

LEND A HAND AND BRING A CAN!

LIARS *MODEL CAR BRIEFS*

Meeting themes:

"Mopars and vehicles with snow plows"

Discuss further planning for our club, 2026 show, addressing "road bumps"...



• LONG ISLAND AUTO REPLICAS SOCIETY •

MCB NEWSLETTER

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On the other hand, get ready for more possible..



Scenes from the Dec MTG and Christmas Party...





MCB Issue 420 (no, it's not at that time or the month of April yet LOL!)

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY January 15th @7:30 PM (Weather permitting)

The LONG ISLAND AUTO REPLICATOR SOCIETY (L.I.A.R.S.) Model Car Briefs is dedicated to bringing you the best and most up to date information about our great hobby of model building.

Were in our 34th year as a Club; let's hope we all stay healthy during this post COVID-19 crisis and that we can all attain some measure of prosperity. Then perhaps we can build a new Club display in memory of Rich Argus...

LIARS Web Page <https://www.longislandautoreplicasociety.com/> [LIARS- Car Model Building Club | New York](#)

LIARS Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/people/LIARS-Long-Island-Auto-Replica-Society-Model-Car-Club/100057442748403/>

MCB Contributors: Richard Manri, Dominick "Mickey" Gerace, Bill "Doc. V" Murray, Steve Magnante (for MotorTrend), Murilee Martin (for Hagerdy), SARAH BLOOMFIELD (for Jalponik)

From our LIARS Unofficial Official

Welcome to 2026 everybody! I hope everybody has a great year!

I do have to start with a bit of unsettling news. Keep Mike Brennan in your prayers. Mike suffered a stroke a couple weeks ago and is in the hospital. Mike is a founding member of the LAIRS Club. I've been bringing Mike with me to the meetings for some time now. He was not comfortable driving at night. So let's keep Mike in our prayers for a speedy and full recovery.

I hope everybody that attended the December Christmas party had a great time. It was great hanging out with friends having some pizza and heroes, and BSing! I would like to thank everybody who brought snacks and desserts for the Christmas party! It was a great time for all!

We pushed the business meeting to January, a result of the November debacle. So please bear with us for a few minutes while we go over of finances. We will discuss the money made from the show and what the club has, financially.

January also means dues are due, starting this month we will be collecting. So please within the next month or so bringing your dues. \$\$

I would like to discuss the 2026 show plans and themes/advertisement/flyers, appointing officers for IPMS insurance

I would also like to get a few events and clinics scheduled for several club meetings this year and appoint members for clinics they wish to hold at MTGs. If you have any ideas for the upcoming year, please bring your ideas to the meeting on Thursday.

A club kit build may be discussed like last year to be shown at the 2026 show, and I would like to go forward with that for at least the Feb or March MTGs

I don't recall anyone discussing a theme for January, though Rich briefly mentioned vehicles with snow plows. Since the Friday after the meeting is my birthday, I would request to bring your favorite MOPAR! How about we make it a dual theme of Mopars and Snow plows, that'll fill up the tables!

That's it for now! Thank you again to everybody! My schedule has been hectic working 16 hour days, I could not have done this without you all!

If you have an idea or suggestion to make, please inform our committee during meetings or contact our board members via their phones and/or emails. If there are any issues at the meetings or regarding other club matters, please inform us and we will handle them to the best of our extent.

Also, please try to bring a canned good to donate for the center. We've all been guilty for being sporadic about this, but let's think about those who are much less fortunate than us, especially as the holiday is approaching. Also try and bring a wrapped toy for a less fortunate young girl or boy and please mark it as to which gender it is appropriate.

Thank you very much and see you all Thursday!

Your unofficial official,

Dominick "McMonte" Gerace,



Remember those folks who made a difference in your life in 2025 (good or bad) and use the lessons learned to be a better you. Life is made up of people, events and decisions. 2026 is a time to start fresh. So surround yourself with

good people, be active, happy and make remainder of 2026 great. Richie.

Some Words from the Editor At Large

I apologize for any absences in responding to people. Once again I've been caught up in many things and work. Thanks to work slowdown between Christmas Eve and day, I got about 15 builds lined up and painted that were in the building quote since October!

Hope everyone enjoyed last month's party and mtg. I think it was one of the best many people were in a jolly ol' mood with great spirits. I brought home some leftovers which were definitely enjoyed by household members.

My respects go out to fellow member Mike Brennan who is currently in the hospital. May we wish him a great and speedy recovery, maybe a hot roddin' gift of some sort?

I have proposed themes for the main theme and sub themes for the 2026 MCC:

L.I.A.R.S 35th anniversary Category - 1948-51 Ford and Mercury sleds/wagons

Centennial 50 - Cars from 1976-2026

George Barris hot rods

Tom Daniels hot rods

Top Fuel Dragsters

Star cars - TV/Movie rides

Veterans Day themed rides – Military styled or red/white/blue flag themed

**1965 Plymouth Barracuda
Craftsman Plus**

Engine swapped madness!

Carroll Shelby Tribute – Cobra GT350/500, Series 1, ect

Station wagons (includes 1960 Chevy Nomad Curbside Plus!)

All I can think of unless anyone has additional suggestions.

This month is a dual theme of Mopars and vehicles with snow plows. So run what you've brung!!

Also were going over things like show plans, finances, ect. Dues are to be collected starting this month and lasting into March the latest.

Welp, all I got for this month!

If anyone else have something to contribute or whatever, please do and send it over!

See you all Thursdays!

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MCB Trivia 1 2 26



WISHING YOU A HAPPY and HEALTHY NEW YEAR!!

Public Service Announcement

In case you are wondering ... Magazines are included in a mailing class called Periodical Class Mail. The United States Postal Service® (USPS) does NOT guarantee delivery of periodicals within a specified time.

Because of the holidays, USPS has more mail and packages to deliver during the months of November and December. Their top priority is delivering mail that must be received in a specific number of days. Sadly, this means that our magazines were not a priority.

Now that the holiday rush is over, we are hopeful that the November/December magazines that have been on hold will be delivered.

Next For those of you who consider yourself a great scratch builder consider this **1:1 Ford GT Wooden Display Model**

(As of 1/9/26, Current "Bring a Trailer" Bid: USD \$18,000)

Comments can be accessed @ the following link

[282Comments](#)



This full-scale model of 1st Generation Ford GT is said to have been created by Belgian artist and furniture designer Olivier De Schrijver and features a sculpted body and an interior constructed from wood. The model rolls on two steel axles with steerable front wheels, and highlights of the build include opening doors, an acrylic windshield and side windows, and depictions of headlights, taillights, side mirrors, louvers, seats, interior switchgear, pedal, and a steering wheel.





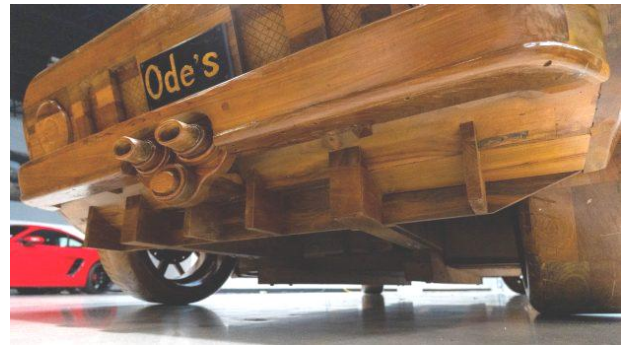
Wheels, brake rotors, and tires are also made of wood and mounted to steel supports with rotating hubs. Tread patterns have been carved into the outer circumference of the tires.



The interior features two bucket seats, a dashboard, a center console, and door panels that mimic a Ford GT cabin. Other design elements include a steering wheel, a shifter, speakers, controls, and pedals. The floor is covered in black carpeting.



The three-spoke wood steering wheel is connected to the front wheels through a steering linkage, and the dash includes a wood representation of Ford GT-style instrumentation and gauges.



Steel axles are bolted to two wood beams to form the model's main support structure. The car measures approximately 174" long, 74" wide, and 45" tall.

Next: Simply reporting that my younger sister came through!

Her Christmas gift included 6 car related Trivia books & 5 1/18 Maisto diecasts! (Best part, was when my wife (*alias Trouble*) noted ... Well where is he going to store them?)

Most of the former items were purchased from Ollies while my sister was still a 2025 3rd tiered member!

Starting 1/1/26 Ollie's Loyalty status resets to NONE!
Fair? ...not to customers!

Now to Ollies model prices, which doubled in the last few months...

then there is Ollies latest adv. which now excludes books & models from their current sales!

Ollies has lost me & other customers due to this (at least to me) insult!

Please advise as to your Ollie's experiences over the last year!

As part of my 2026 New year's resolution, I believe the LIARS should go on record that Ollie's is no friend of the modeling community!

Over to you all for your Holiday experiences...

- Paul Drago reports that he received a few kits for Christmas: he went to a local Marshalls with his wife and they purchased a 2014 Ford GT, and Astin Martin DB5 James Bond car (both from Revell Germany). The Astin Martin is particularly well made and highly detailed. Also, Paul's cousin gave him a 71 hemi challenger, and a 70 Chevelle SS 454.

Have a great day, year, etc., Bill (Dr.V) Murray

(Dr.V wonders if Paul's wife would consider the aforementioned 1:1 Ford GT Wooden Display Model to go with their recent Revell Germany purchase?) It could be stored in your garage since Paul cleaned it up...

Next: Now to the main part of Dr.V's article - **Each year we start out with great New Year intentions.**

As we get older (alternative, our designated Estate Trustee is faced with disposing of our e.g., hobby related collection(s))

Dr.V has not developed a composite Estate package- he has only been married since 1968! *(Why the rush?)*

- WRT his models:
 - He has a computerized EXCEL spreadsheet that is (at least 90% accurate...along with other files that hopefully cover shortcomings.) hosted on his IBM PC & MAC IPAD. (He brings the IPAD to shows ... to check if he already has a model or ... (to forgo Dr. V determining that he has at least one of these!)
 - However, the composite does not indicate where the models are located beyond – in his MANCAVE (ok, basement), attic, closet's, garage/shed ...or in his case 2nd home in the POCONCOS!
 - His listing does not e.g., if it is in his MANCAVE is it built (/condition) or has the original paperwork...

Side note: Dr.V has a large # of models...for the items currently displayed in his numerous MANCAVE display cabinets, the overarching problem is the amount of add'l storage req'd to store original boxes, paperwork, etc! no wonder this add'l crap might be worth extra \$! – Dr.V does not!

- How to determine a model's value?...no easy answer...perhaps in next month's MCB the LIARS can tackle?
 - Dr.V has been trying to establishing several experts to reach out to prior to a member passing! To no avail –

If you need the following please do...



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.....
Model Car Trivia 12 24 25

http://www.board2.spotlighthobbies.com/cgi-bin/bbs62x/webbbs_config.pl?md=index;page=1

By: [Retired Soldier](#)

Anyone building models in the early 1970's remember these little models inspired by Denny Johnson, who enter a model in a contest, it had a 1/32 body and larger 1/25 engine.

MPC flipped out when they saw Denny's creation, and developed their own collection of 8 kits, which sold millions! I believe they were reissued in 2009, which some how I missed them

I did get the six Trick Tricks a few years ago..now R-2 I need to add these to my collection.

Anyone want them reissued????

Make sure you watch the interesting video at the end and give Round 2 a call. Maybe next year they will dig them out the vault for us.

ZINGERS



ISSUE 1-1980 2 EACH OF 8 ZINGERS (1-1850 thru 1-1857)



How the Zingers came to be

- A young man named Dennis Johnson from Cleveland, Ohio entered a model car contest at the 1970 Detroit Auto Show
- The model company MPC saw the potential for a line of kits based on Johnson's car
- MPC created a line of Zinger kits that were inexpensive, easy to build, and fun

What the Zingers were like

- The Zingers were cartoonish creations with handbuilt bodies and full-scale engines
- They were known for their wild proportions and outlandish looks
- Chuck Miller said that the Zingers were great fun to build but weren't meant to run or even sit in



Popular creations

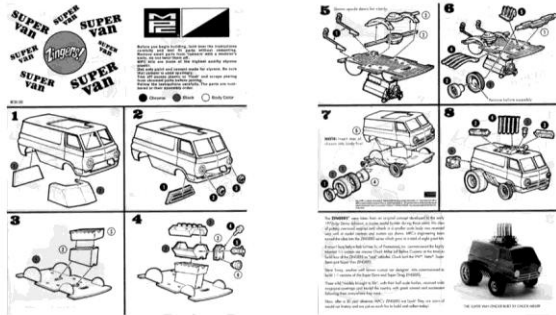
Zinger is a series of 8 models produced by MPC, in the early 1970, to USA. Like human faces, MPC decided to create caricatures of American custom cars by exaggerating their proportions and by scaling an engine 1 in scale bodies 1/2. Revell already had a custom series like the Ratfink by Ed Roth, and Hawk too with Bill Campbell's Weird-Ohs series.



The 8 Zingers models were as follows :

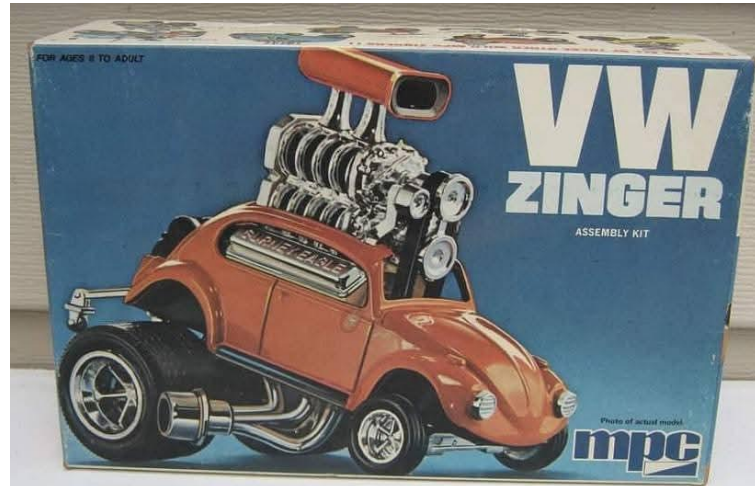
- Little Red Zinger de Dick Branstner (co-founder of MPC), based on his Color Me Gone Dodge Truck (The one who will serve for the Deora)
- Super Drag Zinger, a Top Fuel with its braking parachute and double rear wheels, almost one 6 wheels
- Super Semi Zinger, the famous truck at 6 wheels with pin-up, un cabover GMC Astro 95 Class 8 from 1972
- Singer Van, a Dodge pickup from 1965
- Dune Buggy Zinger, with its reverse air intake
- '57 Chevy Zinger, un Dragster Funny Car
- Zinger VW, a Volkswagen beetle
- Zinger Vette, a Hot Rod Stingray with a huge rear spoiler

Zinger models were approximately to scale 1/32, but considering the starting scale, the plastic models were quite small, but were very successful with young Americans in search of mechanical dreams.

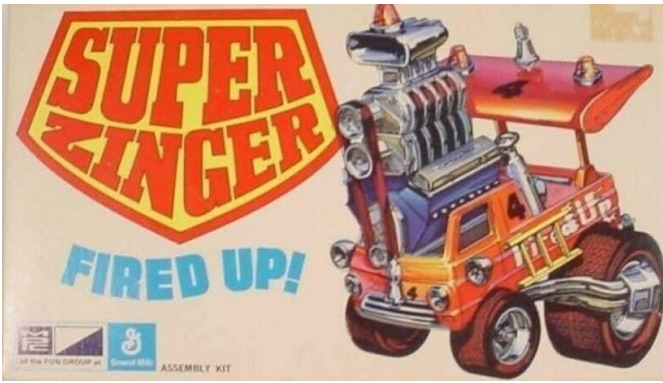


These playful creations were popular at the time and reflected the strong desire for independence of the western and national subcultures., which were linked first to the beatniks and later, to the hippie scene.

I don't know who the builder of these great examples is.







To finish with the models, apparently MPC stopped production in the years 1980, but demand is still there, it's the company Round 2 LLC who re-edited the 8 Zinger models from 2009.



The Zingers on tour

- MPC commissioned Bob Laravey, a legendary car show promoter, to build full-size versions of the Zingers
- The full-size Zingers were toured across the country on the show car circuit
- The display was a huge success, and MPC sold millions of kits



Exhibited in trade shows

Life-size models have also been exhibited in salons to promote Zingers models



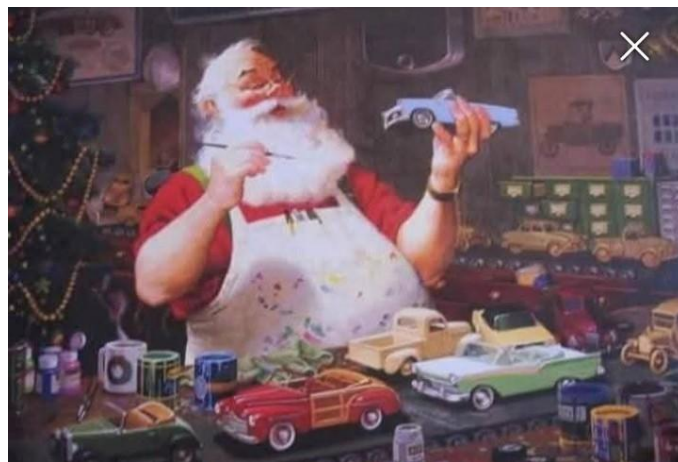
A pin-up girl on a strange truck looking 6 wheels not the right size, with a huge engine, obviously a live image of the USA, but until today, impossible to know anything. I put it on the side of George Barris, but actually not at all, it was Chuck Miller !



Zinger from MPC's original ad were never built by Miller, even if the Chevrolet '57 was built later.



All Zingers were just rolling models. None of the engines were running. They had no valves, no pistons and no drive system.



[Here is the video to the Zinger video...enjoy](#)

<https://youtu.be/YHBSPKmZYsk?si=ewtM8BoXhbgovADf>

Icons of Scale: The Coolest Chevy Model-Car Kits of All Time

Plus some blooper and blunder kits released along the way.

[Steve Magnante](#) Writer Dec 16, 2019

For enthusiasts of a certain age, building a model-car kit—or multiple kits—was a rite of passage. But regardless of when you were born, it's a fact that many car fanatics from Detroit designers to local mechanics still slap together scale versions of their favorite cars. They're often a first point of entry into enthusiasm for a brand, and they're also an excellent way to exercise car-tinkering instincts when we're otherwise unable to do so. I've been a model-car fanatic for nearly half a century, and my very first model car kit was a Chevy (as mentioned below). Though I've built models of plenty of other machinery, here I've conjured a humble list of what I consider to be the five most influential Chevy-themed model kits. Read on to rekindle fond memories, learn about some models you've perhaps never heard of before, or maybe even trigger a model-car purchase.

Badman '55 Chevy Gasser by Monogram

As if its bright-yellow plastic parts, Boss 302-inspired "vertagonal" fender graphics, mile-long traction arms, front beam axle, wheelie bars, and chromed in-grille Moon tank weren't enough to bend my 10-year-old mind when I first saw it in 1974, the 1:24-scale Badman gasser's key features were its translucent red windows and hood scoop. Taken together, the finished kit tickles the retinas without the need for paint.

Like most Monogram custom car kits of the early 1970s, the Badman was designed by [Tom Daniel](#), one of the team that ["put the hot in Hot Wheels" a few years earlier at Mattel](#). Though mature eyes now see the kit's many inaccuracies—its 6-71 supercharged V-8 is connected to an incorrect three-speed manual transmission and the "396" engine has conjoined exhaust ports like a small-block—none of it takes away from the Badman's overall cool factor. I've purchased at least 10 of them over the years.

The original box art (on right in the top photo) featured brightly colored illustrations with a fictional Winternationals cover showdown against another '55. Around 1977, kit photographs replaced the box art illustrations as President Jimmy Carter's administration bolstered truth-in-advertising laws. The goal was to crack down on misleading packaging in toys and other items targeted at kids. Moving forward, kit makers were forced to show the actual contents of the box—for better or worse—thus the photographic depiction on the newer box that's on the left.

Jungle Jim Camaro Funny Car by Revell

Revell was already well known for dozens of highly realistic plastic model-car kits by 1971 when the very first of many Jungle Jim Funny Car

kits was released. But unlike the exquisite Skippers Critter Anglia gasser, Mooneyes Dragster, and Mickey Thompson Challenger land-speed record kits from the mid-1960s, the Jungle Jim Camaro Funny Car is not one of them. Seemingly designed by Revell's B-team—or at least less-skilled apprentices—it suffers from heavy-handed details, chunky workable steering, and a poorly proportioned Camaro body shell. Worst of all are the super wide, cartoon-like slicks and flash-encrusted five-spoke chrome wheels.

So why is this abomination one of my top five? Simply because it time warps me back to the very first day I ever wore corrective eyewear (glasses). I was 12, and after years of shirking a proper eye exam (I knew I needed glasses since I was eight, but I feared the geeky stigma that came with them), Mom finally cornered me. To ease my unhappiness, she bought me this very Jungle Jim Camaro kit on the way home from the optometrist. Thanks to my new glasses, I fully enjoyed the fire burnout box art. In the years since, glasses have served me very well, of course. Thanks, Mom!

Twister Chevy Nova Altered Wheelbase Funny Car by AMT

I'm a few years too young to have seen AMT's groundbreaking altered-wheelbase Twister Chevy II Funny Car as a new model on the hobby store shelf. When these things were the hot deal in the 1967-69 period, I was still pushing Matchbox cars through piles of mashed potatoes. But that hasn't stopped modern-day reproductions and re-releases from setting things right.

When new in 1967, AMT whipped up a simple pan-type chassis with a shortened wheelbase to suit reworked (with altered wheelbases and hood scoops) body shells of its '66 Mustang, '65 Falcon, '66 Mercury, '63 Tempest, and '65 Chevy II. After

plugging in a suitable Ford, Pontiac, or Chevy engine, AMT had something for Funny Car fans to build without spending a ton on multiple chassis and suspension tools.

The Twister isn't an exact replica of any particular real-life race car, but with its stubby wheelbase, Hilborn eight-stack injected Rat, front beam axle, and gutted interior, its less-is-more vibe captures the Match Bash aesthetic perfectly. I got my first Twister as a built-up parts car at a model-car swap meet around 1981. But after Model King re-released the once-rare kit around 1999, anybody with \$30 could build their very own Match Bash Nova with factory fresh plastic.

Funny Hugger II Camaro Funny Car by AMT

With the successful launch of the hastily rendered Twister Nova and others, AMT decided to spend some real money on fresh Funny Car subjects. Among them were the Funny Hugger, a 1967 Camaro flip-top kit released around 1970, and the Funny Hugger II, the 1969 Camaro flip-top featured here, which was released around 1972. I bought my first Funny Hugger II in 1973 at the local drug store and remember being mesmerized by the exciting box art illustrations. Then again, without a single photographic image of the kit hiding inside the box, it took a leap of faith to make the purchase. But me and my model building friends generally knew the AMT brand logo—as well as MPC, Revell, Monogram, IMC, and JoHan—was trustworthy from past experience. Lesser brands—Palmer, Hawk, and Lindberg—had to be approached with caution. Their fanciful box-art illustrations often concealed terrible model kits and sometimes showed components that weren't included in the box. Like virtually all AMT kits (and many from MPC), the Funny Hugger II required paint, but with a twist: While its body shell was rendered in pure white polystyrene and needed coloring, the tube

chassis was molded in metallic silver. It was something I'd only seen in AMT's huge fire truck and military model kits of the day. But when the re-release hit the scene around 2005—once again courtesy of Model King—the gray was gone, undoubtedly to simplify manufacturing.

1970 Chevy Monte Carlo by AMT

This was my very first 1:25-scale plastic model kit—ever. The year was 1972, I was eight years old and Mom wasn't convinced I was ready for stinky (and toxic) model cement just yet. AMT's screw-together 1970 Monte Carlo was part of its short-lived Motor City Stocker Series (which also included simplified replicas of five other American cars from the 1970 model year). Priced at \$1.00, the Motor City Stockers combined the external realism and detail of a \$2.25 glue kit with the simplicity of a snap-together dealer promotional toy.

As soon as I pulled its big 1:25-scale body from the box, the pre-assembled 1:64-scale Hot Wheels, Matchbox, and Corgi cars I'd been playing with, collecting, and trading with my friends suddenly seemed so lame. I remember examining the kit's Rally Wheels and marveling at how they looked just like the real ones I saw in traffic every day. The same held for the grille, speedometer, and dual exhaust system.

The only downsides were the sealed hood and engine plug between the front wheels. But they only served to make me even more curious about the world of glue-together model kits where miniature replicas of just about every Chevy ever made seemed to be available at the local hobby shop. It all started with this kit!

Honorable Mention: C4 Corvette by MPC

Despite taking a beating from the video-game arcade boom of the late 1970s, the domestic model-kit industry continued to hobble along into the 1980s. One of the bright spots was MPC, who doubled down with a series of strong model offerings that reflected popular tastes. One of MPC's best kits of the time was the C4 Corvette. Not only was the real-life motoring world excited by America's totally renewed sports car, MPC reignited model builders' curiosity with new levels of detail and accuracy. To help fan the flames, MPC released a limited run of 1984 Corvette kits molded in metallic gold. They were found in specially marked boxes, while the normal run was molded in black plastic. I remember being amazed by the crisp detailing of the suspension and chassis.

Bloopers and Blunders

Chevy Chevette by MPC Since it takes roughly the same amount of money and resources to take a model-car project from idea to reality no matter the make or model—about \$500,000 in modern funds—you'd expect modelmakers to shoot for the stars every time. When MPC released this Chevette kit in 1978, plenty of hobbyists complained that the effort should have been expended on literally any other Chevy product.

Whether this model kit was a knee-jerk hangover from the days when MPC automatically released yearly kits of

significant annual models or a brave experiment to put some mpg in MPC, we're sure the project wasn't a grand slam like MPC's 1978 Pontiac Firebird Special Edition or Dukes of Hazzard General Lee Charger—both of which broke the million-unit mark. We have to ask, was the Bear Bait graphics and decal theme a shrewdly calculated tie-in to the big rig/CB craze of the mid-1970s or was it a last minute "think of something—anything" Hail Mary so the kit wouldn't bomb on its own terms? While the resulting kit is a very decent replica of Chevy's T-car, MPC management took a huge risk green-lighting such a mundane kit during the rocky road that was the kit industry of the 1970s.

Steve Magnante

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Got Unbuilt Car Model Kits? Throw a Model-Building Party!

Murilee Martin

04 November 2025

Share

If you're reading this and you were born after about 1945, it's a near-certainty that you spent much of your youth building plastic scale model kits, probably including the timeless Visible V-8 or Visible Slant-6 (and maybe even the Visible Cow). Then you got into 1:1 scale cars, yet you couldn't resist acquiring even more car model kits... that you'll get around to building someday. The solution: identify your friends who are in the same fix and invite them over for a model-building party!

Revell

Once I got my first few real cars (I had three by age 17, all labor-intensive hoopties), I stopped building car models

for a while; the final ones in my teenage years were a Triumph TR7 and a BMW E24 in 1:24 scale.

Murilee Martin

Then, when I was an underemployed office temp during the recession in the early 1990s, I started spending a lot of time with a similarly bored friend who had rediscovered model kits in his 20s. He lived in a squalid East Bay basement apartment with his three-legged cat and built an elaborate 1:24/1:25-scale set of diorama shelves depicting what he imagined as the ideal living situation (Chevy Monzas, beer kegs, and animals played major roles).

Murilee Martin

He'd built an excellent beater El Camino kit, complete with camper shell and duct-tape-and-trash-bag side window, and I wanted to do something similar. I picked up the AMT/ERTL 1:25 scale 1970 Chevrolet Impala kit, part of the enduring "3 in 1" series from that company, and we would pool our model-building supplies and work on our kits while listening to KALX and drinking Meister Brau. We called this activity "Model Hell," and it was good slacker fun. We got quite a few free tickets to see bands by calling up the KALX DJs during Model Hell sessions, as an added bonus, including pre-Dirt Alice in Chains opening for Ozzy Osbourne (AiC was incredible, Ozzy had an off night).

Murilee Martin

I'm not a particularly skilled modelmaker, so it took probably six months of Model Hell sessions to finish my hard-living '70 Impala kit (I would have built a '65 Impala sedan kit, since such a car was my daily driver at the time, but nobody offered a four-door Impala kit back then).

Marketplace

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Murilee Martin

It featured junkyard-obtained body parts in different colors, naturally, and I put a great deal of care into having the fresh oil leaks underneath the 454 in gloss black paint over the flat black old oil buildup.

Murilee Martin

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I had a complete story for the owner, a Hayward street-racing enthusiast by the name of Max Tork. One ill-remembered night, Max sideswiped a utility pole on Depot Road and had to replace the right front fender and bumper with parts from Phelps Auto Wreckers in San Leandro. He planned to repair the body damage behind the door, too, but it's hard to get to all your projects.

Murilee Martin

Because the gas gauge didn't work in Max's thirsty Impala, he carried a five-gallon fuel can behind the front seats. Might as well keep a spare tire back there, too.

Murilee Martin

I found some cast-lead 1:24 scale tools at a hobby shop, and added some duct-tape upholstery repair.

Murilee Martin

You can wrap stripe decals around cut-off parts-tree plastic to make pretty convincing 1:25 scale beer cans.

Murilee Martin

I still have the Max Tork Impala, which I've used as a subject to test many a film camera during the decades since it was built. Not at all ironically, I moved to Georgia in my hootie Impala a few years later and got a job writing for Year One, where my coworkers nicknamed me Max (after Mad Max, not Max Tork, but still proving that Model Hell can help form one's persona).

Revell

I did very well in avoiding the buildup of a kit stockpile from that point until my early 40s, when I began inspecting cars in the 24 Hours of Lemons and teams gave me generous gifts to ensure fair treatment. A team turned their Ford Fairmont race car into a Billy Beer-mobile and gave me an unopened 1:25 scale Revell Billy Carter "Redneck Power" Pick-Up kit.

I got a few more kits that way, and then I started going to Japan for my work as an automotive journalist and really got into trouble with a buildup of car models.

Murilee Martin

For example, how can anyone resist a high-quality Fujimi Toyota Estima Police Interceptor kit for ¥2310 (about \$15

at the current exchange rate)? I sure didn't, and I also failed to resist the allure of the Aoshima Toyota Century kit and a bunch of others. I keep dreading the discovery of a new-old-stock Fujimi "Mad Police" kit (a hasty "Road Warrior" knockoff series from the early 1980s) in Japan, but have evaded that one... so far.

Murilee Martin

Then I got so inspired by building boomboxes out of junkyard-obtained parts that I threw a couple of boombox-building parties. Every guest arrived with a box of automotive audio hardware and affiliated electrical components and left with a working boombox. Here we see our own Andrew Ganz with a suitcase boombox based on a 1990s Chrysler cassette deck, at the now-legendary 2016 South Denver Build a Boombox party.

Murilee Martin

Here's James Gilboy with the proof that you can build a working boombox out of a cardboard Toyota MR2 parts box and an early-1990s Tacoma radio. Anyway, the Build a Boombox parties were great fun because they involved a group of creative gearheads working with their minds and hands, but not on high-stakes car projects, while enjoying food, drink, and music. That's what inspired the idea of having Model Hell Parties. After several MHPs over the years, here's what has worked best.

Participants bring kits they are willing to build and/or share

Murilee Martin

Each guest digs through their kit hoard, picks one they want to work on at the party, then throws in others they're willing to share (for parts or in their entirety). Don't be afraid to mix different scales.

Murilee Martin

Participants bring their stashes of spare model parts and decals
Kitbashing is what a Model Hell Party is all about, so the more options, the better. Engines, wheels/tires, and seats are especially fun.

Murilee Martin

The Model Hell Parties in my garage have all had amazing treasure troves of parts available.

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Murilee Martin
You never know what might be useful, so bring it all.
Model parts are small!

Murilee Martin

For example, if you want to build a Ronald Reagan Gundam with both the General Lee and the Starsky & Hutch Gran Torino involved, you'll need a good assortment of parts to choose from.

Murilee Martin

If you can't buy it, build it.

Murilee Martin

If you have a snap-together Ford GT and there's a Fiero GT kit handy, you know what to do.

Murilee Martin

That's right, you build an Iron Duke-powered Ford GT.

Participants bring tools and materials to share

Murilee Martin

You can never have enough paint, glue, body filler, etc., at a Model Hell Party.

Murilee Martin

As the host, I provide containers of cheap hobby paintbrushes. In addition to actual styrene model cement, it's good to have plenty of super-glue and epoxy on hand.

Murilee Martin

Paint galore! Shared files, knives, small saws, flush cutters, etc., are very helpful as well.

Make sure you have enough tables and chairs

Murilee Martin

This might require having participants bring their own. I like to cover all the tables with taped-on kraft paper.

Provide cardboard and scrap plywood for spray painting

Murilee Martin

There will be spray painting, so the host will need to provide some means of keeping the paint off tables and floors.

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Murilee Martin

At my Model Hell Parties, we've just dragged hunks of plywood out onto the alley pavement for spray painting.

Murilee Martin

Obviously, you need to make sure the participants' full-sized cars don't pick up any overspray.

Provide project-friendly food and drink

Murilee Martin

It's a bad idea to operate a grill, boiling pots of pulled pork, and so on at a party in which everyone is working with finicky small parts and getting their hands covered with paint and glue. Food that's simple and easy to handle works best at a Model Hell Party.

Murilee Martin

I live close by Denver's Little Saigon commercial strip, so my go-to main course choice for Model Hell Parties is a big tray of assorted bánh mì sandwiches. These are baguette-based sandwiches with good structural integrity, and they're light on content spillage, easy to eat one-handed while painting the hood of your AMT Fire Chief Impala coupe kit, and available with a variety of meaty or vegetarian stuffings. Pizza also works well at an MHP.

Murilee Martin

Chips and dip with olives and pickled vegetables have been MHP culinary successes, too.

Murilee Martin

My garage doesn't have a refrigerator, so I provide separate coolers for alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Provide Model Hell Party Tunes

Murilee Martin

This part is critical. I like to go old-school and go 100 percent vinyl, preferably LPs issued by automotive manufacturers. At my next Model Hell Party, I may try playing nothing but eight-track tapes issued with upscale GM cars of the 1970s (so far, I have a half-dozen Oldsmobile and Cadillac eight-tracks that work, sort of).

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Murilee Martin

All of my junkyard boomboxes are hooked together for a 47-speaker system, and many of them feature colored lights that flash in time with the beat. It turns out this can be too distracting for focused model building, however.

Provide a laptop and inkjet printer for custom decals

Murilee Martin

This is going the extra mile, but it can really pay off. Inkjet printer-ready sheets for making waterslide decals are fairly cheap, and they actually work on model kits. Above is a photo of an AMC Pacer kit turned into a very accurate replica of a real 24 Hours of Lemons car, complete with bribe stencils.

Murilee Martin

Fortunately, I test all my bribe stencils on my garage wall prior to leaving for a race, and so it was possible to compare the real one with the 1:24 scale reproduction.

Murilee Martin

With custom-printed decals, it's possible to make a 1969 Charger kit into the North's answer to the General Lee: the General Sherman.

Murilee Martin

All of my Model Hell Parties have been resounding successes. Keep in mind that one afternoon isn't long enough to do a super-sanitary job on a complex model, but you'll have fun even if all you manage to get done is painting the interior trim.

Murilee Martin

So much mixing and matching of parts takes place at these parties.

Murilee Martin

Simple kits are the most likely to get finished completely during the course of a single MHP.

Murilee Martin

Your chopped gasser can never have too much boost, and it's always nice when it gets a pickup bed for carrying welding tools.

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Murilee Martin
That J-10 is just right for carrying a Coke machine.

Murilee Martin
Race crew member kits can be finished at a single MHP.

Murilee Martin
I'm happy I was able to finish my Estima Police Interceptor kit at the most recent MHP, though a few finishing touches had to be handled after the party wrapped up. We knew this van as the Previa on our side of the Pacific.

Murilee Martin
I'll be throwing another Model Hell Party soon.

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hyperv6

November 4, 2025 at 10:26 am

Today building a model is in many areas difficult. The lack of Hobby shops with kits as they are mostly RC items today. The lack of discount stores also carrying kits, paint and good kinds of glue are rare.

When I do find kits it is like Hobby Lobby with a food selection of kits but lacking good paints in a wide array of colors.

I used to go to the Roadway Truck outlet. They would get in crushed cases models. It was called Rex Salvage. I could go in and score 5-10 kits at 25cents each. They were generally in good condition except for a limited number of top crushed kits. Often if a body was damaged the company would send you a new one.

I have nearly two hundred kits of all types and nature. We would trade and customize and other things. I did take many of the kits I did not like and sold them to a collector for a good profit.

I did get back into building in the 90's and I built model car for every year Dale Earnhardt raced except for 2001, I have the kit but never the heart to build it. I was working nights and in the winter I needed something to do.

I built a number of Tamaya F1 cars and even a pro stock Pontiac for Jay Leno. I still have these cars in car cases on the wall in the garage. Many think they are die cast and even the Dale Sr I did the decals even on the fenders for each specific year.

I would love to build today but you have to send for many things and I get tired of waiting for paints etc. Also the cost of a kit is crazy today at nearly \$30 for many 1/24.

The last build was the B 17 I flew in in 1/48 scale it came out nice but hard to display due to the size.

Kids miss out on skills that can be learned with these kits. I just repainted a set of Phone Dial Porsche wheels and they came out perfect. Much of this was due to my learning to paint models and using clears.

High-Performance Kit Cars That Are More Affordable Than They Look

BY SARAH BLOOMFIELD SEPT. 16, 2025 4:45 PM EST

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Wako Megumi/Getty Images
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Sure, building a car model is fun, but putting together a life-size, working version of a car you can actually drive is so much more satisfying. Kit cars are essentially prefabricated parts you assemble yourself to build a car. Many kit cars are designed to resemble rare or far too expensive models that are usually out of reach for the average budget, such as the Ford GT40, Porsche 356, and Shelby Cobra. That said, a few are true originals that look and drive like nothing else on the road.

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Building the car in your own garage eliminates the assembly cost, which makes it a lot cheaper. For some kits, you need a donor car, or a specific model and some of its major components. Donor cars don't have to be in perfect condition, and buying one cheaply can keep the price of building a kit car low.

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Other kits provide nearly all the parts you need to assemble a working car model. Sometimes you can buy the kit in installments to help with affordability. Buying the parts this way also gives you time to complete each step as you go, so you don't get overwhelmed during the building process. Quite a few companies make kit cars today, but they don't all focus on high-performance models. Some of the top companies offering kit cars include Factory Five, Burton Car Company, DDR Motorsports, and Dakar Cars Limited. Here, you'll find details about some of the

most affordable high-performance kit cars available and the companies making them.

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Exomotive Exocet — \$7,999
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Exomotive
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Exomotive brought the MEV Exocet to the United States in 2013, but the company's founder, Kevin Patrick, took an immediate interest in the Exocet soon after it was released in 2010. Kevin built his own MEV Exocet and loved it so much that in 2011, he went to MEV headquarters to secure a place as the only Exocet provider in the U.S. But the Exocet required refinement before it could be brought to the country, which meant a collaboration between Kevin Patrick and Steve Mills, founder of MEV.

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Touted as the easiest kit car in the world to build, even inexperienced mechanics and hobbyists can construct the Exomotive Exocet if they put in the effort. Build time is estimated at around 100 hours, and the starting price for the Exocet Base model is an affordable \$7,999. You'll need a 1990-2005 Mazda Miata donor car (next-generation Miatas won't cut it) and a Mazda, Honda, or GM engine to complete the build. A mid-level MEV is available for \$8,299, and it adds a roll bar tube, harness mounting tubes, and more front and rear downtubes. An off-road/race package can make it easy to wander from the pavement in your Exocet, but it will cost you \$8,999 to upgrade.

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Under the hood, the Exocet can support Mazda's 1.6- and 1.8-liter engines, Honda's K- and J-Series blocks, and the EcoTec, LFX V6, and LSX V8 powertrains from GM. The ultimate power, torque, and top speed for the Exocet depend on the engine equipped and other customization features and mods made during assembly, which might affect the car's weight. Output generally ranges from 100 to 700 horsepower.

Speedster Werks 356 A Speedster — \$9,120

Bonhams Cars

Dedicated to supporting car lovers who want to experience the satisfaction of building their own cars, Speedster Werks is a kit car company that's been in business for more than 20 years.

Although Speedster Werks is well-known for its Porsche 356 A Speedster replica kit cars, the company partakes in several other ventures as well. In addition to prototyping, Speedster Werks takes on bespoke and small vehicle projects, production of small-scale parts, and glass-reinforced plastic (GRP) repairs. The company is based in the U.K., but the 356 A Speedster kit car can be imported to the U.S.

Everyone's drawn to the classic look of the Porsche 356 A Speedster, but who can afford one? With fewer than 5,000 of this model produced, not only is it rare, but it also fetches a significant price at auction, with models selling for \$200,000 and up. However, if you're willing to put in a little elbow grease, you can get a 356 A

Speedster replica kit car from Speedster Werks for £6,750, which converts to about \$9,120 USD.

Building the 356 A Speedster replica requires a shortened VW chassis, as the GRP body shell in the Speedster Werks 356 A Speedster kit fits perfectly on this frame. The kit includes the front and rear engine hoods, one-piece doors, headlight bowls, bumpers, and a prefitted front luggage area. It also comes with all the necessary hinges and an engine bay kit. All that's left to contribute is the engine, and this car's ready to build.

Dio Tipo 61 — \$9,500

DioCars

Bill Bonadio is a serious car enthusiast who began building his own cars when he was a teenager. Inevitably, this led to him starting his own kit car company, DioCars, in the '90s. It all started with two amateur car builders in the '60s who made a replica of the Maserati Tipo 61 "Birdcage" using a Triumph TR-3 chassis. When Bonadio came across a version of the Maserati replica in the '70s, he thought it was the real deal. After realizing it was a replica, he contacted one of the original builders about becoming a dealer.

It took some time, but eventually, Bonadio was able to build and sell the Dio Tipo 61 kit car, which can be built on the chassis of several models with anything from a two- to an eight-cylinder engine. The specifications for the chassis

are pretty flexible for the Tipo 61 — a rarity for kit cars. Basically, any frame with a wheelbase between 88 and 102 inches will work, as long as the rear track is 45 inches and the front track falls somewhere between 45.5 and 52 inches.

A Dio Tipo 61 car kit costs \$9,500, but this only gets you the front and rear body sections, lower body panels, and the molded door sections and two doors. Other components, such as the windshield and hood hinges, cost extra but won't add too much to the overall price. An original Maserati "Birdcage" from the '50s has an estimated value between \$5 and \$6 million, making the price of the Dio Tipo 61 kit car even more appealing.

DF Goblin V1 — \$9,950

DF Kit Cars

DF Kit Car got its start all because of the immense satisfaction that comes with building a car from the ground up. After the company's owner completed his own car build using a Chevrolet Cobalt donor car and parts he fabricated with CNC equipment from his family business, he wanted to share the experience with others. So in 2015, DF Kit Car was born. By focusing on creating an easy-to-build, fun-to-drive kit car, DF Kit Car is making a name for itself in the kit car community.

The DF Goblin V1 is the first kit car to come from the company, but a Goblin V2 is on the horizon.

For now, you'll need a 2005-2010 Chevrolet Cobalt or Pontiac G5 donor car to get started with the Goblin V1 build. The kit is sold in three stages, but you only need the first two to build a working Goblin V1. The third stage is optional, as it only includes accessories and other parts that allow for customization, no critical operating components.

A base Goblin V1 kit will run you \$9,950 for both stage one and two, plus the cost of the donor car and, if needed, the engine. Of course, the price of the kit car varies depending on the donor car model, drivetrain, and powertrain. If you want options like a new parking brake, customized steering wheel, or tow bar, it will cost a little more. The Goblin V1 can support engine blocks with outputs that range from 140 to 260 hp and either an automatic or manual transmission, putting you in complete control of the final outcome of your Goblin V1 build.

DDR Grullon GT8 — \$19,995

YouTube/DDR Motorsport

In 2001, Diego Grullon combined his 25 years of experience in the racing industry with the talent of a team of car specialists to launch DDR Motorsport. The goal was to create an impressive component kit car that could rise above the competition. Innovation, quality craftsmanship, and a focus on supercar design elements make the kit cars from DDR worth buying and building. Based in Florida, DDR Motorsport fabricates a lineup of relatively affordable GT kit cars, as well

as doing some prototyping and manufacturing for customers.

Although the base price for the Grullon GT8 high-performance kit car is almost \$20,000 — which could buy you a great used car — the car that this kit is based on, the McLaren F1, typically sells for \$20 million or more at auction. When put in perspective, DDR's self-build version that uses a Corvette C5 donor car is certainly, and it sure looks more expensive than it is. An upgrade to the Grand Prix version will jump the price of this kit car to between \$23,000 and \$26,000.

With the kit, you get the components to create a sophisticated supercar, including a welded tubular steel frame and hand-laid fiberglass body. In the engine bay, any of GM's longitudinally mounted LS1 to LS7 V8 engines will fit, so you have a few choices. A six-speed transaxle, shifter, and cables from a 2000-2004 Porsche Boxster S donor car provide smooth gear changes, but you'll need an engine-to-transaxle adapter plate to mate the gearbox to the engine.

Factory Five Mk4 Roadster — \$20,990

Factory Five

Factory Five is a big name in the kit car industry. It is, after all, the largest kit car component manufacturer in the world. Located in Massachusetts, Factory Five has a massive manufacturing facility dedicated to creating the parts necessary to build each of its exceptional kit

cars. While many kit car companies have limited model options, Factory Five offers hot rods, coupes, roadsters, and trucks to appeal to a wide customer base. The company provides top-notch customer service, ensuring an enjoyable kit car experience, from building to driving.

A complete Factory Five Mk4 Roadster kit is affordably priced at \$20,990. You can pick up the base kit for \$14,990, but the complete kit is a better deal because you need fewer donor parts to finish the build. Going with the complete kit means you really only need to supply a working Ford engine, transmission, fuel pump, battery, and rear end with brakes, wheels, and tires. Everything else comes with the kit.

The Mk4 Roadster is modeled after the Shelby 427 Cobra of the '60s, an iconic yet extremely rare model. During the Cobra's production run, fewer than 1,000 models came off the line. At auction, a 427 Cobra can bring in more than \$1 million, putting the car well out of reach for pretty much everyone. With the Mk4 Roadster, you get to put the car together yourself, which makes driving the kit car all the more enjoyable when you finally get to take it out on the road.

What Does It Take To Build a High-Performance Kit Car?

DF Kit Car

Kit car companies strive to make their products easy to assemble, but that doesn't mean just any

gearhead has the fortitude to build a car from the ground up. Yes, you might start with a donor car, but there's a lot of time and effort that goes into putting all the pieces of a kit car together. So the main thing it takes to build a kit car, aside from the burning desire to drive a car you built yourself, of course, is the determination to see the job through.

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Having a garage with enough space to strip a donor car and then build a kit car is another necessity if you want to build your own car. You definitely want to keep the parts out of the elements as you work, and a place to keep everything organized is also nice. Mechanic's tools are a must, but you can also check the kit car maker's website and building guides to see if you'll need any special tools or equipment to complete your car.

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Don't overlook finding a solid community of kit car builders who can help and support you through the building process. Many kit cars take about 100 hours or more to finish, and knowing people who have built a kit car can encourage you to keep going with your project.

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Read More:

<https://www.jalopnik.com/1969112/affordable-high-performance-kit-cars-cheap-look-expensive/>

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Model Mercantile Market

"Wanted or For Sale" section...

WANTED: Stock wheel and tire for AMT '64 Chevrolet Covair annual kit or promo.

Contact John Heyer at oldie383@gmail.com or his cell phone 631-575-6923.

WANTED: CAR MODEL Magazine May 1974 issue. Will pay \$20 for it in excellent condition.

WANTED: AMT 1969 LINCOLN unbuilt kit. Will buy or have many vintage kits available for trade.

Contact Gary Weickart at 631-581-5834 or gweickart@aol.com.

WANTED: Large diameter wheels, tires, and disc brakes from Revell/AMT/Tamiya/Aoshima/ect. kits. 1/24th and 1/25th scale. ()

WANTED: Modular and modern motors like LS1s, HEMIs, DOHC 5.4 Cobra motors, import motors like Toyota 2JZ and Nissan Skyline RB. 1/24th and 1/25th scale.

WANTED: Vortech style superchargers, blower superchargers from 2007/2010 Shelby GT500 and Revell Ford Mustang Mach III concept car, and turbochargers. 1/24th and 1/25th scale.

Contact Richard Manri @ 631-589-6876 or his email picorro93@gmail.com to negotiate price or trade for the three above.

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Additional scenes from Dec MTG













Here is your chance to have some input into this club without having everyone know where it came from. If you have a suggestion, an idea, or a problem you would like to discuss please put it in writing on this sheet and it will be discussed at the next meeting. Please bring your filled out sheet with you, or you can email it to your editors email address on the first page header. ALL subjects and suggestions will be brought up in front of the club.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SIGN THIS SHEET.

LIARS Annual (2025) INPUT AND PROFILE SHEET:

LIARS Profile: (name) _____ (Can be your LIARS nickname or anonymous panhandle...)

- How long have you been building models? _____
- How long have you been a member of LIARS? _____
- What do you usually build? _____
- Where do you usually build? _____
- How many models do you have? _____
- Have you ever had any failed builds that were scrapped or recycled for other projects?

- Have you ever parted out old finished builds and recycled their contents for new projects?

- How many unbuilt models do you have? _____
- What are your favorite 3 models you have built? _____
- Have you ever won an award for building a model? _____
- What 3 models should win an all time kit of the (last) century award? _____
- What 3 models are so horrible that you would buy them just to protect others from having to build them?

- What was the dumbest, most boneheaded mistake you've made in the past? (Can be model or general related)

- Was there any kit you regretted ever purchasing?

- What do you drive now? _____
- Are you bitter about anything? _____
- Are you saving your pennies for something fun to drive? _____
- With an unlimited budget, what 10 full size cars would you have in your garage?

- What (if any) person (living or dead) in the 1:1 automotive world would you like to meet? _____

- Do you go to model car shows? _____
- What are your favorite model car shows and why? _____
- Do you have kids & if so, do they share your passion? _____
- Did you build models with them? _____

***LIARS Model Car Challenge, 35th
anniversary, coming November 2026!
Details and more TBA!***
