

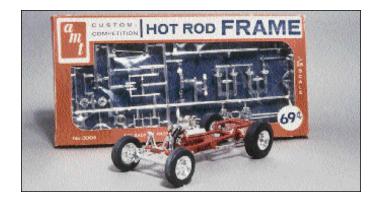
by TERRY JESSEE

-BUCKET. That's one of those immortal hot rod Ford Model T-based hot rod/street rod is one of is great both in stock and hot-rod form. the most timeless of custom car designs. The archetypal style is the fenderless hot rod popularized by such cars as Norm Grabowski's Kookie T and the famous Tommy Ivo T roadster. Many car people consider Henry Ford's 1932 model to be the real hot rod, but the Model T, procars and great models.

The Ford Model T topped many "Car of the Century" terms that any car nut will understand. The lists, so now is a fitting time to pay tribute to a car that

Model kits of the Ford Model T (and modified versions of it) have been prominent in model company catalogs since the early 1960s. My purpose here is not to provide a comprehensive listing of every Model T kit ever produced. Instead, I thought I'd show you some of duced from 1908 to 1927, was the basis for some great the milestone kits produced by AMT, Revell, Monogram, MPC, Lindberg, Aurora, and others.

AMT



The first T hot rod kit that most of us remember was AMT's ■ remarkable 1/25 scale 1925 Ford Double T kit, released late in 1960. At the time, the company was a virtual steamroller, with market domination headed by its 3-in-1 Customizing Kits and the success of the '32 Ford coupe, sport roadster, and '40 Ford coupe kits. Unlike the early deuce kits, the Double T featured separate suspension components and a detailed chassis. The engine was a big overhead valve Lincoln V-8, onto which you could add multiple carburetors or a

As a part of its Hot Rod Shop line of parts packs, AMT produced a series of T parts including an altered body and a tube frame. As was the case with Revell's Custom Car Parts, modelers could combine parts packs to produce complete models.



AMT produced several promotional kits for the Ford Motor Company in 1964 and '65. The '65 edition of the AMT Double T eliminated the chopped coupe in favor of a stock "phone booth" coupe body. That kit was rereleased as part of the company's Street Rods series. Rick Hanmore backdated this kit to reflect hot rod trends in the early '60s.

Latham supercharger. The kit contained two complete models, a stock roadster/pickup and a chopped coupe. Nearly 200 parts made more than a dozen different configurations possible. It was a great kit, and though it may seem dated now, it's still one of the nicest vintage Ford kits.

Later versions of the kit included a tall, unchopped coupe, a police paddy wagon, and a fruit wagon. In all cases, the kit still provided parts for two complete models – one stock and one street rod.

AMT produced several series of T kits, each based on different tooling, and all in 1/25 scale. The 1927 Phaeton series originated with the XR-6 version in '65. The custom version was Tex Smith's futuristic roadster powered by a Mopar slant six. Designed by Steve Swaja, the XR-6 was declared "America's most beautiful roadster" at the '64 Oakland Roadster Show. Also included in the kit was the stock T phaeton, which featured a "Tub" hot rod version.

The 1927 phaeton kit was rereleased around '68, this time without the XR-6. This kit's custom version was based on the touring car, but now included full fenders. Another variation on this platform was a vintage fire engine originally released as the "Cinder Bug," which featured parts to produce a small chemical hose wagon based on the '27 frame. Like all of AMT's T kits, it offered variations, including the street rod/custom parts from the original phaeton kit. The little T fire engine was also released as part of AMT's "Street Rod" series in the mid-'70s.

Probably the strangest custom variation of AMT's T touring kit was the "My Mother the Car" model, inspired by the shortlived mid-1960s NBC sitcom starring Jerry Van Dyke. When Hollywood customizer George Barris used a T-tub built by Norm Grabowski to produce the full-size "1928 Porter" for which the series was named, ÂMT performed appropriate modifications to its '27 touring and released this model kit in 1965. Advertising teamed it with the Munsters Coach and Dragula kits, billing them as the "Big Three on TV."

A third tool produced a new 1923 T roadster in the early '70s as part of AMT's "Street Rod" series. The '23 featured a completely different frame with multi-piece fenders, along with updated suspension parts and a small-block Chevy for the street rod version. The stock version included separate vinyl tires on spoked wheels that were much heavier than those in the '25 versions. Other versions of this kit included the Depot Hack and Delivery Truck. In the original hack version, the instructions provided a custom tip that suggested using the street rod parts from the '23 roadster to build a rod version of the hack. The tip even included a concept drawing.



AMT's Double T kit included parts for two complete models, a stock T roadster and a chopped coupe hot rod. It was also possible to build the hot rod as a roadster.



AMT has produced a number of different T kits over the years. The company's first was the 1960 edition of the Double T with the chopped coupe option. Subsequent kits included the '27 phaeton and fire engine, and a retooled '23 roadster which appeared in the early '70s.



AMT/Ertl rereleased MPC's famous Marcellus & Borsch Winged Express as part of its Buyer's Choice Program in 1997. The kit sold out quickly. Bill Coulter photographed this example built by Barry Payne.

AMT offered a wide selection of car-parts packs in its mid-1960s Hot Rod Shop releases, a program probably inspired by Revell's Custom Car Parts. Among those packs was a T-Bucket with "tub" wheel cutouts and an all-new T frame. The T-Bucket body could be used on the T frame or on the Fiat frame from the Double Dragster kit.

Of all the model companies, AMT probably produced the widest variety of Ford Model T kits. Sadly, none appears in AMT/Ertl's current catalog.

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MONOGRAM

Monogram's earliest T-Buckets were the Green Hornet and the Black Widow pickup. Great kits for their day, they were eventually eclipsed. The Black Widow, for example, had a solid rear axle mounted directly to the chassis! The Green Hornet was reissued in 1996, but the Black Widow has never reappeared.

Monogram's Big T was a sensation when it was released in 1962. The kit cost almost \$11. Currently, original editions of this kit can sell for as much as \$400!

Monogram also produced the "Son of Big T." The original edition of the 1/24 scale Little T included extra parts to produce smaller versions of the Big Drag and Big Rod, as well as a turtle deck and a trailer. This kit was rereleased in 1998 as the Boomer Bucket.





Monogram was at the table early, too, although its kits weren't quite as sophisticated as AMT's. Its 1959 1/24 scale editions of the '27 Black Widow pickup and '24 Green Hornet roadster offered modelers high-fashion hot rods with street and drag racing versions. The kits were equipped with full moon-style wheels wearing tires that looked a little oversized. Still, they were fun to build and paved the way for even better kits.

Monogram had introduced a 1/8 scale Chevy small-block V-8 in the 1961 product line. Modelers liked it, but asked whether Monogram planned to produce a model to put it in. Interest was so keen that Model Shop Supervisor Roger Harney convinced the company's management to produce a T-Bucket and a series of "hop-up" kits for it. Those kits formed the basis of Monogram's successful and now-legendary 1/8 scale product line.

In 1962, Monogram stunned the hobby industry with the release of the enormous 1/8 scale Big T. Roger Harney designed the '24 pickup with input from car customizer Daryl Starbird. Several versions were available, including the Big T, Big Drag, and Big Rod. Another version was the Big Tub, a wild touring car. These are among the best known and loved big scale kits ever produced.

Monogram also introduced a 1/24 scale version of the T kit called the Little T. The Little T came with parts to match all of the Big T kit versions, including a pickup box and turtle deck. It also included a simple gas tank for the Little Rod version and drag parts for a racing version like the Big Drag.



LINDBERG



Like Monogram, Lindberg introduced a T hot rod kit early. The company's catalog listed a Model T-based hot rod kit as early as 1959, but it was a simple kit and not well detailed.

Lindberg introduced two versions of a more complex 1/32 scale 1924 T-Bucket pickup kit around 1961. One version was motorized. Although not up to current standards, this kit is fun to build and

Lindberg's Tall T Coupe was based on the Joe Cruces Tall T that appeared in many car magazines. Like many of Lindberg's kits, it was produced in the odd scale of 1/27.5. The T was another of Lindberg's motorized kits; it featured custom spoked wheels and a simple flathead V-8 engine.

looks good alongside its contemporaries from AMT, Revell, and Monogram. Lindberg's T-Bucket kit was released in nearly a dozen different editions.

A tall T coupe followed, but it was in an odd scale, about 1/27.5. Again, this model was designed to be motorized. It's fairly simple, but cute when assembled. Lindberg's T coupe was equipped with a triple-carburetor flathead and wire wheels. Comparing the model to photos in car magazines of the day suggests that the T coupe was inspired by Joe Cruces' "Tall T" show car which appeared in *Rod & Custom* and several other hot rod magazines.

Lindberg also did a big-scale T kit. The 1/8 scale T-Bucket was produced under several different names including the Tiger T and the Big Red Rod. The Big Red Rod was rereleased in 1998 in a limited

Lindberg produced T kits in scales ranging from 1/32 to 1/8. The firm's motorized T Roadster was an early effort that included a simplified chassis for the electric motor. Lindberg introduced a completely different T-Bucket kit around 1961. That kit featured better detail and offered multiple versions, including a drag car. The Tee Wagon shown is a '70 release; it features some great box art. The Bobtail T was just one version of Lindberg's 1/8 scale T kit, a series which included the Big Red Rod and the Tiger T.

series of 5,000 kits. It's good to see the return of this classic kit.

Shelf space and cost were the major reasons why the 1/8 scale kits saw limited release. In 1963, the Tiger T had an astounding \$12.98 list price – almost *seven times* the cost of a 1/25 scale kit!



REVELL

Revell took a little longer to enter the T market. Under the guidance of Research and Development Director Jim Keeler, Revell introduced Ed Roth's T-inspired Outlaw kit in 1962. The Outlaw has been reissued several times in its original form, but there were other versions, too. In about '72, Revell changed the model's induction system and rear wheels, added flame decals, and released the model under the name Canned Heat. In 1979, the kit was released again under Revell's Advent label as Yellow Fever.

Two years after the Outlaw, Revell introduced its only true T-bucket kit. The full-size Tweedy Pie, built by Bob Johnson, was featured in several car magazines. Ed Roth added chrome wheels, quad headlights, and some other new pieces to produce the '64 version of the car that Revell replicated in kit form.

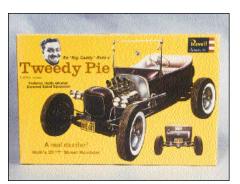
Revell's Custom Car Parts series included the Tweedy Pie body. With four or five packs, a modeler could build a T-bucket with magnesium wheels, slicks, a tubular frame, and a Chevy 283 cid engine. The only drawback was that it took almost \$5 to build the model – more than twice the cost of a standard kit!

The Revell T-Bucket saw limited release in a double kit as well. The Sanitary T altered and the Mooneyes dragster were essentially groups of Custom Car Parts packaged as complete kits in response to AMT's successful Double Kit series.

Revell's T-Bucket kit was rereleased several times, once as the Rodfather, once in the "Happy Days" kit series, and once in the Hot Rod series. Subsequent modifications eliminated a number of the original Tweedy Pie parts, one reason why the kit has never been reissued in its original form. Revell-Monogram recently introduced its Tweedy Pie II kit. The kit includes the unique Tweedy Pie deuce grille shell and the front axle with drum brakes from the original kit.

Another completely different Revell T kit showed up as part of a double dragster kit in 1964. Revell released its model of Tony Nancy's 22 Jr. in its first double kit. Assembling the custom "fiberglas" T body for the roadster is a classic exercise in frustration. On the whole, though, the kit is accurate and is really the only one of its type.

Revell went almost a decade before producing another new T kit,



Bob Johnson built the full-size Tweedy Pie, which Ed Roth revised to the version that Revell produced in kit form in 1964. Subsequent reissues eliminated many of the original parts, so the kit can no longer be released in original form.



Although Revell produced stock 1/32 scale Model Ts as part of its Highway Pioneers series in the 1950s, the company didn't offer any serious hot rods until Jim Keeler came in as Research and Development Director in 1961. The original '62 edition of Ed "Big Daddy" Roth's Outlaw featured incorrect lime-green decals, as shown in this photo by SAE contributor Bill Bozgan. Later versions had correct blue-green graphics.

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CAR KIT DOUBLE

but when it arrived, it was a good one. The company's rendition of Little John Buttera's 1926 T sedan is counted among the model kits that created a resurgence of model building by adults during the '70s. Buttera's car featured up-to-date suspension and interior appointments, and was powered by a Ford 289 cid Cobra V-8! Revell released a kit of the sedan in '75, followed by a touring version.

Revell has reissued the Buttera kits several times. Later releases featured a sedan delivery conversion. The last release of the Buttera T was a 1927 touring car with updated wheels and tires that Revell introduced in '94. All of Revell's kits have been 1/25 scale.



John Buttera was known as a fabricator of Funny Car chassis. He applied his talents to a pair of T street rods, a phaeton, and this sedan. Revell released kits of both in 1975. The sedan is scheduled to be reissued this summer.

MPC

MPC's first T-Bucket kits were actually introduced by AMT. These kits are replicas of Don Tognotti's King T and Joe Wilhelm's Wild Dream. both of which were popular show cars in the mid-1960s.

Revell's parts packs

series of double kits

that were similar to

AMT's Double Drag-

ster. This kit fea-

tures the Sanitary

T-bucket and Moon-

eyes rail dragster.

were combined to

produce a unique



MPC's first T kits weren't even introduced under the MPC label. As a result of an agreement between West Gallogly and MPC's George Toteff, AMT had the right of first refusal for any new tooling that Toteff developed after he left AMT in 1963. His first T tooling was for a 1/25 scale double kit introduced by AMT late in '64. The kit included the King T and Wild Dream. The King T was a '14 Ford built by Don Tognotti, who went on to produce the Oakland Roadster Show. Wild Dream was a T-inspired hot rod built by customizer Joe Wilhelm. AMT released both kits in one box.

Once AMT's production run was completed, MPC was free to offer the models as separate kits the following year. The Wilhelm car was released as Wilhelm's Wonder.

MPC offered another unique 1/25 scale T kit in its Switchers series. That version provided for a roadster, coupe, or coach version, all engineered so modelers could switch parts back and forth between versions without gluing.

Parts from the King T and the Switchers kits were later recycled to produce the Li'l Evil T in MPC's street rod series, which featured a tie-in with the National Street Rod Association. Typical of MPC hot rod kits at the time, the model was a mix-and-match pile of existing parts, resulting in poor fit between the fenders and frame.

Another kit produced from many of those same parts was a tall T coupe street rod called the Blackjack T. It shared its chassis with the Li'l Evil T, but it fit the frame much better, and the model had a more realistic stance.

One of the best-known of MPC's T kits was the 1/25 scale Marcellus & Borsch Winged Express. The "Wild Willy Borsch" T was a favorite of drag racing fans and modelers alike. MPC also released a similar kit in 1/20 scale called the Altered T.



MPC later released the kits separately under its own label. The Wild Dream was given a new color scheme and renamed Wilhelm's Wonder. Many original MPC kits were modified to produce new versions later. This kit was redone as the Ice Cream Truck.



The Li'l Evil T kit was a 1974 tie-in with the new National Street Rod Association. MPC combined parts from the Tognotti T and the Switchers kit to produce this roadster. The fender assembly didn't fit the chassis, resulting in a wild forward rake.

AURORA

urora is most famous for its line of 1/32 scale hot rod kits. Most A were inspired by famous full-size cars. Aurora's T for Two coupe is a model of Joe Cruces' Tall T which was prominently featured in Rod & Custom and other magazines in the early '60s.

A second tall T kit was the four-door sedan. Aurora updated all of these kits in the mid-'70s with more contemporary wheels and tires. Many of the changes were introduced by Tom West.

Aurora did one 1/25 scale T kit. The company's double kit was fashioned after AMT's successful Double T, and featured a stock 1922 roadster with an East Coast-style hot rod. The street rod version, released in '63, was remarkable in that it offered both chrome and brass-colored plated parts. It was never reissued again.



Aurora's 1/25 scale **Double Deuce 1922** Ford kit was similar to AMT's Double T kit, but offered East Coast flavor for the roadster version. First produced in '62, the Ts were released separately a couple years later, but were never reissued again.

THE OTHER GUYS

Even Palmer got into the T-bucket act with a little-known hot rod kit. The 1/32 scale Tiger Cat was much better than Palmer's general offerings. No chrome parts were offered, but the rest of the kit was relatively well done.

Another model that collectors seldom see is Hubley's metal T. Based on the chassis from the company's 1/18 scale Indianapolis race car model, this early 1960s T-bucket kit featured an Offenhauser four-cylinder engine and a custom grille shell. Hubley called it a deuce, but it's really a '27 T roadster body. Hubley's hot rod is another kit that has never been rereleased. The Ideal Toy Company (ITC), Pyro, and Entex also offered T kits.

When is a T not a T? One of the major problems with listing T kits is that so many models were T derivatives, like Hubley's metal hot rod kit. AMT's Munsters' Coach kit is another good example. To build the full-size car from Tom Daniel's design, George Barris stretched a fiberglass T touring body and fit it to an elongated version of a Model T street rod frame.

Many of the popular 1970s show car kits were based on the Model T. Tom Daniel's wild Red Baron is a combination of a giant chromeplated German helmet and a T-bucket body. More than a dozen of Monogram's Daniel-designed kits were inspired by early Ford C-cab trucks or T-buckets. Similarly, MPC's show car series featured cars which weren't really Ts, but were based on the T-bucket or C-cab style. Examples include the Hard Hat Hauler and Popcorn Wagon kits, which were rereleased by AMT/Ertl in 1998.

Like deuce kits, model kits based on Ford's Model T have been produced by the dozen. Stocks, customs, street rods, and show cars have all been offered. No matter what your modeling preferences, somewhere you'll find a T kit to please you.

Thanks to Ed Wright, Terry Thormahlen, Rod Wagner, Bobby Bennett, Bill Coulter, Barry Payne, Joel Block, Ted Kellison, and Rick Hanmore for their assistance with this article.

MILESTONE FOOD MODEL T KITC*

MITESIANE LAKA MINDEL I WII2.					
* This list is not comprehensive					
AURORA 1922 T double kit rod/stock 1/32 1912 T truck 1/32 1921 "T for Two" 1/32 1921 T roadster/coupe 1/32 1922 T sedan 1/32 1927 T "Sad Sack" rod 1/32 1927 T "Drop Out" Bus	568 629 527 626 622 507 551	* This list is not comprehen: IDEAL TOY COMPANY (ITC) 1925 T roadster pickup HUBLEY 1/20 T Sport Runabout 1/20 T Depot Hack LINDBERG 1/32 1924 T pickup 1910 T Open Body Torpedo 1924 T roadster pickup "Tee Wagon"	3872-9 n/a n/a n/a 6603 6301	"Carl Casper's Paddy Wagon" "Switchers" T coupe "Wild Willie" T altered	n/a 1781 0775 0766 102 or 0620 0619 1783 6066
1923 T roadster ("Street Rods Series") 1923 T Depot Hack 1923 T Delivery Van 1923 T Delivery Van ("Bell Telephone")	T-126 T-142 T-400 3264 2225	1925 "Tall T" coupe 1925 "Tall T" coupe motorized 1925 "T for Two" 1927 "T-Cup" pickup	1611 1611M 6109 6303	PALMER 1/32 "Tiger Cat" T-bucket PYRO 1/32 1915 "Pie Wagon"	247-50 C459
1925 "Tall T" coupe Double Kit 1925 T Double Kit (original) 1925 T "Fruitwagon" Double Kit 1925 T "Paddy Wagon"	125 T329 T319	1/8 "Bobtail T" 1/8 "Tiger T" 1/8 "Big Red Rod"	690M n/a 650	1/32 "Tiger T" T-bucket 1/16 "Tee Wagon" T-bucket REVELL	n/a n/a
1927 T/XR-6 Double Kit 1927 T Touring 1927 T Police Car 1927 T Fire Engine ("Street Rods Series")		MONOGRAM 1924 "Green Hornet" 1924 "Little T" 1927 "Black Widow"	PC61 PC92 PC60	1923 "Rodfather" roadster 1923 T Body "Custom Car Parts" 1923 T-bucket "Hot Rod" series 1923 "Tweedy Pie"	H-1444 C-1126 7137 H-1286
1927 T Fire Engine "Cinder Bug" 1927 T Touring "Laurel and Hardy" 1927 T "My Mother the Car" "King T and Wild Dream Double Kit" Custom Shop T-bucket body ENTEX 1913 T readstor (1/16 coals)	T-325 T-461 904 2164 3006	1927 "Boomer Bucket" T w/trailer 1927 "Street T" w/trailer (1975) 1927 "Uncertain T" "SweeTee" 1/8 "Big T" (1962) 1/8 "Big Rod" 1/8 "Big Tub "	2741 2200 PC134 n/a PC78 PC85 PC86	1926 Sedan "Li'l John Buttera" 1926 Sedan delivery "Street Demons' 1926 Touring "Li'l John Buttera" 1927 "Happy Days" T-bucket 1927 T Touring Ed Roth's "Outlaw" "Sanitary T/Mooneyes" Double Kit	H-1334 7373 7144 H-1282 H-1223
1912 T roadster (1/16 scale)	8469	1/8 "Golden T"	2609	"Tony Nancy" Double Kit	H-1224

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