

**Record: 1****Title:** Windshield Wipers.**Authors:** Matthews, Andrew**Source:** Cobblestone. Jul2009, Vol. 30 Issue 6, p33-33. 1p. 1 Color Photograph.**Document Type:** Article**Subjects:** WINDSHIELD wipers  
ANDERSON, Mary, 1866-1953**Abstract:** The article discusses the invention of windshield wipers by Mary Anderson.**Lexile:** 1110**Full Text Word Count:** 219**ISSN:** 0199-5197**Accession Number:** 43395932**Database:** Middle Search Plus**Windshield Wipers****Rain Rain Go Away**

The first cars were missing what we would consider some pretty important safety features, such as horns, seatbelts, roofs, and headlights. In fact, Henry Ford's first automobile, his 1896 Quadricycle, didn't have any brakes! At the start of the 20th century, however, when cars were still new, they were used mostly for recreation on nice-weather days. It was only as automobiles became more numerous on the roads and could finally reach speeds of over 30 miles per hour that they needed additional features to make the roadways safe.

Mary Anderson is credited with the idea for a hand-operated window-cleaning arm to brush away rain, sleet, and snow. A crank inside the car moved a rubber blade on a swinging arm back and forth across the windshield. Anderson patented her idea in 1903. She could not find a company willing to invest in it, however, so she let her patent lapse. Then, in the 1920s, newer, faster, closed-bodied automobiles included automatic wipers. This basic idea to make driving safe in all kinds of weather is now a standard feature on all cars — as are seatbelts, horns, and headlights!

PHOTO (COLOR): Our view of the road is often in the hands of these necessary arms.

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By Andrew Matthews

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