

Phaeton (carriage)

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A phaeton (also phaéton) is a form of sporty open carriage popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Drawn by one or two horses, a phaeton typically features a minimal very lightly sprung body atop four extravagantly large wheels. With open seating, it is both fast and dangerous, giving rise to its name, drawn from the mythical Phaëthon, son of Helios, who nearly set the Earth on fire while attempting to drive the chariot of the Sun.

With the advent of the automobile, the term was adopted to refer to open touring cars,[1] which were in consequence referred to as phaeton-bodied.