

unstoppable

IN TRANSIT!

Ford made history with the Transit that revolutionised the light commercial vehicle segment in Europe forever. It's been over 40 years now and the Ford Transit is here to stay...



The one that started it all
- the 1965 Ford Transit

Edition 11 of a special CV series by

 **APOLLO TYRES**



This is how the Transit has looked since 2006 - a representation of Ford's new style with sharper styling and a revised cabin



The Ford Transit is the International Van of the Year 2007!



The first Transit on the third platform displayed styling cues from Ford's new edge design theme that debuted on the Focus and Ka road cars

Seldom do such vehicles come with credentials as celebrated as the Ford Transits. Over 5,000,000 Transits have been produced since 1965 over a spread of just three basic platforms. The vehicle that has ruled the European minivan market for over 40 years has revolutionised the segment forever. The story behind the Transit is testimony to Henry Ford II's vision that brought together the engineering prowess of Ford of Britain and Ford of Germany to create a prototype for Ford's European market as we know it today. The two Ford subsidiaries were earlier in direct competition to each other with the Britain outfit pitching their Thames van against Germany's Taunus. The rest as they say, is history.

The very first Ford Transit was manufactured out of the company's Langley facility in Berkshire, England which was a base for building Hawker Hurricane fighters during the Second World War. The Transit's instant success meant that demand eventually exceeded supply and production was shifted to the Southampton plant where it continues to be made to this day. The Ford Transit's runaway success can be attributed to many things, but its broad track and heavily American-inspired styling was probably the biggest contributor. The Transit was a bold departure from conventional European commercial vehicles of the day and the design theme meant that it had tremendous advantage in load carrying capacity. Most mechanical components on the Transit were adopted from Ford's car range at the time and the sheer number of body styles was a big hit with the customers. Engine options were also widespread - an Essex V4 petrol engine in 1.7 and 2.0 litre versions was offered (though it didn't find many takers) alongside a Perkins 41bhp diesel powerplant. The Essex V4 was



APOLLO TYRES LTD.

unstoppable

Never wary of progress, never skeptical about success,
Never scared of challenges, never tired of trying,
Every step of the way we travel with our customers,
On the "unstoppable" journey to success.

later replaced by Ford's very own 'Tork' petrol engines. Later on, a long nose version of the Transit was produced to accommodate the longer diesel engine and also a 3.0 litre V6 which found buyers mainly with the Police and Ambulance services.

The van remained by and large unaltered till 1978 when it received its first major facelift in the form of a redesigned nose, better interiors and engine options. 1984 saw the introduction of the York 2.4 litre DI engine and subsequently, the model received another minor cosmetic job to the front end. The grille was now offered in rubberised black with integrated headlamp surrounds. The next major upgrade was on its way in 1986 and a revised platform saw the Transit see light of day as a one-box design. Engine options were carried over from the previous generation

although in 1989 the 3.0 litre V6 was replaced by a Cologne 2.9 EFI V6. Barring the chassis cab and long wheelbase versions, the model range now was outfitted with independent front suspension. Ford kept on updating the Transit in subtle fashion and by 1992, all models across the range had the updated independent front suspension. Evolution continued and another facelift was made in 1994 with a new nose, dashboard and a host of newer and more modern engines.

The third and current all-new platform for the Transit was finally introduced in July 2000 and had cues that showcased Ford's new edge design theme that had debuted on their Focus and Ka passenger cars. The biggest highlight of this third generation Transit was the fact that you could order it in either front or rear wheel drive trims and the introduction of the Duratorq diesel engine and 2.3 litre 16-valve petrol engines. The Durashift automatic transmission was also introduced with a specially adapted manual mode, tow-haul mode, economy mode and winter mode. The Transit was given its final facelift in 2006 which featured more modern and sharp styling than ever seen before. The changes included new headlights, tail lights, new interior with the gearshift on the dashboard and an incorporation of Ford's new design. This version of the Transit that continues to be produced to this day has won the International Van of the Year award in 2007. The Transit changed the face of the light transportation industry in Europe and continues to dominate amidst stiff competition from other auto makers to this day. What started back in 1965 is today the biggest success story in its segment. With such unmatched versatility and practicality that has seen more success around the world than any other vehicle in its class the Ford Transit van is truly unstoppable!