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HOW TO KEEP YOUR CAR IN SHOWROOM SHAPE FOR YEARS AND YEARS



DETROIT LISTENING POST

Preview of 1980 models

Since General Motors introduced—with its corporate breath held and executive brows furrowed—its shorter, narrower, lighter big cars for the '77 model year, we have witnessed a total turnaround in design and character of the American automobile.

Downsized intermediates and front-drive luxury cars have followed from GM, while Ford has unveiled space-efficient, lightweight compacts, downsized big cars and all-new sporty coupes. Chrysler has countered with the nation's first front-drive small cars, sporty coupe versions of the same, and a new generation of Chrysler and Dodge full-size models. American Motors has given us luxury compacts and prettier, more efficient subcompacts, and Volkswagen has become the fifth major U.S. manufacturer by installing a Pennsylvania plant to turn out its popular subcompact Rabbits.

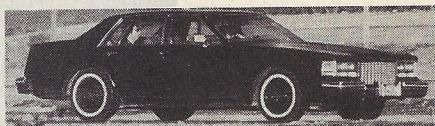
Further on in this issue you'll find our report on the first of the 1980 models, GM's all-new front-drive X-body compacts. And there's plenty more in store for the fall. Here's what to expect in September:

General Motors

The General's got a lot of new stuff up its corporate sleeve for '80, even after his new compacts hit the street.

First off is an all-new, front-drive Cadillac Seville based on the downsized Eldorado platform. The four-door '80 Seville's most distinguishing styling feature is a fast-sloping rear deck and "bustle-like" trunk, a throwback to 1930s design. Power will come from a choice of a fuel-injected 350 V8 gas engine or GM's 350 V8 diesel, with turbocharging a possibility.

The full-size B- and C-body cars of all five divisions, which led the downsizing parade in '77, will get mild face lifts and shed 200 to 300 more pounds for 1980. Their noses will be lower and their rooflines altered slightly, as GM designers milk all the aerodynamic efficiency they can out of these basically squared-off shapes. Front and rear styling will remain similar to '79, except that Buick's Electra picks up the very handsome Riviera's frontal look with a sloped, vertical-bar



Seville, all-new for '80, shares front styling, front-drive chassis with Eldorado.



Olds 98 has lower, more aerodynamic hoodline but keeps traditional grille.



Buick Century four-door notchback model has '79 Seville-style squared-off roof.



Cadillac deVille gets subtle face lift and new roof style for 1980.

grille. With Oldsmobile planning to triple its diesel engine production for '80, most models from all divisions will offer optional diesel power.

As predicted a year ago, both Olds and Buick will have Seville-like notchback luxury versions of their intermediate A-body Cutlass and Century sedans, although the controversial Aero fastback sedans and coupes will stay for now.

Pontiac's very popular Firebird Trans Am will offer an optional turbocharged 301 V8 as 400-plus-cu.-in. engines fall out of sight, while Chevy's Corvette gets a substantial face lift and sheds 250 pounds of excess weight for '80.

The aging H-body subcompact—Monza, Sunbird, Starfire and Skyhawk—will hang around little changed until replaced for '81 with a new front-drive design, but Chevy's Chevette receives another minor restyle in the face of increasing competition in the mini class.

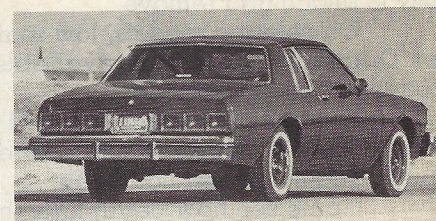
On the technical side, there will be a new small-displacement V8 from



Olds 88 four-door retains '79 look, but rear styling is cleaner and simpler.



'80 Buick Electra inherits handsome Riviera front, restyled coupe roofline.



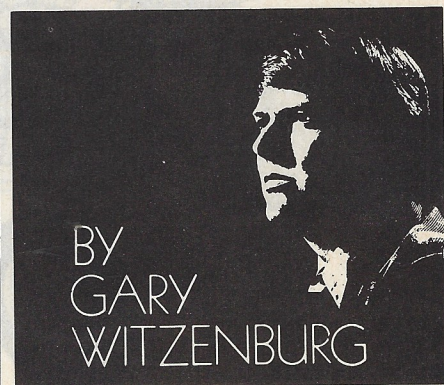
Chevy Caprice has rectangular taillamps, altered roofline, quarter-window shapes.


Chevrolet (around 267 c.i.d.), low-drag disc brakes and lock-up torque converters for most of the larger cars.

Ford Motor Co.

Ford was two years behind in downsizing its family-size cars, but will waste little time in giving the same treatment to its luxury cars and intermediates. Topping the '80 Lincoln-Mercury line will be an all-new, smaller, lighter, 114-inch-wheelbase

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STANADYNE GUARANTEES YOU WON'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH A DRIP.

DETROIT LISTENING POST *(Continued from page 36)*

Mark VI and 117-inch-wheelbase Lincoln two and four-door sedans. They will retain much of the basic Lincoln look, except for refinements in roofline and window shapes.

A new four-speed automatic transmission with over-drive top gear and lock-up torque converter will be standard equipment, as will electronic fuel injection. Also standard on the Mark VI (optional on other Lincolns) will be a space-age electronic instrument panel.

The 1000-pound weight decrease, lock-up overdrive transmission and fuel injection will combine to give these cars a substantial fuel economy increase. Yet they will retain Lincoln comfort. The Mark VI will have more interior room than the Mark V it replaces.

Ford's regular intermediates, Ford LTD II and Mercury Cougar, will disappear for '80, but the intermediate specialty Thunderbird and Cougar XR-7 will get an all-new, smaller and more efficient unitized body/frame on a 108-inch wheelbase—nearly identical in size and weight to the original '67 Cougar. Much-improved aerodynamics and a new 255-cubic-inch V8 will help give these small luxury coupes better fuel economy with equivalent or better performance compared to the overweight '79s they supersede.

Also new for '80 will be turbo versions of Fairmont and Zephyr (with automatic transmission optional for the first time with the Ford turbo four-cylinder), special multi-adjustable Recaro bucket seats (like those in the '79 Mustang Indy pace car) available for Mustang/Capri and T-Bird/XR-7, and electronic fuel management (EFM) on some models. Ford trucks also will get a 250-pound weight reduction, the 255 V8 engine and lockup overdrive automatic transmission.

Chrysler Corp.

Chrysler's downsized, front-drive Volare/Aspen replacements won't be ready until 1981, but there are some interesting things on tap for '80, nevertheless. For one, the handsome but heavy Chrysler Cordoba and Dodge Magnum personal luxury coupes will be re-done on the 113-inch-wheelbase LeBaron/Diplomat chassis (with a new name for Magnum), while the two-door L/D gets a 109-inch wheelbase and restyling.

By mid-year, there will be an all-new car to wear the distinguished Imperial nameplate, certainly a European-style four-door sedan and probably LeBaron-based. Also, Chrysler has been craving a turbomotor, but couldn't get one due to supply problems. However, Garrett AiResearch is increasing its turbocharger capacity and Borg-Warner is importing a Japanese-built unit, so watch for a turbo Omni/Horizon by mid-'80.

American Motors

Biggest news is four-wheel drive available for all Concord models, and the agreement with Renault of France, which is bringing fine Renault Le Car minis, Gordini sportsters and (by early 1980) R-18 sedans into more and more AMC showrooms. Also, the workhorse 258 six-cylinder engine will be lightened for '80, and Pontiac's fine 2.5-liter Four will replace the costlier VW-designed unit as the base Spirit engine.

Volkswagen

Rabbit-based, front-drive mini-pickups will begin hopping out of the U.S. plant by late summer or early fall, and Karmann-built Rabbit targa-top convertibles will replace the ancient Bug convertible, most likely by early summer. Look for more refinements and options, as well.

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