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Nissan: A brief history

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A look at Nissan and how they have developed over the years...

From humble beginnings in 1932, Nissan cars are now a stalwart on the UK's roads – the ubiquitous **Nissan Qashqai was the sixth most popular choice for new car buyers in 2019**, with 52,532 models sold. Nissan's also a leader in the electric vehicle market, with the LEAF and LEAF e+ showing most of the competition how it's done. It's a brand known for its value, comfort and reliability, but how did it get here?

The beginnings

Nissan was born in 1911 as Kwaishinsha Motor Car Works and was Japan's first domestic automobile manufacturer. The first car was called DAT, taken from the initials of the company's three investors and was entered into the 1914 Taisho Exposition. Fast forward to 1932 and the brand had changed its name from Datson to Datsun – 'son' in Japanese



meaning disadvantage. The year after, they bought 66,000m² of land in Yokohama City, on Japan's south coast, where the present Yokohama plant is sited, and automobile production began in earnest.

Cars that built a brand

In 1934, the construction of the Yokohama plant was completed, the company's name was changed to Nissan Motor Company, Ltd and the first Datsuns were exported to Asia and Central and South America. In 1937, the catchy-sounding Nissan Passenger Car model 70 was the first Nissan car to roll off the line.

In 1984, it was decided to market all Datsun cars under the parent brand's name of Nissan – a move which cost the company \$500million in rebranding and marketing. However, in 2013 – 30 years after killing off the brand – Nissan brought it back from the dead, initially just for the Indian market, but it now sells in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Russia and South Africa among others.

Nissan began manufacturing cars in the UK at their purpose-built plant in Sunderland, with the Bluebird rolling off the line first in 1986. The plant celebrated the production of its ten millionth car in June last year – a Vivid Blue Qashqai, complete with ProPILOT technology.

Along with the Qashqai, the plant also manufactures the Micra – it's second-most produced car – the electric LEAF and the crossover Juke – all models that can be leased, brand new, through **ZenAuto**.

Looking ahead

So, where does the Japanese brand see itself in the future? With the **ban on the production of petrol and diesel cars** looming ever closer, it seems only right that Nissan continue to be at the forefront of the electric revolution.

They'll continue to incorporate as much innovative technology as possible into their cars,



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including the Invisible-to-Visible (12V), which uses VR to highlight objects that are just out of vision to enhance driver awareness, as well as making driving more “convenient, comfortable and exciting.” With a forecasted launch of 2025, we won’t have too long to wait.

