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In a nutshell: The Audi F1 Project

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Audi and Formula 1

Audi to compete in Formula 1 from 2026

Audi will enter the FIA Formula 1 World Championship in 2026 with its own factory team and a drivetrain (“Power Unit”) developed in Germany. The long-term commitment to the pinnacle of motorsport is part of a comprehensive strategic renewal of the company, which aims to become faster, leaner, and more efficient overall. The Formula 1 project is a strategic flagship project that showcases the technological, cultural, and entrepreneurial renewal of the brand as well as its new design philosophy.

The timing of the entry has been deliberately chosen: new technical regulations in 2026 will pave the way for a significant realignment of the racing series. This means that the brand is ready for a new challenge after winning victories and titles in a wide variety of motorsport disciplines over the past decades. This tradition feeds into a technical innovative strength that repeatedly underscores the brand claim “Vorsprung durch Technik.”

The sporting DNA of Audi has been shaped over the course of more than a century of motor racing. From the successful participation in the International Austrian Alpine Rally between 1912 and 1914 to the Grand Prix successes and world record drives of the Auto Union between 1934 and 1939, it has been a long and successful road to modern times.

A major technological upswing began in 1981 in the World Rally Championship. Following the triumphant success of the Audi quattro and four World Championship titles, the brand consistently used motorsport to make its lead in production-relevant technologies visible. Whether it was the high-performance, turbocharged engines in TransAm and IMSA GTO, the quattro all-wheel drive on the circuit in the DTM and in the super touring car category, the powertrain technologies from TFSI to e-tron quattro in Le Mans, the first fully electric Audi in motorsport in the FIA Formula E or the first victory of an electrified drive in the Dakar Rally: Audi has always delivered pioneering achievements. To this day, the company is a pioneer in key areas such as drive and lighting innovations, aerodynamics, electrification and efficiency technologies. The ideas from Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm have regularly led to paradigm shifts in the industry. Motorsport has therefore always served as a first-class platform for presenting and developing this spirit of innovation to an international audience in exciting competition.

The involvement in Formula 1 is also set to continue the brand’s successful motorsport history. For the 2026 season, a generational change in the powertrain and chassis will set new priorities in the premier class of motorsport. Cost efficiency, greater relevance to road car production and the focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies, as well as closer and more exciting races, are key objectives of the new regulations. As all manufacturers must develop new racing cars and powertrains, the timing is ideal for Audi to enter the race as a power unit manufacturer with its own factory team.

Development takes place within an economically attractive framework: Following the successful introduction of a cost cap on the team side, such a budget cap now also exists for the development of the drivetrain. This ensures a clearly defined financial framework with reliable planning over the entire term of the regulation cycle. At the same time, Formula 1 is enjoying increasing popularity worldwide and appealing to new target groups.

In the F1 project, Audi is relying on two long-established locations with know-how specific specialization. The drivetrain comes from Neuburg an der Donau, not far from the AUDI AG headquarters in Ingolstadt. In the F1 Factory in Hinwil, Audi Revolut F1 Team develops and builds the racing cars. The Swiss location is also responsible for planning and executing race operations. In addition, a Technology Centre has been established in Bicester, England, in the summer of 2025. The team's presence in the so-called "Motorsport Valley" will give it access to additional F1 expertise.

Former Ferrari Team Principal Mattia Binotto is CEO and Team Principal of Audi Revolut F1 Team. The xxperienced Formula 1 manager reports directly to Audi CEO Gernot Döllner. When it comes to drivers, the company is banking on a combination of experience and youthful energy with seasoned racing driver Nico Hulkenberg and young talent Gabriel Bortoleto.

The Formula 1 commitment of Audi is long-term and has a realistic roadmap. The team aims to improve every year. From 2030, it should be able to challenge for World Championship titles.

Formula 1 is considered the toughest test lab in the world. The short development cycles, minimal chain of command and quick decisions are intended to serve as a model for the entire company. At the same time, Audi gains access to the latest technological developments and materials. Thanks to open competition, Formula 1 provides an environment for the development and testing of electrified powertrain technologies and for novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources.

The visual identity of Audi in Formula 1

Clear, technical, intelligent and emotional

With the presentation of the Audi Concept C, launched in September 2025, the company has made a clear statement: The future design philosophy of Audi is characterized by consistent clarity. The Audi F1 Project will be a pioneer for the new brand identity, which will be rolled out in the future both for the F1 team and Audi as a whole.

The visual identity of Audi Revolut F1 Team is based on the design philosophy introduced in 2025 and its four design principles: clear, technical, intelligent and emotional. At its core are the four rings which are the foundation upon which the rest of the brand is built.

The company's goal is to have the most striking car on the racetrack when it enters the pinnacle of motorsport. The brand's first Formula 1 race car, the Audi R26, is one of the first expressions of the brand's new visual identity

Minimalist graphic surfaces, defined by precise geometric cuts, integrate seamlessly with the racing car's geometry. The color palette features Titanium, Carbon Black and the newly introduced Audi Red.

The Titanium color was developed for the Audi Concept C and will play an important role in the brand's future color palette. It stands for performance and technical precision, which are rooted in the company's motorsport tradition, while also conveying a warm elegance.

With the identity for Formula 1 the brand introduces a new red – Audi Red, which will become a central distinguishing feature of Audi Revolut F1 Team. Audi will also sport red rings, used selectively to underscore its Formula 1 presence.

The new visual identity of Audi also plays a role away from the racetrack. The design experience extends beyond the car to the brand's entire F1 experience, from the motorhome to the fan and VIP areas, to the pit garage and team clothing.

Reactions to the entry of Audi into Formula 1

“We are writing a new chapter for Audi”

Formula 1 is more than just motorsport for Audi – it is a symbol of the transformation of the entire company and a catalyst for strengthening brand awareness among new target groups.

Gernot Döllner, CEO of AUDI AG: “Motorsport is part of the Audi DNA and has always been the driving force behind technological progress and innovation. By entering the pinnacle of motorsport, Audi is making a clear, ambitious statement. It is the next chapter in the company’s renewal. The start of our first Formula 1 season marks the beginning of a new chapter for Audi – both on and off the track. We aim to demonstrate what can be achieved when people work together towards a common goal. In this sport, where every millisecond counts, efficiency is crucial. It teaches us that focused, precise teamwork makes us strong. We face the challenges with courage and view this project as a driving force and motivating example to become better every day.”

Jürgen Rittersberger, CFO of AUDI AG: “Formula 1 is more than just motorsport. It’s entertainment, emotion, technology – and also a challenge. But it is precisely this combination that takes us where we want to go: inspiring new customer groups for Audi. With the enormous reach of Formula 1, we have the opportunity to attract new customers for our brand – especially in the younger target group, where Formula 1 is experiencing rapid growth. Thanks to the cost cap, Formula 1 is also more financially sustainable than ever before. When we look at the development of sponsorship opportunities, team evaluations, and the overall revenue potential in Formula 1, one thing becomes clear: This path makes perfect sense for Audi – also economically.”

Mattia Binotto, CEO and Team Principal Audi Revolut F1 Team: “The Audi F1 Project is the most exciting project in motorsports, if not in sports overall. The goal is clear: to fight for championships by 2030. That journey takes time, the right people, and a mindset of continuous improvement. Formula 1 is one of the most competitive environments. Becoming a champion is a journey of progress. Mistakes will happen, but learning from them is what drives transformation. That’s why we follow a three-phased approach: starting as a challenger with the ambition to grow, evolving into a competitor by daring the status quo and achieving first successes, and ultimately becoming a champion.”

Gabriel Bortoleto: “Being part of Audi feels like a dream come true for me. My big idol is Ayrton Senna. And it was Ayrton Senna who brought Audi to Brazil. When the Audi F1 Project started and I was given the chance to be part of it, it was like a gift for me. I am living my dream of driving in Formula 1 – and with Audi, a team that we are building from scratch. We will experience every moment together, the highs and the lows, until we become a winning team. We have the chance to make history together. That’s why I’m so committed to this project.”

Nico Hulkenberg: “Audi’s entry into the pinnacle of motorsport is a real statement. For me, as a German, representing such a major brand with a unique motorsport history is also something very special. You can sense that something big is happening here. The team’s energy and ambitions are impressive, and the project’s positive atmosphere is truly tangible. This is the beginning of a long journey, and that’s exactly what motivates me. 2026 will be a reset for everyone: new rules, new cars, and new opportunities. It’s essentially a blank slate, and that’s where the opportunity lies to build something special in the long term.”

Reasons for entering Formula 1

Ideal conditions

A number of important reasons create ideal conditions for the involvement of Audi in Formula 1, the pinnacle of motorsport. Many recent innovations are preparing Formula 1 for the challenges of the future and making it increasingly attractive for new target groups and therefore also for manufacturers.

Its global reach, technological freedom, financial regulations with a cost cap and its regulatory focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies create attractive framework conditions. Audi is entering this stage at an ideal time.

Global sports platform
Formula 1 has been a globally established sports platform for decades and, with more than 827 million fans, is the world's most popular sports series. In 2025, around 1.6 billion TV viewers watched the races. The sport is also booming live on site: 19 sold-out Grands Prix in the 2024 season and eleven new spectator records with a total of 6.75 million fans at the track underscore the global success of Formula 1. In addition to its proven high presence in traditional media, it is increasingly reaching young target groups. This trend is of great importance to Audi, as it particularly affects the core markets of North America, Europe and China.

Technology – "Vorsprung durch Technik"
Motorsport is an integral part of the Audi DNA. Technical innovations and the associated motorsport successes have shaped the brand. Audi wants to prove its technological leadership in the racing series with the greatest global reach and the most sophisticated racing cars in the world. Formula 1 is one of the few motorsport platforms that offers the necessary technical freedom for Audi to demonstrate its "Vorsprung durch Technik" expertise.

The regulations, in turn, allow Audi to continue the transformation of its motorsport program in Formula 1 that began more than a decade ago. So far, the brand has achieved three Le Mans victories on this path with the e-tron quattro hybrid drive since 2012 as well as two Driver's and two Manufacturers' World Championship titles in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). Audi has celebrated race victories and a team title in Formula E with the all-electric e-tron drive. The first victory of the four rings with electric drive, high-voltage battery and energy converter at the 2024 Dakar Rally was another milestone. The hybridized Audi F1 Power Unit "made in Germany" is to continue the brand claim "Vorsprung durch Technik" in the pinnacle of motorsport in the future.

Financial regulations
In 2021, Formula 1 introduced an effective cost cap for all teams. Since 2023, there has also been a spending limit for the development of the power units that will be used from 2026. The Audi F1 Project has therefore been subject to a budget limit from the outset. This enables long-term planning security, economic stability and a reduction in costs, which are necessary to be competitive.

Formula 1 as a test lab
Formula 1 is considered the toughest test lab in the world. The short development cycles, minimal chain of command and quick decisions are intended to serve as a model for the entire company. At the same time, Audi gains access to the latest technological developments and materials. Thanks to open competition, Formula 1 provides an environment for the development and testing of electrified powertrain technologies and for novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources.

The combination of high performance and sporting competition is accelerating innovation and technology transfer: the new technical regulations for the F1 drive systems focus on a modern hybrid concept. The output of the electric motor has been tripled and will be on a comparable level with the combustion engine, which will run on novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources from 2026. This means that around 50 percent of the drive power will then be provided electrically. The complex MGU-H of the current generation of engines, which converts exhaust gas heat into energy and is not relevant in road car development, will then no longer be needed.

The regulations stipulate that the fuels specially developed for Formula 1 could also be used in production vehicles without modification – a highly relevant field of research, as the combination of different types of drivetrains will continue to play an important role into the coming decade. Furthermore, the findings in the development of electrified components are important for the mobility of the future. Audi also expects to gain important insights into development processes and methods and quality assurance.

New cycle of regulations
Far-reaching changes to the technical regulations in Formula 1 from 2026 onwards provide Audi, as a newcomer, with the ideal opportunity to enter the pinnacle of motorsport. All competitors had to familiarize themselves with new framework conditions and technologies at the same time, both on the vehicle side and the drivetrains. The Audi entry therefore coincides with the start of a new regulatory cycle. That is why the conditions for a Formula 1 entry in 2026 have been more favorable than ever before in the past 30 years and, thanks to the cost cap, also financially attractive.

The appeal of Formula 1

Global platform

In recent years, Formula 1 has proven that it is willing and able to change fundamentally. Its aim was to adapt to new, broader audience needs. Within just a few years, the top category of international motorsport has attracted significant new target groups in this way. This growth impetus is reflected in rising spectator numbers and greater loyalty to the sport.

The traditionally high level of public interest in Formula 1 continues to grow: in 2025, around 1.6 billion television viewers followed the season on screen. A total of 6.75 million fans attended the Grands Prix worldwide at the race tracks – a new record. 14 of the 24 race events attracted more than 300,000 spectators, with 500,000 at Silverstone alone. 19 Grands Prix were sold out.

In addition to its proven strong presence in traditional media, Formula 1 is increasingly reaching a young audience via social media. The number of followers on social media channels has more than doubled between 2020 and 2025. New formats such as the Netflix documentary series “Drive to Survive” and the movie “F1® The Movie” starring Brad Pitt, have helped to make the sport attractive to a wider audience beyond its core sports-loving fan base. New partnerships with iconic companies such as Disney, Lego and the luxury goods group, LVMH, are also contributing to the growth of Formula 1. F1 Arcade, with its increasing number of gaming and event locations, and an official Formula 1 exhibition taking place at various locations around the world, are additional touch points.

Within just two years, the rights holders of Formula 1 succeeded in attracting new target groups to the racing series, thereby renewing the fan base by almost 50 percent. The increasing public impact has recently been particularly noticeable among young people in core markets of Audi, North America, Europe and China. 43 percent of Formula 1 fans are now younger than 35. In addition to these figures, a look at the audience structure is also revealing: the sport is attracting more and more women today. Almost every second fan today is female.

A program of 24 Grand Prix races on five continents ensures the sport’s global media presence and high continuity throughout each calendar year. New races in major cities such as Las Vegas and Madrid are opening up new target groups. And the list of cities and countries that would like to host a Formula 1 Grand Prix in the future is long.

Structure and locations

One project with three locations

To enter Formula 1, Audi has acquired the Sauber Group in Switzerland, founded Audi Formula Racing GmbH (AFR) in Neuburg an der Donau and opened a Technology Centre in Bicester, England. The Audi F1 Project is led by experienced Formula 1 manager Mattia Binotto.

Neuburg: F1 Power Unit made in Germany
Audi Formula Racing GmbH in Neuburg an der Donau, founded specifically for the F1 project, is responsible for the development and manufacturing of the complete drivetrain (hybrid drive including the gearbox). Thanks to the existing infrastructure at the Neuburg site, development of the Audi F1 Power Unit, labelled AFR 26 hybrid, was able to begin immediately in 2022 at the Audi Sport GmbH subsidiary, while comprehensive modernization and expansion was carried out at the same time. A new building with a floor space of around 3,000 square meters expands the test facility and houses specialized workshops and laboratories. In total, Audi has 22 state-of-the-art engine and component test benches in Neuburg.

From 2026, an F1 power unit will consist of the V6 internal combustion engine (ICE) with 1.6-liter displacement and turbocharging, an energy recovery system (ERS) including energy storage (ES) and electric motor-generator unit (MGU-K) as well as an electronic control unit (CU-K). This highly efficient powertrain, which runs on synthetic fuels or fuels produced from renewable biomass, reflects Formula 1's regulatory focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies. This was a prerequisite for the involvement of Audi.

Neuburg is the only operational site of an F1 project in Germany. It has a CO_2-neutral electricity and heat supply with TÜV-certified green electricity from hydroelectric power plants and district heating from industrial waste heat. In combination with compensation measures for unavoidable emissions, the Neuburg site achieves certified CO_2 neutrality. It is already certified according to the international management systems ISO 14001 (environmental management) and ISO 50001 (energy management). In addition, Audi Formula Racing GmbH has been awarded the three-star environmental seal of approval by the FIA, the world governing body of motor sport – the highest award for environmental protection and sustainability.

Concept development for the F1 drivetrain of Audi began in 2022. Just two years later, the complete power unit was dynamically tested on the test bench for the first time. Simulations and digital development tools were particularly important here, as there had been no opportunity to test the new powertrains on a race track until early 2026. The dynamic driving simulator, as well as digital tools and methods, therefore play an important role in development, similar to product development at Audi – and also in the future for the development of the drivetrain.

As with its driver team, Audi also relies on a mix of experience and young talent in the simulator in Neuburg. Swiss driver Neel Jani and Zane Maloney from Barbados support the further development of the Audi F1 Power Unit as simulator drivers. They help to compare model calculations with the real drivability in the simulator.

The new regulations open up a great deal of freedom in the area of the high-voltage battery and the MGU-K including the inverter (CU-K), which are key elements for the conversion of kinetic energy into electrical energy during braking. There are virtually no restrictions from the technical regulations in this area and there is maximum competition. Audi benefits in this area from its experience from other electrified motorsport programs since 2012.

The new fuels, which can be of either synthetic or biological origin, will bring additional complexity to development from 2026. All power unit manufacturers are entering uncharted territory in this field, meaning that the fuels could become a differentiating and competitive factor. Audi has been working exclusively with the British company bp on the development of the new fuels for Formula 1 since the end of 2022. Building on the technical cooperation, the companies have also agreed on long-term sponsorship. bp was announced as the first official partner of Audi Revolut F1 Team in July 2024.

Hinwil: Three decades of F1 experience
The race cars are being developed in close collaboration with AFR at the Hinwil site in Switzerland with race operations in Formula 1 being handled there too from 2026 onwards. Audi Revolut F1 Team is located around 30 kilometers from Zurich.

The Swiss team has been competing in the FIA Formula 1 World Championship since 1992 and brings the valuable wealth of experience from more than 30 years in the pinnacle of motorsport to the Audi F1 Project. The collaboration between Sauber and Audi also goes back decades: Audi already used the Sauber Group’s high-tech wind tunnel in Hinwil, just four hours’ drive away, in the Le Mans era and for the DTM Class 1 touring cars.

In October 2022, Audi confirmed the Sauber racing team as a strategic partner for the F1 project and a minority stake was announced at the beginning of 2023. In March 2024, the company went one step further: in preparation for the Formula 1 entry, the Supervisory Boards of Volkswagen AG and AUDI AG decided to take over the Sauber Group in its entirety ahead of schedule. Sauber AG thus became Audi Motorsport AG.

Sauber’s company history began in 1970, when founder Peter Sauber built his first racing car and won the Swiss Sports Car Championship in the same year. Following this first success, he decided to set up a workshop on the premises of his father’s company in Hinwil, Switzerland.

The small workshop has become a large industrial complex, which also includes its own wind tunnel building. The Hinwil site is being further expanded for the Audi F1 Project and staff numbers are also being increased.

Intensive technical cooperation takes place between Audi Revolut F1 Team in Hinwil and Audi Formula Racing in Neuburg to fully exploit the advantages and possibilities of a factory entry. The focus here is on integrating the power unit into the overall vehicle with important details such as thermal and energy management. There is also close cooperation on the transmission. Gear wheels and shift mechanics are developed in Neuburg, while structural parts such as the gearbox housing and rear axle are produced in Hinwil. During race weekends, the team on site is connected to Mission Control and the simulators in Hinwil (race car) and Neuburg (power unit).

Bicester: F1 expertise from the Silverstone area
A third location, a Technology Centre in Bicester, England, opened in July 2025. With its presence in the so-called “Motorsport Valley”, the project benefits from the F1 expertise in the Silverstone area. The location gives Audi Revolut F1 Team access to the world’s largest pool of motorsport know-how and talent.

The Technology Centre is based in Bicester Motion, a 179-hectare industrial park that is home to numerous companies from the automotive and aviation industries. The British association, Motorsport UK, is also based there.

Management: Internationally experienced management
Head of the Audi F1 Project is Italian Mattia Binotto, a experienced Formula 1 manager who reports directly to the CEO of AUDI AG, Gernot Döllner.

As CEO and Team Principal of Audi Revolut F1 Team, Mattia Binotto is responsible for development activities at all three locations. The mechanical engineer brings with him over 25 years of experience in Formula 1. Among the senior positions he held at Ferrari were Technical Director from 2016 and Team Principal from 2019 to 2022. His task at Audi is to achieve seamless coordination between the race car and the powertrain.

As Racing Director, former Audi factory driver and Formula 1 driver Allan McNish coordinates all trackside activities of Audi Revolut F1 Team. His remit includes oversight of sporting matters, engineering coordination, driver management, race strategy and garage operations, as well as media and partner activities and the lead of Audi’s Driver Development Programme, a key pillar of its long-term F1 strategy.

As Technical Director, James Key is responsible for the technical management, performance, and development of the team. He manages the technical operations from the team’s headquarters in Hinwil and oversees the concept, design, and construction of the chassis as well as the important aerodynamic development.

Thomas Fuhr serves as CEO of Audi Formula Racing GmbH, overseeing the Neuburg facility. He will draw on his engineering and leadership experience to further develop the organization and support its technical ambitions. Fuhr brings more than three decades of international engineering and leadership experience. From 2009 to 2012, he served as Managing Director of Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains.

As CTO of AFR in Neuburg, Stefan Dreyer heads the development of the Audi F1 Power Unit. The German has been with Audi since 1999. Among others, the experienced engineer has been involved in leading roles in the successful motorsport programs in LMP, DTM and the Dakar Rally. The COO in Neuburg with a focus on operational processes is German Christian Foyer. The graduate engineer for combustion engines has been working in operations and project management for various F1 teams and manufacturers for around 18 years.

Across locations: Vision 2030
The project, with its three locations and division into Audi Revolut F1 Team and powertrain development at Audi Formula Racing, is united by a clear vision: after a phase of development and consolidation, the Audi wants to be in a position to compete for World Championship titles in Formula 1 by 2030.

The project will be investing in five core areas in the coming years: personnel, processes, infrastructure, tools and corporate culture. Formula 1 is considered the most complex sport in the world – and it is driven by people. Technology is important. But it is the team that makes the difference.

When recruiting, those responsible do not rely solely on experience. Audi is building a team that grows and develops through fresh ideas and innovation. Targeted training programs and partnerships with universities promote promising young talent in all areas, who can grow thanks to a culture of trust within the team.

Within AUDI AG, the F1 project is intended to become a symbol of a new performance culture and a catalyst for internal change, characterized by teamwork, trust, efficiency and the pursuit of excellence. These values will shape the entire company in the future.

For all employees of the company, the Formula 1 commitment is intended to create pride, identity and enthusiasm and be a symbol of the transformation of Audi.

The regulations as of 2026

New rules from 2026

New guidelines for the chassis and engine in conjunction with a cost cap for the team and powertrain will give Formula 1 new impetus from 2026. The aim: more agile racing cars, more exciting competition and focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies.

Power unit
The V6 internal combustion engine (ICE) will have a displacement of 1.6 liters from 2026. However, the proportion of electrical power will increase significantly to 350 kilowatts, while the output of the combustion engine will fall to around 400 kW due to a reduction in the fuel energy flow. The electric side compensates for this accordingly, as energy recovery through recuperation increases significantly thanks to the more powerful MGU-K. The conversion of thermal energy into electrical energy via the MGU-H in the previous generation of vehicles will no longer be necessary from 2026, creating the conditions for making future drives less complex and more cost-effective. From 2026, the use of novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources will also be mandatory. This path towards CO_2 neutrality was a key prerequisite for the commitment of Audi.

Chassis
From this year, the Formula 1 racing cars are smaller and lighter: their wheelbase has been reduced by 20 centimeters to 3.40 meters, the overall width from 200 to 190 centimeters and the weight fell from 798 to 768 kilograms. Active aerodynamics are used for the first time. Under certain conditions, the driver can adjust the wings at the front and rear at the touch of a button to reduce drag and as a result support the energy management of the new drive units. To improve overtaking opportunities, the driver can also call up higher power (boost) from the battery when closely following the car in front. The new racing cars are characterized by greater efficiency and have significantly less downforce as well as narrower tires. The aim of these measures is more agile driving behavior and generally more exciting races. Another focus of the new regulations is on cost efficiency by further reducing expenditure. For this reason, the rules impose restrictions on materials, minimum weights for components and stipulate manufacturer-independent standard components in individual areas. An optimized vehicle structure with a two-stage nose, higher requirements to prevent side intrusion into the cockpit and better protection for the driver and fuel tank increase the level of safety even more.

Drivers

Combination of experience and youth

The driver pairing for the Audi entry into Formula 1 for the 2026 season was decided early on: with seasoned racing driver Nico Hulkenberg and young talent Gabriel Bortoleto, Audi Revolut F1 Team is relying on a combination of experience and youth that already worked well together at Sauber in 2025.

With more than 250 Grand Prix races under his belt, Nico Hulkenberg is one of the most experienced drivers in Formula 1. He has also demonstrated his talent in other series: in 2015, he won the Le Mans 24 Hours with the Porsche factory team – another milestone in an impressive career in which Hulkenberg won every junior series he competed in on his way to the top of motorsport.

Born in Emmerich am Niederrhein in 1987, the German started karting at the age of nine and became German Junior Kart Champion in 2002, then German Kart Champion in 2003. In 2005, he secured the title in Formula BMW. Between 2006 and 2007, he led A1 Team Germany to the championship title in the A1GP series with nine race wins. This was followed by the title win in the FIA Formula 3 Euro Series in 2008 and the championship in GP2 (now Formula 2) in 2009.

The up-and-coming German talent quickly caught the attention of Formula 1. In 2010, he made his debut in the pinnacle of motorsport with Williams, scoring points in only his third Grand Prix and taking advantage of the changeable conditions at the Brazilian Grand Prix to secure his first pole position. After leaving Williams and spending a year as a test and reserve driver, Hulkenberg drove for Force India, Sauber and Renault between 2012 and 2019, earning a reputation as a fast driver with a great technical understanding.

Between 2020 and 2022, Hulkenberg remained in Formula 1 as a reserve and development driver for Racing Point and Aston Martin. On several occasions, he stood in for Sergio Pérez, Lance Stroll and Sebastian Vettel, consistently delivering outstanding performances. In 2023, he returned to the starting grid as a full-time driver with Haas. With strong qualifying and race performances, “The Hulk” proved that he is still one of the most reliable drivers on the grid and was confirmed in April 2024 as the first driver for the future Audi F1 factory team.

For the German, the 2025 season was a return to familiar territory: he had already been part of the Hinwil-based team in 2013. With third place at the British Grand Prix in Silverstone in July 2025, Hulkenberg achieved his long-awaited first podium finish in Formula 1.

Brazilian Gabriel Bortoleto contested his first full season in the Formula 1 World Championship in 2025 and made an immediate impression – which was no big surprise given his track record:

Bortoleto won both the FIA Formula 3 and FIA Formula 2 Championships in consecutive years in his first season in each series – a feat that only three other drivers have achieved before him.

Even as a child, Bortoleto dreamed of becoming a Formula 1 driver. His great idol: Ayrton Senna. Born in São Paulo in 2004, he sat in a kart for the first time at the age of six. Between 2012 and 2014, he won several junior karting titles before moving to Europe at the age of eleven to pursue a professional racing career.

Bortoleto made his debut in single seaters in 2020. He finished fourth in his first season in the Italian Formula 4 Championship. This was followed by two years in Formula Regional in Europe and Asia, where he achieved his first podium finish in 2021 and three race wins in 2022.

On his Formula 3 debut in Bahrain in 2023, Bortoleto won the race outright, took the lead in the championship and defended it throughout the season. The following season, he moved up to Formula 2 and, as a rookie, secured the championship title in an extremely competitive field.

At just 20 years of age, Bortoleto fulfilled his dream of becoming a Formula 1 driver. In his rookie season, “Gabi” impressed not only with his sporting achievements as a regular points scorer and strong qualifier, but also on a personal level: the young Brazilian is very popular within the team and gets on very well with his teammate Nico Hulkenberg.

Milestones in the Audi F1 Project

Audi and its road to Formula 1

In preparation for its entry in 2026, Audi has set the course for its Formula 1 Project. Important milestones since 2022 at a glance.

Spring 2022
Audi is setting up a project team to develop a concept for the F1 power unit and prepare for entry into the pinnacle of motorsport.

July 2022
Foundation of Audi Formula Racing GmbH (AFR).

August 2022
At a press conference at the Belgian Grand Prix in Spa-Francorchamps, Audi announces its entry into the FIA Formula 1 World Championship as a power unit manufacturer for the 2026 season.

End of 2022
Audi announces Sauber as a future strategic partner for the Formula 1 project, meaning the Swiss team will compete as an Audi factory team from 2026. A strategic partnership is agreed with bp to jointly develop the novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources for Audi that will be mandatory from 2026.

December 2022
In order to expand the Motorsport Competence Center at the Audi Neuburg site for the F1 project, the company announces a new 3,000 square meter building. Also in December, the wait ends for fans of sim racing: they can now experience the show car with the Audi F1 Launch Livery virtually in the official racing game EA Sports F1® 22 from Codemasters.

Spring 2023
Construction of the new F10 building begins in Neuburg. Testing of the individual components of the Audi F1 Power Unit on the test bench begins.

May 2023
The first test benches are installed in the new building in Neuburg using container construction.

June 2023
Neel Jani becomes simulator driver for drive development in the Audi F1 project.

Fall 2023

The V6 engine runs on the test bench for the first time.

March 2024

Audi announces the complete takeover of Sauber ahead of schedule.

April 2024

Nico Hulkenberg signs a contract to race for Audi in Formula 1 from 2026. The German professional racing driver brings experience from around 250 Grands Prix.

May 2024

The complete Audi F1 Power Unit consisting of combustion engine, electric drive, battery and control electronics runs as a unit on the test bench and covers simulated race distances.

July 2024

Audi and bp announce their strategic partnership in the development of fuels and lubricants, which has been in place since 2022. As part of the extensive exclusive sponsorship and technology partnership, bp becomes the first official partner of the future Audi Revolut F1 Tean.

August 2024

Mattia Binotto has been Chief Operating and Chief Technical Officer of Sauber Motorsport AG since August 1, while Jonathan Wheatley will become Team Principal and Spokesman of the Board of Management. Both form the new dual leadership for Audi in Formula 1.

November 2024

Young Brazilian Gabriel Bortoleto signs as a driver for the future Audi Revolut F1 Team. This completes the driver lineup for the first season of Audi in Formula 1. Audi also announces that the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) will become a strategic partner in the F1 project and will acquire a significant minority stake in Sauber Holding AG, future factory team of Audi.

January 2025

With the complete takeover of Sauber Holding AG, Audi takes another important step on its way into Formula 1. The complete takeover paves the way for the Qatar sovereign wealth fund to come on board as an investor with a capital increase.

April 2025

Jonathan Wheatley begins his work as Team Principal of the future Audi Revolut F1 Team on April 1.

May 2025

As Head of Audi F1 Project, Mattia Binotto takes over responsibility for development activities at all locations on May 1.

July 2025

To further expand its technical capabilities, a Technology Centre is opened in Bicester, England, as the third location for the F1 project. Audi announces that global fintech company Revolut will be the title partner of the future Audi Revolut F1 Team.

September 2025
Audi announces that German sporting goods manufacturer adidas will be the official apparel supplier for the future Audi Revolut F1 Team.

Fall 2025
Final endurance runs of the Audi F1 Power Unit (AFR 26 hybrid) on the test bench and construction of the first race engines for the 2026 season.

November 2025
The Audi R26 Concept is unveiled at an event in Munich, giving a concrete preview of the brand's future appearance in the pinnacle of motorsport.

December 2025
Shortly before Christmas, the first Formula 1 race car from Audi successfully fires up for the first time at the Hinwil site.

January 2026
The Audi R26 completes its first rollout in Barcelona at the beginning of January. Audi Revolut F1 Team, as it has been officially known since January 1, is presented in Berlin. At the end of January, an official shakedown of the new generation of Formula 1 race cars takes place in Barcelona – still behind closed doors.

February 2026
During official tests in Bahrain (February 11–13 and February 18–20), Audi Revolut F1 Team tests in Formula 1 for the first time in front of the public.

March 2026
Audi celebrates its Formula 1 debut with a points-scoring result in the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne. In addition to his existing duties as "Head of Audi F1 Project," Mattia Binotto also assumes the responsibilities of Team Principal effective immediately.

April 2026
Former Audi factory driver Allan McNish becomes Racing Director, overseeing the team's trackside operations. Mattia Binotto is now CEO and Team Principal of Audi Revolut F1 Team.

November 2026
Thomas Fuhr strengthens the leadership structure of Audi's Formula 1 project as CEO of Audi Formula Racing GmbH in Neuburg.

Motorsport history

More than 100 years of pioneering spirit

From the first mid-engine Grand Prix car to quattro all-wheel drive in rallying to diesel, hybrid, and electric powertrains at Le Mans and the Dakar Rally: Audi has led every motorsport project to success with determination, courage, and team spirit. For Audi, simply participating was never enough, innovation was a matter of course. The company wants to continue this tradition in Formula 1. Here is an overview of the most important milestones.

Success with electric drive concepts
The regulatory focus on increased electrification and advanced powertrain technologies does not only play an important role in the pinnacle of motorsport. The company began electrifying its motorsport program in endurance racing in 2012. With the first victory of a hybrid racing car at the Le Mans 24 Hours, Audi achieved a pioneering feat at the world's most important endurance race in 2012. The Audi R18 e-tron quattro remained unbeaten three times in a row at Le Mans in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Many other innovations such as the Audi laser light complement the pioneering technical achievements. Drivers and manufacturers titles with the hybrid sports car in the 2012 and 2013 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) complete the Audi sports car era, which ended in 2016. Following the LMP program with the R18 hybrid sports car, Audi was the first German car manufacturer to compete in the all-electric Formula E racing series in the 2017/2018 season. With four victories and a total of eleven podium finishes, Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler clinched the team championship after twelve races. Things continued to go electric after that: the brand with the four rings competed in the famous Dakar Rally from 2022 with an innovative prototype. Audi made history in January 2024: the Audi RS Q e-tron was the first low-emission prototype with an electric drive, high-voltage battery and energy converter to win the world's toughest desert rally.

Audi Sport customer racing for the brand's customers
Since 2009, Audi has used its most competitive products to hunt for trophies worldwide in customer racing with production-based technology. In its second generation, the Audi R8 LMS was available in variants for the GT2, GT3 and GT4 categories. The Audi RS 3 LMS TCR touring car also existed in two generations for racing and competed on five continents. Since the start of the program, customers have won several hundred racing titles worldwide. Outstanding individual successes include two class victories for the GT3 sports car at the Daytona 24 Hours, three overall victories at the Bathurst 12 Hour, four triumphs in the city street race in Macau and in the Spa 24 Hours and seven times at the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

Pioneering performance with TDI technology
Audi demonstrated a pioneering achievement with TDI technology: the newly designed Audi R10 TDI was the first racing sports car with a diesel engine to triumph in the legendary Le Mans 24

Hours in 2006. In total, TDI technology prevailed eight times at Le Mans. Audi won again at the Sarthe in 2007 and 2008 with the R10 TDI. In addition, Audi won the American Le Mans Series three times in a row with the diesel racing car and the European Le Mans Series in 2008. With the R15 TDI, Audi celebrated a one-two-three victory in the fastest Le Mans race of all time in 2010, setting a new distance record that still stands today. Audi TDI power also prevailed at Le Mans in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. In 2014, the brand celebrated its 13th victory in just 16 participations. Audi also demonstrated “Vorsprung durch Technik” in terms of energy efficiency: throughout the TDI era, Audi reduced diesel consumption by 46 percent within a decade.

Title wins in the modern DTM

Following Laurent Aiello’s victory in 2002 with the Abt-Audi TT-R, Audi returned to the DTM as a factory in 2004 after a twelve-year absence and won the title at the first attempt with Mattias Ekström. The Swede also triumphed in 2007, followed by Timo Scheider in 2008 and 2009 – making Audi the first and so far only car manufacturer in DTM history to achieve a title hat-trick. Martin Tomczyk completed the success story of the Audi A4 DTM in the 2011 season with another title win – the fifth for the Audi A4 DTM. In 2013, Mike Rockenfeller clinched Audi’s ninth DTM title in total with the Audi RS 5 DTM. In his rookie year, René Rast caused a sensation with another title in 2017. Audi also won the manufacturers championship. Rast won the prestigious title two more times in 2019 and 2020. This means that Audi drivers have already won the DTM twelve times. There are also six manufacturers and eight team titles. In terms of technology, Audi has mastered one of the biggest upheavals in the history of the racing series with flying colors: In the two concluding years of the era of turbocharged engines, the Audi RS 5 DTM with its highly efficient two-liter turbo engine was the measure of all things with 28 victories, 95 podium finishes, 29 pole positions, 28 fastest race laps and all six championship titles. Since 2021, the DTM has been exclusively for GT3 sports cars.

Audi R8 most successful Le Mans sports car of the modern era

At the end of the nineties, Audi opened a new chapter when the brand turned its attention to the challenge of sports prototypes. As before in the other disciplines, the aim here was to assert the claim of “Vorsprung durch Technik.” At its debut in Le Mans, the world’s toughest endurance race, Audi immediately made it onto the podium in 1999 with third place. In the following years, the Audi R8 was in a class of its own. From 2000 to 2002, Audi achieved a historic hat-trick, also thanks to the TFSI technology that was used for the first time in 2001 and later found its way into large scale production. In 2004 and 2005, customer teams clinched two more overall victories for Audi at Le Mans. The R8 secured its place in motorsport history with a total of 63 victories in 80 sports car races.

quattro for the racetrack

Making quattro all-wheel drive ready for the racetrack was Audi’s major task in the second half of the 1980s. The series of successes began in 1988 with the Audi 200 quattro and in 1989 with the Audi 90 quattro IMSA GTO in the USA. In 1990 and 1991, the Audi V8 quattro won two championship titles in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM). Subsequently, the 80 and A4 models continued the successes in the category of production-based super touring cars. In

1996, the Audi A4 quattro won the championship titles in seven countries before the FIA banned all-wheel drive in circuit races. It was not until 2012 that all-wheel drive returned to the racetrack as the e-tron quattro at Le Mans.

The modern success story began with the Audi quattro
After the company revived the Audi brand in 1965 with its first new product series, a wide range of private racing initiatives developed in the 1970s, not least thanks to sports sponsorship. Motorsport activities received a major boost when Audi entered the World Rally Championship as a factory. From the 1981 season onwards, Audi competed with the quattro model and its legendary permanent four-wheel drive. The superior victories as well as two brand and two driver's titles with the "original quattro" in the World Rally Championship between 1982 and 1984 were an important factor in the market success of the quattro drive. This also spurred Audi's rise into the premium manufacturer segment.

A broad base in the post-war period
Auto Union products were particularly popular with private drivers after the Second World War. The sporty customers, as well as factory drivers such as Heinz Meier, Gustav Menz and Hubert Brand, competed in touring car competitions, rallies and hill climbs. In 1954, the DKW Sonderklasse won the European Rally Championship with Walter Schlüter and the German Championship for Touring Cars with Heinz Meier. In 1956, the DKW Monza set several endurance records on the eponymous Italian racetrack. From 1954 to 1964, DKW drivers celebrated over 100 championship titles, 150 overall victories and 2,500 class victories in motorsport. Added to this was the factory's involvement in motorcycle racing, motocross and off-road racing. In addition to the four Auto Union brands, another traditional company contributed its motorsport record: The NSU brand merged with Auto Union GmbH in 1969 to form Audi NSU Auto Union AG. Even before the war, factory entries of solo and sidecar motorcycles shaped the brand's sports program. With the NSU 6/60 Kompressor sports car, the brand achieved a quadruple class victory on the Avus in 1926. Models such as the Wankel Spider or the TT touring car further enhanced the sporting record in the sixties and into the early seventies.

Pioneering achievements in the first half of the century
The Horch brand achieved an early success by winning the Herkomer-Fahrt in 1906. Audi then proved its long-distance qualities on the most adventurous mountain passes in Europe at the time. Conquering the Alps was a great challenge in the early days of the automobile. From 1912 to 1914, Audi won a total of eleven first prizes over the course of three editions of the International Austrian Alpine Rally and thus also the coveted Alpine Challenge Cup. A heyday followed the founding of Auto Union in 1932 from the Audi, DKW, Horch and Wanderer brands. The spectrum was diverse and ranged from long-distance driving and off-road sports to solo and sidecar motorcycles, off-road sports bikes and record-breaking machines. In 1938, Ewald Kluge was the first German to win the legendary Tourist Trophy motorcycle race with DKW. The Auto Union racing cars from the Type A to the Type D revolutionized Grand Prix racing between 1934 and 1939 with their mid-engine concept. The single-seaters from Zwickau achieved 24 victories, 23 second places and 17 third places in 61 circuit races. The popular hill climbs and world record

races completed the program. In addition to the engine layout, the lightweight construction, the optional streamlined bodywork and engine charging systems and thus up to 520 hp of power stood for extreme technology.

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About Audi

Audi drives transformation and shapes the mobility of tomorrow – with intelligent, electric products.

The premium automotive brand is available in more than 100 markets. Its global production network spans 21 sites in 12 countries. **Vorsprung durch Technik** unites more than 88,000 employees. With courage, passion, responsibility, and trust, they are reinterpreting more than 100 years of automaking tradition for the future. In 2026, Audi is entering Formula 1 with a factory team in a bold expression of its motorsports DNA.

The Audi Group also includes the supercar manufacturer Lamborghini, the luxury brand Bentley Motors, and the motorcycle maker Ducati.

Learn more about the Audi Group here.

Since 2026, Audi is competing in Formula 1 with its own factory team and a hybrid drive system (“power unit”) developed in Germany. The F1 project from Audi is based at three locations: Audi Formula Racing GmbH, which was founded specifically for the project, is developing the power unit in Neuburg an der Donau. Audi Revolut F1 Team is based in Hinwil in Switzerland. This is where the development of the race car and the planning and execution of race operations are located. In addition, the UK Technology Centre in Bicester provides a foothold in the heart of “Motorsport Valley,” offering direct access to top F1 talent and key strategic partners.

Formula 1 is regarded as the pinnacle of motorsport and, with its global reach, is one of the most important sports platforms in the world. Thanks to open competition, Formula 1 provides an environment for the development and testing of electrified powertrain technologies and for novel fuels derived from synthetic and renewable biological sources.