

## Famous vans in TV history

Those of us of a certain age have certain vans imprinted on our unconscious, thanks to the medium of television; think of the Mystery Machine, driven by Fred and The Scooby Doo Gang or the distinctive black van used by Hannibal Smith's A-Team. Younger viewers are being introduced to the less dynamic, but equally lovable van driven by Postman Pat. And possibly the least stylish hybrid van that we all remember has to be the 'Trotters Independent Trading Co' van driven by Del Boy from 'Only Fools and Horses'. In fact, this last van is so popular and so instantly recognisable that one of the three-wheelers actually used in the show has recently sold for £44,227.50. Let's hope the new owner has got cheap van insurance!

A recent poll by Toys R Us found that the Mystery Machine was the most popular fictional vehicle of all time. Although it has no official model or make, it is generally assumed to be a 'groovy' camper-van. The 'flower-power' designs and the Machine's slightly psychedelic paint-scheme help to capture an age of television that was seemingly innocent, yet hinted at 'extra-curricular' activities; just why was Shaggy so spaced out and hungry all the time and what was in those Scooby Snacks? Such is the Mystery Machine's popularity that a large number of camper vans, Chevy's, GMs, Fords and Dodges have been converted in tribute to the Scooby Doo Gang's wheels.

The A-Team's ride, by comparison, was less quirky and certainly had the edge on machismo. Their sleek, black van was as much a part of the team as BA Baracus, providing them with a home on the road and a seemingly endless supply of tools with which to convert old combine harvesters into flame-throwing tanks. With its instantly recognisable red stripe, this GMC van was more than just a getaway car; it became an icon of automotive popular culture that simply oozed class.

The Ecto-Mobile, used by the Ghostbusters in the films of the same name, may not have had the class of the A-Team van, but it promoted the idea of the heroes who were fighting odds that were stacked a mile high against them. A converted hearse, it obviously tapped into an alternative power source, enabling Dan Ackroyd and his gang to bust ghosts right, left and centre. Although used for less other-worldly purposes, Postman Pat's van is equally recognisable, having taken children's drawings as its inspiration. Originally, the bright red van used a generic crown symbol to represent the Royal Mail but, when the Royal Mail gave their consent for the logo to be used it was changed accordingly.

The celebrity van of the future, is likely to be somewhat different to these icons of the past - however, you may not notice from the outside. Conventional vans run from fossil fuels, such as diesel, whereas hybrid vans work from a combination of fuel and electrical technology. As well as all the benefits that are offered to the driver and his passengers, this also has a positive effect on the environment. Because they can run on a minimal amount of fossil fuel, the amount of carbon dioxide emitted by a hybrid van is much less than that of a standard vehicle. There is also less potential to run out of fuel at an inconvenient moment; because the hybrid van can charge its batteries as it runs, there should always be a reserve source to draw on when fuel gets low.

While celebrity vans from our past have been indelibly printed in our memories, it is hybrid vans that are likely to grace our screens in the future.

## About the Author

Julia Niven - Whether you need van insurance for private or business use, our click and buy service means you can arrange your [van insurance](#) online in minutes!

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