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## Here's why the Bugatti Veyron's top speed was exactly 407 km/h

**Lead**

20 years ago, the W16-powered Bugatti Veyron took the crown of the world's fastest production car with a top speed of 407 km/h. But why did they stop at this seemingly arbitrary number?

It wouldn't be a stretch to say the Bugatti Veyron kickstarted the horsepower wars that have been raging right up until the debut of the latest Bugatti speed machine, [the 1,800hp Tourbillon](#). Back in 2005, the Veyron's 1,001hp output from its 8.0-litre W16 was almost inconceivable, as was it's mind-boggling 407 km/h top speed. However, why was did this seemingly random number become the Veyron's headline figure? Well, the answer lies with the driving force behind the Veyron's development: Ferdinand Karl Piëch.

Piëch wanted the Veyron to represent the pinnacle of human technology at the time, and that meant it would have to outrun one of his previous creations, the legendary Porsche 917, which had triumphed at Le Mans with a top speed of 406 km/h on the Hunaudières Straight. Naturally, that meant the target top speed for the Veyron was set at 407 km/h, but during testing at Volkswagen's Ehra-Lessien proving ground, test driver Uwe Novacki managed an incredible 411 km/h. Thereafter, the Veyron managed several runs exceeding 408 km/h, but nevertheless, Piëch's target of 407 km/h had been achieved, cementing it as the Veyron's magic number.

**Gallery**

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