

Audi motorsport history

From quattro to e-tron

Audi positions itself as the sportiest manufacturer in the premium segment and has a perfect basis to do so: motorsport. Sportiness, advanced technology and emotive design are the basis for the success of the Audi brand. The genes for this have their origin in racing – since 1980.

The success story began with the Audi quattro

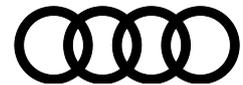
Excluding the era before the Second World War including the legendary Auto Union Grand Prix race cars in the 1930s, the motorsport history of AUDI AG began with the Audi quattro. The dominant victories and two manufacturers' and two drivers' titles achieved with the "original quattro" in the World Rally Championship between 1982 and 1984 were an important factor in the market success of quattro drive.

quattro victorious in circuit racing as well

After Audi had turned rally racing upside down and stormed up Pikes Peak (USA) with the Sport quattro in record time on three successive occasions, Audi made quattro drive fit for circuit racing as well: initially with the Audi 200 quattro and the Audi 90 quattro IMSA GTO in the United States, in 1990 and 1991 with two championship titles for the Audi V8 quattro in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM) – and ultimately also with the A4 in the production-based super touring cars. In 1996, the Audi A4 quattro won championship titles in seven countries. Between 2012 and 2016, the all-wheel drive system returned to the race track as the e-tron quattro.

Audi R8 most successful Le Mans sports car in present-day racing

After the dominant quattro drive was banned from touring car racing, Audi switched to sports prototypes and underpinned its slogan "Vorsprung durch Technik" in this motorsport category for 18 years as well. On making its debut at Le Mans, the toughest endurance race in the world, Audi, in 1999, immediately managed the leap onto the podium, in position three. In the following years, the Audi R8 was in a class of its own. From 2000 to 2002, Audi achieved a historic hat-trick, not least thanks to TFSI technology that debuted in 2001 and subsequently made its way into production as well. In 2004 and 2005, customer teams clinched two further overall victories for Audi. The R8 secured its spot in motorsport history with a total of 63 victories in 80 sports car races.



Title wins following the return to DTM

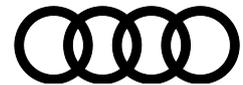
Following Laurent Aiello's victory with the Abt Audi TT-R in 2002, Audi returned to the DTM with a factory-backed commitment in 2004 and instantly won the title with Mattias Ekström. In 2007, the Swede triumphed again, followed by Timo Scheider in 2008 and 2009 – making Audi the first and so far only automobile manufacturer in DTM history to have managed a title hat-trick. Martin Tomczyk completed the success story of the Audi A4 DTM in the 2011 season with another title win – the fifth in total for the Audi A4 DTM. In 2013, Mike Rockenfeller in the Audi RS 5 DTM clinched DTM title number nine for Audi. Rene Rast caused a sensation in 2018 when he clinched another title for Audi in his rookie year. Audi took home the Manufacturer's Championship in the same year.

Pioneering achievements with TDI technology

With TDI technology Audi achieved a pioneering feat and, at the same time, demonstrated “Vorsprung durch Technik” once again. In 2006, the Audi R10 TDI featuring a new concept was the first sports car with a diesel engine to triumph in the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans. In total, TDI technology came out winning eight times at Le Mans. In 2007 and 2008, Audi was again victorious with the R10 TDI at La Sarthe. In addition, Audi won the American Le Mans Series with the diesel-powered racing sports cars three times in succession and, in 2008, the European Le Mans Series as well. With the R15 TDI Audi, in 2010, celebrated a one-two-three result in the fastest Le Mans race of all time and set a new distance record that has not been broken to date. In 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, Audi TDI power was again victorious at Le Mans. In 2014, the brand celebrated its 13th victory in just 16 participations. Audi demonstrates “Vorsprung durch Technik” in terms of energy efficiency as well. During the entire TDI era, Audi reduced diesel consumption by 46 percent within the space of one decade.

First hybrid winner at Le Mans

On clinching the first victory of a hybrid race car in the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2012, Audi achieved another pioneering feat in the world's most important endurance race. Three consecutive times (2012, 2013 und 2014) the Audi R18 e-tron quattro remained unbeaten at Le Mans. Many other innovations such as Audi Laser Light have been added to these pioneering feats in technology. The drivers' and manufacturers' titles won with the hybrid sports car in the 2012 and 2013 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) complete the track record in Audi's sports car era that ended in 2016.



Audi Sport customer racing for the brand's customers

The R8 LMS in 2009 marked Audi's first systematic development of a race car for use in customer sport. The GT3 sports car with a component content of more than 50 percent having been adopted from production instantly impressed. By the end of 2016, Audi delivered more than 200 race cars to customers. In March 2015, Audi presented the second generation of the successful GT3 sports car. It has won the 24 Hours at Spa and, even twice, the 24 Hours of Nürburgring, plus achieved other victories and championship titles. Since 2017, the Audi RS 3 LMS designed for the TCR touring car category has complemented the range down to the entry level. Starting at the end of 2017, Audi Sport customer racing will be offering a third model, the Audi R8 LMS GT4, primarily developed for gentlemen drivers.

Vorsprung durch Technik to continue

Audi will continue to race with electric power in 2019 and at the same time its factory-backed commitment in the popular DTM touring car series. In the 2017/2018 season, Audi was the first German automobile manufacturer on the Formula E grid. With four victories and eleven podium finishes in total Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler clinched teams' championship after twelve races. The commitment in the fully electric racing series that is currently experiencing a boom with the participation of additional manufacturers and partners forms the electric pillar of the motorsport program. In addition, Audi will continue to be active in the DTM and gripping motorsport with internal combustion engines. Next year, the DTM will see one of the greatest changes in its more than 30-year history. In 2019, modern turbocharged four-cylinder engines will be introduced in the series.