a sculptured, performance look to the front end, while large bodyside scallops deliver a striking undulating A-line across the doors. Running front to rear is the iconic horizontal "coke bottle" bodyside styling that creates a tapering silhouette accented with muscular front and rear fenders and gives the Dodge Charger one of the most distinct profiles on the road. Defining the fastback's wide stance is an all-new signature taillamp design that incorporates 164 illuminating LEDs to form its signature "racetrack" graphic and gives the new Charger its unmistakable character from blocks away.

The 2011 Dodge Charger's interior cockpit is meant to be an enthusiast's office. The all-new design features premium materials throughout. Transmitting the performance chassis' world-class feel of the road, the all-new Charger features a new thick-rimmed three-spoke Dodge steering wheel for enhanced performance feel and grip. Crafted in world-class materials, Charger's passengers are surrounded with comfort, craftsmanship and style, thanks to premium soft-touch materials and four available distinct interior color combinations. The all-new 2011 Dodge Charger's state-of-the-art Uconnect® Touch integrates world-class infotainment and convenience technologies to keep passengers connected, comfortable and secure. From segment-leading Garmin® navigation, to dual-zone climate controls and the ability to check fuel prices with the integration of available SIRIUS Travel Link, Uconnect Touch delivers an excellent experience for Charger's driver and passengers.

Maximizing its unibody's world-class structural stiffness, Dodge Charger engineers were able to tune the cabin for

sound quality (rather than sound level) by isolating powertrain, road and wind noise. In addition, Charger's unibody packages material and structural design improvements, including dual-pane acoustic windshield and front-door side glass, body-cavity silencing foam, under-flush rolled-framed door with triple seals and acoustic wheel-well liners to absorb road noise and quiet the cabin. Combined, these design improvements place the all-new Dodge Charger's interior sound quality among the best in the E-segment.

As the Dodge brand's flagship, the chassis of the all-new 2011 Charger is designed, engineered and fine-tuned to deliver a level of quality, capability and refinement that rivals the very best European, Asian and North American E-segment sedans. With its new second-generation E-segment rear-wheel-drive (RWD) architecture, Dodge Charger features world-class suspension-tunings with re-designed geometry making for a nimble, balanced chassis that will build the Charger's legend as one of the best driving sedans in the world.

Engineered to perform against the best E-segment sport sedans, the all-new 2011 Dodge Charger SE and Charger Rallye feature the new 3.6-liter Pentastar engine for world-class levels of power, refinement, technology and fuel efficiency. For maximum thrills, efficiency and best-in-class power, the new Dodge Charger R/T lineup features the legendary 5.7-liter HEMI® V-8 engine with four-cylinder mode Fuel Saver Technology.

The all-new 2011 Dodge Charger R/T with all-wheel drive (AWD) features a re-thought stance and 19-inch wheels to make it much more appealing than ever before. The AWD preserves the Charger's character and deepens its performance envelope in the most treacherous conditions. The Charger AWD features a segment-exclusive active transfer case and front-axle disconnect system to improve fuel economy by up to 5 percent. No other major automotive manufacturer offers the combination of these two independent technologies. Dodge Charger's innovative AWD system seamlessly transitions between RWD and AWD with no driver intervention. When all-wheel drive is not required, the system automatically disconnects the front axle to maximize fuel economy while still providing the outstanding performance and handling inherent in rear-wheel-drive vehicles.

The all-new 2011 Dodge Charger features more than 65 safety and security features, including standard Keyless Enter-N-Go and Electronic Stability Control (ESC) with segment-exclusive Ready-alert Braking and Rain Brake Support safety features to improve overall vehicle handling and performance both on and off the track. Safety and security features available for the first time on the Dodge Charger include adaptive-cruise control (ACC) with Forward-Collision Warning (FCW), Blind-spot Monitoring (BSM) with Rear Cross Path (RCP) detection and ParkView® rear backup camera with grid lines, all designed to provide the driver with added confidence while behind the wheel.

Built at the Brampton Assembly Plant in Brampton, Ontario (Canada), the 2011 Dodge Charger arrives in showrooms in the fourth quarter of 2010.

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