

[Jakob "Buster" Brown's Crankbox](#), July 15, 2003:

CARS: Unfit for Human Transportation

Summary:

Users get lost driving CARS, which are typically big, linear hunks of metal that are optimized for parking (they seem to fit well into those outlined areas found on side-streets and parking lots), but are unpleasant to drive and navigate on highways, toll-roads, and dirt paths. CARS are good for parking (teenagers take note), but that's it. Don't use them for driving ... ever.

CARS are great for one thing and one thing only: **parking**. [Sitting still is superior to moving](#) in many ways, and drivers often prefer simply pulling off the road when highway signs become confusing.

For getting somewhere, however, CARS are the **Attack of the 50-Foot Woman**. She picks you up in her giant hand and says, "Does my butt look big in this?"

CAR Driveability Crimes

The problems that CARS cause on the road are [legion](#):

- **Linear orientation.** CARS are typically designed to go in one direction and one direction only, which goes to show that the designers are [not thinking holistically](#). What if I want to go to Cleveland and Buffalo at the same time? Today's consumer wants to multitask.
- **Jarring driver experience.** CARS have to drive down roads and follow traffic laws. Typical pedestrian experiences, like taking an escalator or stepping into the local bakery to argue with the baker over the stale buns he sold you last week are virtually impossible with a CAR. (And the baker tends to get very angry and ignore the issue of the buns entirely.)
- **Crashes and hardware problems.** While airbags and safety-belt laws have improved things, you're still more likely to be injured in an accident while driving a car than you are when walking. (Unless you're walking past the bakery, of course. Gosh, that guy sure holds a grudge!)
- **Brake-and-go breaks the flow.** You have to wait for red lights to turn green before you can proceed through intersections. You have to stop

at stop signs. Why should I have to wait for the other guy? Aren't I a big, important guru? Get the %\$#@ out of my way!

- **No running allowed.** Because the CAR does not have your standard feet, you cannot use it to jog, dance, or push the flush-handle on a public toilet. Typically, drivers will not even be able to find shoes that will fit it. (Don't fall for the false advertisements in auto parts catalogs. Those aren't Italian loafers they're selling -- just useless hunks of metal and asbestos.)
- **Feed me!** CARS are big heavy beasts that require gasoline to get them moving. And gasoline costs money. You can't just feed them your left-over pizza crusts. (Or stale buns. You can try, but be prepared to invest in a can of fuel-injector cleaner the next time you fill up.)
- **CARS are made for sitting, not driving.** CARS typically have 2 to 6 seats, intended for sitting still, not moving at 60 mph. If you doubt this, try sneaking up behind the baker when he's sitting down. Give him a big shove to get him moving. Bye bye baker. Hello punitive damages.

Drivers Hate CARS

In [several recent driveability studies](#), drivers complained woefully whenever they found themselves behind the wheel.

Following are quotes from business managers, testing the [highway](#) area:

"It's a pain that I have to stop at stop-signs and traffic lights. Pain in the buns... I find it to be annoying and slow. I mean, why don't they get the %\$#@ out of my way? I'm a big, important gur... I mean, business manager, after all. They're not!"

"I hate General Motors. If I drive a car, I can't take it down the sidewalk, put shoes on it, or walk into the bakery to argue with the baker over those stale buns he sold me last week. I prefer feet, especially mine. They're much more attractive than tires any day! Don't you think so? Here, let me take my shoes off..."

The following quotes are from independent professionals, testing the [street](#) area:

"They [CAR tires] don't behave like people feet. I'm not saying they don't move. But they're like, rubber and junk. And they're round, not flat and pokey-outey on the end."

"I'm a little frustrated with cars. Like they made every car to drive, but then they crowd you in there so you can't enjoy the experience of sitting. And

have you ever gotten your foot caught in a cup-holder, or your hair in the seatbelt? That's really uncomfortable!"

"Look, baby. I love to park, like any girl. But you ain't driving me anywhere, and I DON'T do feet!"

This quote is from my personal secretary, [Jimmy](#), testing my patience:

"Yeah, like, CARS suck, man. Whatever the 'GU' says is like the word of the master. He's totally right on and junk. Yo, Gu-dude, does taking a taxi count? Cuz like, my feet are really starting to chap up from walking to work every Tuesday... What? You want to see them? Well, OK. Let me take my shoes off... Yo, what are you doing? Bogus, man! What kind of a freak are you? I'm outta here! (I wonder if the baker still needs help since the accident...)"

As the last quote shows, even the desire to ride in a CAR can have disastrous consequences.

We've had similar reactions from drivers in many other studies, including legal professionals:

"Look, Mr. Brown. I'm here to serve a subpoena. I have no opinion on CARS. Shoes? Why would I have an opinion on shoes? What? Why, that's disgusting!"

Disgusting indeed, and all because of CARS.

Next Column: Action Items

Given the poor driveability of CARS, what should we do if we still want to get to Cleveland? My next Crankbox will discuss new designs for CARS that will minimize highway problems (think wings, think rudders, think feet).

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