

## Date Of Manufacture

Why Is This Important.

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Judging Standards Committee

When was your Model A manufactured and why is that date important? Strictly speaking, it's not important unless you want to know how authentic your car is, want to restore it per the "Restoration Guidelines" or have it judged at a sanctioned Model A event. It also helps when purchasing parts since many 1928/1929 parts do not interchange with 1930/1931 parts.

The "Guidelines" require the car owner to write the year and month of manufacture on the window placard. This information is used by the judges to determine which parts/features are correct for that car. An incorrect month/year can result in major point deductions. Over the four-year production run, many changes were made. A part or component on an early car is correct for a certain period of time and then becomes incorrect on a later car. For example, a well restored STYLE P1 Powerhouse Generator would receive full points on a December 1927 car but would be an incorrect part on an October 1930 car, requiring a point deduction.

Every time I have judged at a regional or national meet, cars have lost points because the owner did not completely fill out the placard or did not select the best date for his Model A. The owner has quite a bit of latitude in the date to select.

So where do you start? Most start with the engine number (Figure 1) as it is easiest to find. The "Guidelines" list the engine manufacture date for all engine numbers by month and year. When the Model A was produced, the engine and frame number (Figure 2) matched. The frame number is hidden by the body. Additionally, some 1928/1929 gas tanks had date stamps on them. Lastly, title information may also be helpful in determining the original engine number. It is best to try and corroborate all information at this time. Over its 80+ years of life, the engine, body, and all components could have been changed.



Assuming you've determined the original engine or frame number, the vehicle assembly date could be as much as 3 months after the engine production date (4 months in 1931) and 6 months for commercial vehicles.

This will provide a range of year and month of manufacture, which would be correct for your engine block. If you have determined that your engine number is not original to the car, your range broadens and you could accept point deductions for the engine block.

Once you have determined a range of dates to consider for your vehicle, one way to help ensure you score the maximum points is to assess all the parts and components you have against the dates and charts in the 23 areas of the "Guidelines". I like to make a table with an X for a correct part and an O for an incorrect part. For example, assume you are using engine #1000 manufactured in December 1927. This engine would be correct for December 1927, January 1928, February 1928, and March 1928.

Area/Part	Points	Dec. 1927	Jan. 1928	Feb. 1928	Mar. 1928
1. Engine	40				
Block		X	X	X	X
Carburetor		O	O	X	X
Intake manifold		O	O	X	X
2. Elect.	25				
Starter		X	X	X	X
Light switch		O	O	O	X
Distributor		X	X	X	X
Generator		X	ok 2 mo. rule	ok 2 mo. rule	O
3. Cooling	15				
Fan shroud		O	O	X	X
Water pump		X	X	X	X
Fan		X	X	X	X

Continue to assess the remainder of the 23 Areas in a like manner. Next, look at the scoring sheets on the MAFA website to project how many points will be lost for each incorrect part. Then select the date that gives your vehicle the most points.

In the partial example above, February 1928 and March 1928 are a tossup. Replacing the light switch with the earlier versions would give February 1928 a slight edge in points. Changing the generator instead of the light switch would give March 28 a slight edge.

This may seem like a lot of extra work, but after all the time, money and effort you put into your restoration, the extra effort will put your vehicle in its best light for judging. In any event, be sure to write the month and year on the window placard provided.