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DODGE CHARGER R/T
THE SPIRIT OF FAST & FURIOUS

For fans of *Fast & Furious*, the Dodge Charger R/T is an extension of Dominic Toretto. It is almost unthinkable to see one without the other in the popular movie series. Now it's time to discover the secrets of this incredible machine, which even Toretto himself was once too scared to drive, generating 375hp, capable of doing 0 to 60mph in just six seconds and whose beautiful bodywork and unmistakable roar never cease to amaze.

We've heard it roar with fury, move at breakneck speed and perform the most unusual acrobatics in the various instalments of the *Fast & Furious* saga, of which it has become a true symbol. It is, of course, the one and only 1970 Dodge Charger R/T. Few other vehicles are as distinguished as this, and as such it has been able to give the concept of speed a new meaning. But the iron heart of this 8-cylinder beauty began to beat long before its heroic appearances in Universal Pictures' popular movies. To discover the true origins of the Charger, a line of American vehicles produced by Chrysler's Dodge division, we must go back to the 1960s.

EVERY CHARGER HAS ITS OWN STORY

Nowadays, it is impossible not to associate the classic Dodge Charger R/T with Dom Toretto, since the car has played an important role in the series since the very first movie, *The Fast and the Furious* (2001). Dom has a profound sentimental attachment to the car; when he was younger he modified it together with his father, who was later killed during a stock car race. For years, without the courage to drive it, Dom kept the Charger as a priceless heirloom, hidden away in his garage. However, when he finally puts the past behind him and gets behind the wheel of this powerful automobile, Toretto shows that no one was faster than him and his Charger.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE 'MUSCLE CAR'

World War II had put the brakes on the automobile industry in the United States, but after it ended, the market began to see a revival during the 1950s. By then, the young 'rebels without a cause' of the era, emulating James

Dominic Toretto's 1970 Dodge Charger R/T has become an icon of the *Fast & Furious* saga. The characteristic roar of its engine, jutting through the hood, thrills fans as soon as it resonates in the cinemas.

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At the time it was in production, Dodge launched a curious range of colours for the Charger R/T, but none were as popular as the black that characterizes Dom Toretto's car.

Dean, had begun to demand a different type of vehicle from that of their parents, similar to the throngs of car modifying street racers seen throughout the entire *Fast & Furious* series. They wanted something that would express their youthful identity: a car that would look sporty, was fast, powerful, and at an affordable price.

This growing demand caused several companies to start manufacturing so-called 'muscle cars'. They were vehicles with sporty bodywork and a 'muscular' quality that, despite having high-performance engines, came onto the market at very reasonable prices. It was a dream come true for the young people of the time. Thanks to this new supply, they could buy sports cars that they could use in their everyday lives on weekdays and, at the same time, race with their friends on weekends.

Chrysler Corporation wanted to be a part of the 'muscle car' fashion. In 1966, when families in the United States gathered around television to enjoy their favourite new fantasy series, such as *Star Trek* or *Batman*, Chrysler took the chassis of the Dodge Coronet, which had not sold well, and began production of the Charger, using the family TV shows to promote it. When it was officially unveiled, the new model was advertised as 'the Dodge rebellion', as the company's conservative aura was blown apart by a sports car that was to enter into direct competition with the Plymouth Barracuda, the Ford Mustang and other well-known vehicles of the time.

With its four-on-the-floor gearshift and a well-designed interior, four seats were included, despite it being a two-door car. The two back seats could be folded down in order to give a large loading area in the back of the car. This space, as fans of *Fast & Furious* well know, was just the thing for stowing nitrous oxide. The Dodge Charger, which was 5.17metres long and whose basic engine was a 5.211cc V8 generating 230hp, caused a sensation among young people. In 1969 alone, for example, a total of 69,000 Chargers were produced.

FASTER AND MORE FURIOUS

In the late 1960s, Dodge began working on a new version of the Charger, the R/T model, designed with a new, improved look than that of its predecessors. It featured a new wedge-shaped front, retractable glass fibre headlights, a more aerodynamic rear windshield, and a rear fin. Its popularity increased with the start of its movie career; it featured with great success in the famous police chase of the 1968 film *Bullit*, in which the protagonist, Steve McQueen, chases it down whilst behind the wheel of a Ford Mustang. It was the age of 'Dodge Fever'.

Like many other companies of the time, Dodge sought – apart from aesthetics – to create powerful and fast cars to satisfy its customers. Fuel consumption was not an issue, as gasoline was still very affordable. The only thing that mattered was speed. With this in mind, Dodge ordered new designs for the Charger from John Pointer, Chrysler's missile engineer. His ideas paved the way for the creation of the 1969 Charger Daytona, which went directly into NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) to test its power against other standard automobiles.

How fast was the Daytona? Dom Toretto demonstrated this in a dizzying sequence of *Fast & Furious 6*, in which he raced through the streets of London with his long-time friend, Letty. Behind the wheel of this incredible sports car, the star of the series reminded the audience that the Daytona was the first to reach and exceed 200mph, a land-speed record that would remain intact for years.

The 1969 Charger would become one of Dodge's most emblematic models ten years later when an orange version named General Lee – in reference to the well-known Confederate general of the American Civil War – appeared in the popular television series *The Dukes of Hazzard* (1979–1985).

AN UNEXPECTED BLOW

In 1970, to celebrate the turn of the decade, Dodge introduced some changes to the Charger, such as a large chrome grille loop that enhanced its front even more. In the same vein, the production of Special Edition (SE) models began, which had deluxe finishes, resulting in a classic that conveyed an image of arrogance, power and virility. No wonder that years later, the makers of *Fast & Furious* chose the 1970 Dodge Charger R/T to be the ideal partner for Dominic Toretto and, incidentally, the flagship of the entire franchise. Right from the first movie, Toretto demonstrated the enormous power of his 'furious' vehicle, capable of even doing a wheelie when speeding away from traffic lights.

In *The Fast and the Furious* (2001), Dom Toretto showed his own private treasure to Brian saying: 'Me and my Dad built her. 900 horses of Detroit muscle. It's a beast!'. Later, he explained that his father had managed to do a time of nine seconds flat on the popular Pomona racetrack (California). 'So much torque, the chassis twisted coming off the line. He barely kept it on the track'– a marvel whose fury caused even Toretto himself to respect it.

DIFFERENT LINES

Despite the effects caused by the oil crisis in the 1970s, Dodge remained determined to keep the Charger among its most outstanding models. However, in the following decades it underwent significant changes.

Currently, the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat is particularly successful, producing more than 850hp and reaching over 200mph, numbers that have led many to consider it the fastest sedan in the world. Its power was perfectly reflected in the epic finale of *Fast & Furious 6* when, after proclaiming 'Ride or die', Dominic Toretto, at the wheel of a beautiful Hellcat, hurled himself after a huge military aircraft in one of the most awesome chases in the series – pure adrenaline!

The close ties that this line of vehicles has maintained with *Fast & Furious* can clearly be seen in one of Dodge's most recent advertising campaigns, in which the actor



With a stylish and sporty design, the Dodge Charger R/T is one of the classic 'muscle cars', which have achieved so much success in the US since the late 1960s.

Vin Diesel plays Dom's iconic character Toretto in three ads behind the wheel of a Challenger SRT Hellcat, a Charger SRT Hellcat and a Durango R/T, respectively.

NEW MODEL, ORIGINAL PARTS

Transformed into one of the main characters of *Fast & Furious*, the iconic black Dodge, modified with an engine that protrudes above the hood and nitrous oxide tanks, has appeared in most of the movies in the series, although in some of them it ended up smashed beyond recognition. For this reason, shooting each new instalment was a major challenge for Dennis McCarthy. Since the third movie, *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift* (2006), McCarthy and his company, Vehicle Effects, have worked on preparing the vehicles that are due to appear in each film. This made it possible to recover the old 'treasures' in the new movies. For example, after Toretto's famous Charger R/T was destroyed in the final race of the first movie, Letty appeared to be refitting the same vehicle in *Fast & Furious* (2009 – the fourth instalment), expressing her desire for Toretto to return to the US from exile as soon as possible.

Given the nature of the series, which always includes a huge number of races, crashes and vehicular acrobatics in every movie, on average six models of each vehicle are usually needed, and they don't all come out unscathed! For example, of the original Chargers employed in *The Fast and the Furious* (2001), only one survived, which can now be seen on the Universal Studios guided tour. For the following instalments, McCarthy had to travel across the United States in search of parts that would allow him to assemble new models of the 1970 Charger R/T. The difficulties in obtaining them led the team to make a glass fibre mould of the bodywork.

The magic of cinema and McCarthy's skill have allowed us to enjoy the Dodge Charger in absolutely incredible scenes, like watching it parachute from a plane or drive at breakneck speed over the ice.



Throughout the series, various types of Charger have been used, some with visible modifications in their designs.

Parachuting Charger

In *Fast & Furious*, Toretto pulls off some outrageous stunts with his Dodge Charger R/T. Perhaps one of the most surprising was seen in the seventh instalment, when Dom, his crew and their vehicles were dropped by parachute from a C-130 cargo plane. The real problem arose when the movie's director, James Wan, decided to shoot the scene for real without resorting to digital effects. With the help of the US Air Force, which provided them with military-grade parachutes used for launching heavy objects, like tanks and Humvees, the team modified all the vehicles in the sequence, including the Charger, putting the engine at the back to balance its centre of gravity. The vehicles were dropped without drivers inside them, and a group of professional parachutists filmed the scene. Afterwards, the vehicles were suspended with cables from a 300-ton crane to film the remaining 'airdrop' scenes.



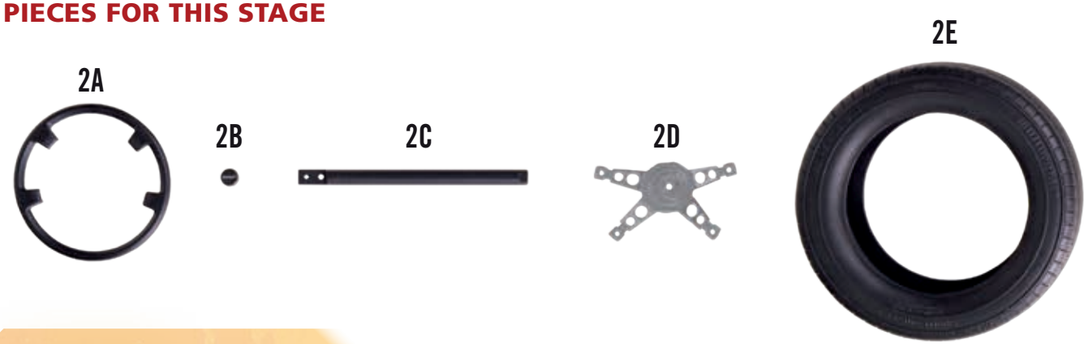


STEERING WHEEL AND FIRST WHEEL

Here we will show you how to assemble the steering wheel and the front left wheel of your Charger R/T.

Editor's note: The parts shown here may differ slightly from the parts supplied with this issue. This does not affect the quality or the assembly instructions in any way.

PIECES FOR THIS STAGE



- 2A Steering wheel
- 2B Steering wheel hub cover
- 2C Steering column
- 2D Steering wheel spokes
- 2E Front left tyre
- 2F Wheel rim (outside)
- 2G Tyre valve
- 2H Wheel rim (inside)
- 2I Wheel hub washer
- 2J Wheel hub cover
- BM Flush screw 1.7 × 4 mm (× 5)*
- CM Screw 1.7 × 3 mm (× 2)*
- HM Screw 2 × 3 mm (× 4)*

* Some of the parts are spares.

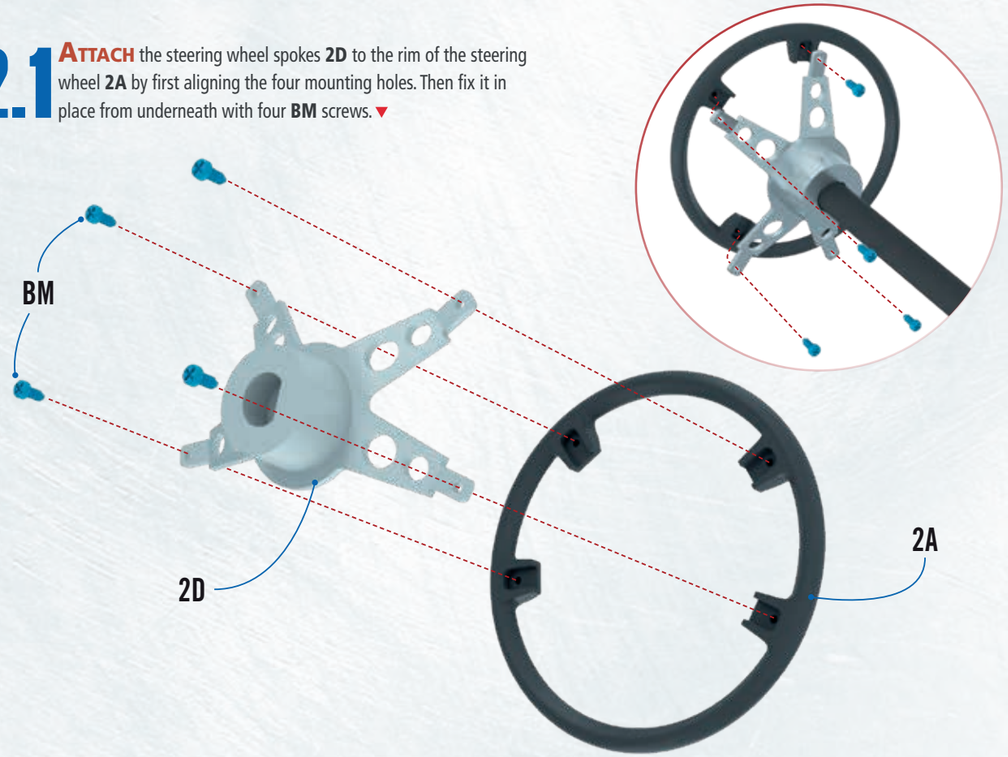
ASSEMBLY AREA

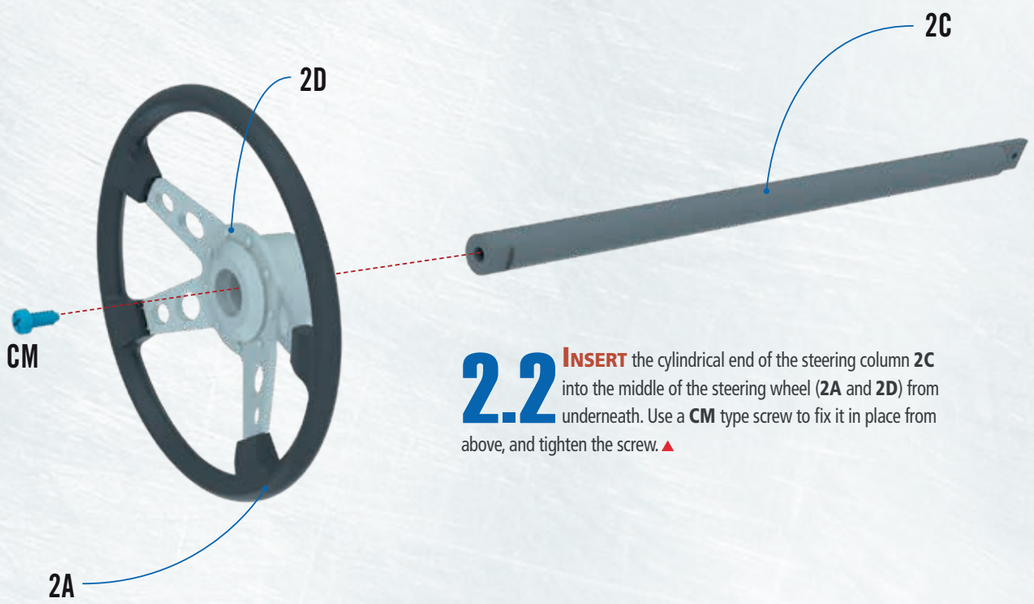


STEERING WHEEL AND FRONT LEFT WHEEL

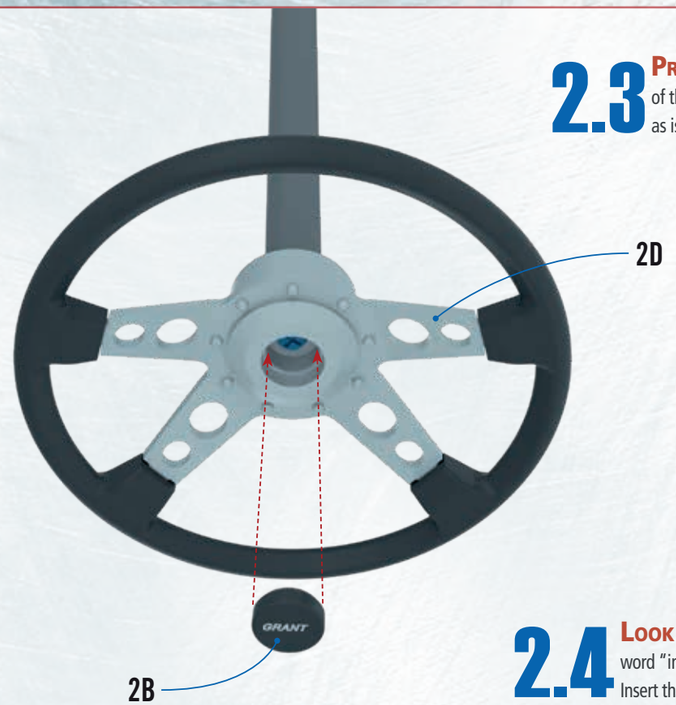
Steering wheel, and the first wheel and tyre

2.1 **ATTACH** the steering wheel spokes **2D** to the rim of the steering wheel **2A** by first aligning the four mounting holes. Then fix it in place from underneath with four **BM** screws. ▼





2.2 **INSERT** the cylindrical end of the steering column **2C** into the middle of the steering wheel (**2A** and **2D**) from underneath. Use a **CM** type screw to fix it in place from above, and tighten the screw. ▲



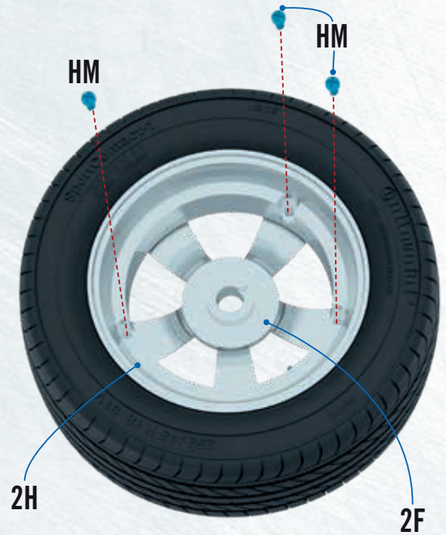
2.3 **PRESS** the steering wheel hub cover **2B** into the centre of the spokes, ensuring that it is positioned the same way as is shown in the illustration. ◄

2.4 **LOOK** at the front left tyre **2E**: on one side you will see the word "inside" written, and on the other, the word "outside". Insert the tyre valve **2G** into its slot in the outside rim **2F** and then push the rim into the outside of the tyre. Then insert the inside rim **2H** into the inside of the tyre. Make sure that you align the screw holes on the two rims before pressing them firmly into place. ▼

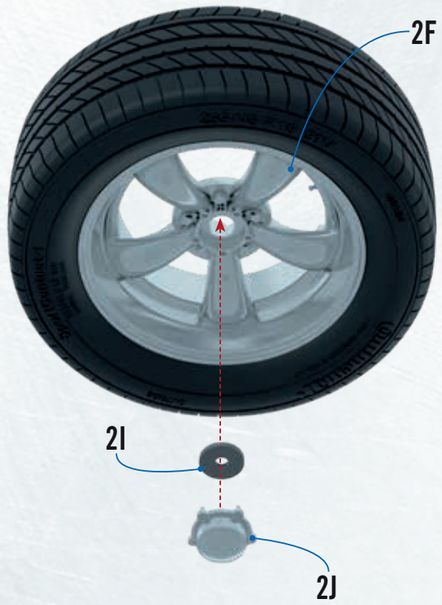


Steering wheel, and the first wheel and tyre

2.5 **INSERT** an **HM** screw into each of the holes in the inside of the wheel rim **2H**. Tighten the screws to join the two parts of the rim (**2H** and **2F**) together. ▼



2.6 **PLACE** the wheel hub washer **2I** into the centre of the outside rim. Then gently position the hub cover **2J** over the washer. But DO NOT press it firmly into the wheel hub yet, as you will need to remove it later. ▼



STAGE 2 FINAL RESULT



The result of your second assembly session is the steering wheel and front left wheel of your Dodge Charger R/T in a 1:8 scale. Put what you have built so far in a safe place until you are ready to mount the parts onto the model.

MUSCLE AND PONY CARS: THE KINGS OF TUNING



After the period when hot rods were all the rage – created using cars manufactured before the Second World War – a new kind of automobile, that was ideal for customisation, appeared in the 1960s: powerful two-door coupés, which soon became legendary.

As we have already seen, tuning originated in order to give cars a unique, unmistakable character that, besides demonstrating excellent technical quality, expressed the personality, the ideals and even the philosophy of their owners. Whatever the style chosen, the aim was always to go beyond the standardised idea of the mass-produced car, regardless of what type it was. In the 1950s, the easiest option was to use cars manufactured before the Second World War, by then very affordable because their technology and design had become obsolete. In the two decades after the war, anybody could buy an old Ford and turn it into an unrecognisable hot rod. It would have been inconceivable and expensive to take a recently manufactured car and completely transform it. By the 1960s, however, old Ford Model Ts were few and far between. Luckily, American car manufacturers finally realised that their buying public was far broader than just middle-class families. Young people wanted cars that would make them dream, that would excite them. They wanted cars that they could drive at high speed, to give them a feeling of freedom, a certain idea of going against the rules of society. The keywords were speed, power, and acceleration. In the previous decade, the American car industry had been hard-pressed to provide such characteristics. Nonetheless, other cars, very different to the huge, comfortable, humdrum saloon cars the youngsters despised so much, did exist in the United States. Unlike on the Old Continent, racing cars did not run on tracks with bends and straights, but on oval-shaped circuits. They also raced over short distances, generally a quarter of a mile.

After the age of the hot rods, in muscle cars fans found new material with which to create their works of art. In the photograph we can see a Hudson Hornet, a true icon of this type, with a chopped roof.

Muscle and pony cars: the kings of tuning



The design of muscle cars was inspired by the modified cars that took part in street races.

A Pontiac Firebird modified with extra air intakes on the bonnet. Pony cars were the successors to the American muscle cars of the 1960s and 70s.

They were tests of pure acceleration and speed that could be considered the direct forerunners of today's drag racing. These races became very popular just after the war. They were illegal for several years, until 1951, when the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) was founded and the regulatory framework was created.

ENTER THE MUSCLE CARS

Despite their power, dragsters were relatively simple vehicles. Although they did not incorporate very sophisticated technical ideas, they had the power to excite, and this led a growing number of youngsters to break the law and organise secret races in order to find out what it felt like to drive so fast.

Manufacturers saw opportunities in the trend and offered models built with some of the same features as dragsters. In 1949 the Oldsmobile Rocket 88 appeared, a two-door coupe with a 5-litre, V8 engine. It was followed shortly afterwards, in 1951, by the Hudson Hornet. Both were very popular, and many units were modified to take part in the races and competitions that were held all over the United States.



Gradually. the cars began to assume a configuration that became a popular standard: two doors, a V8 engine, rear-wheel-drive, mid-size, and aggressive styling. A name had to be found for these new vehicles: to start with they were called supercars, although in no time at all they became known as 'muscle cars'.

They very soon showed their worth and satisfied the needs of part of the market. But they had their limitations. For a start, their design owed a great deal to racing cars. The muscle car was designed to travel in a straight line. It had to be relatively inexpensive, so it could not be very sophisticated. Manufacturers tried to beat their competitors with extra features - and, of course, with extra power. Some engines produced as much as 450hp. Many muscle cars that had a few minor modifications were race-ready. Their reputation and popularity was growing.



The Oldsmobile Rocket – customised here – became, together with the Hudson Hornet, the typical American muscle car.

In the early 1970s the muscle car bubble burst, partly because of the oil crisis that forced muscle cars with high fuel consumption off the road, and partly due to the sums demanded by insurance companies. The cars were considered to be racing cars despite the fact that they were driven in towns and cities.

And on top of all that they had to deal with an increasingly tough competitor: the pony car.

THE PONY CAR CRAZE

A new type of vehicle appeared in the mid 1960s that completely revolutionised the car manufacturing industry in the United States: the pony car. Once again, the aim was to satisfy the needs of younger consumers, who wanted inexpensive cars, but with plenty of power. At the start of that decade, the public had welcomed sports versions of family saloons (such as the Monza, developed from the Chevrolet Corvair). The way forward seemed obvious. It was Lee Iacocca, who would later become



At SEMA 2014, this magnificent 1968 Dodge Charger was on display, highly modified and equipped with a huge V10, twin-turbocharged engine.

President of Ford Motors, who made the first move. He created a sports car with a stylish look and great performance, derived from the mass-produced parts of the Ford Falcon and the Ford Fairlane.

The Mustang was presented to the public on 17 April 1964 and was a massive unexpected success. They had hoped to sell 100,000 units in the first 12 months, but in just 18 months, more than one million Americans bought one.

No muscle car had come anywhere near these sales figures. Of course, the other manufacturers did not just sit there twiddling their thumbs, and before long the roads of the USA were filled with Mustangs, Chevrolet Camaros, Plymouth Barracudas, Dodge Challengers, Pontiac Firebirds, AMC Javelins …

A new kind of car had been born: the 'pony car' was an affordable, American-made sports car that was stylish, compact in size, and with above-average performance. The origin of the term "pony car" came from the Ford Mustang. Its unique size and engineering defied the existing list of classifications, so a new title was invented, referring to the badge and the car's performance.

For much of the 1970s, these cars were a young man's dream. But just like the muscle cars, the oil crisis and the increased price of insurance hit sales. In later years, the situation was further complicated, when more powerful and more expensive larger models began to appear that finally put an end to the pony car era.

Pony cars, however, had become legendary. Many enjoyed a new lease of life after 2000. In the 21st century they became one of the best options for tuning, as they possessed characteristics that were ideal for customising and tuning.

The pony car phenomenon crosses the oceans

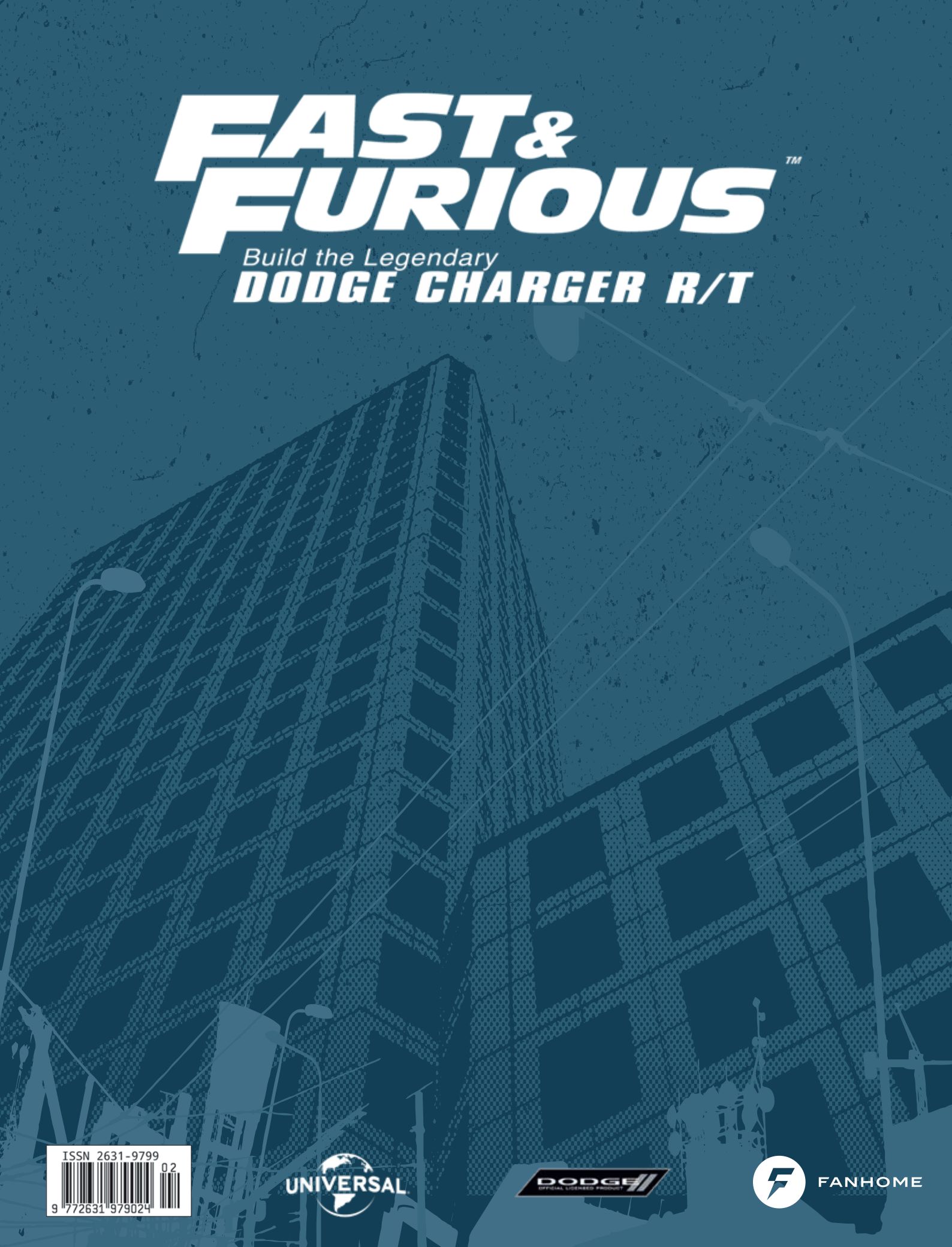
The success that pony cars had in America crossed the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and had a major impact in Europe and Asia. While on the Old Continent there was a solid, consolidated history of sports cars, in the Land of the Rising Sun they caused a sensation. In Europe, Ford tried to replicate the success of the Mustang with the Capri, a very popular coupe. In Japan, on the other hand, it was decided to create a car similar to a pony car that would meet the same needs as in the USA. This was the Toyota Celica (in the photo), a model that occupies a place of honour in the history of the automobile. Including the first version, which was very successfully launched in 1970, there were seven generations of this model, which remained in production until 2005.



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