

# The Way Cool License Plate: A History of Personalized Plates in the United States



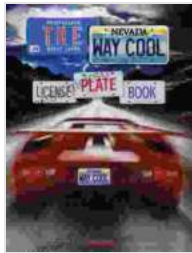
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License plates are a ubiquitous part of modern life. They identify our vehicles and allow us to travel freely from state to state. But did you know that license plates can also be a form of self-expression?

Personalized license plates, also known as vanity plates, allow drivers to display a custom message or design on their vehicles. These plates have become increasingly popular in recent years, as people look for ways to make their cars stand out from the crowd.



### **The Way Cool License Plate Book** by Amy Pickar-Abernethy

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 15479 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 64 pages



In this article, we'll take a closer look at the history of personalized plates in the United States, explore the different types of plates available, and share some of the stories behind some of the most iconic plates ever issued.

### **A Brief History of Personalized Plates**

The first personalized license plate was issued in the United States in 1903, to a wealthy New York socialite named William Phelps Eno. Eno was

an early advocate for the use of automobiles, and he believed that personalized plates would help to make them more popular.

Initially, personalized plates were only available to a select few individuals, such as elected officials and celebrities. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, several states began to offer personalized plates to the general public.

The popularity of personalized plates has grown steadily over the years. In 2020, there were over 10 million personalized plates registered in the United States.

## **Different Types of Personalized Plates**

There are a wide variety of personalized plates available, each with its own unique design and features.

- **Standard plates** are the most common type of personalized plate. They feature a custom message or design on a standard-sized license plate.
- **Specialty plates** are personalized plates that are issued to support a particular cause or organization. For example, there are specialty plates that support breast cancer awareness, veterans, and law enforcement.
- **Collector plates** are personalized plates that are issued to classic car enthusiasts. These plates typically feature a vintage design or a nod to a particular car or car culture.
- **Motorcycle plates** are personalized plates that are issued for motorcycles. These plates are typically smaller than standard plates and may feature a unique design or message.

## **Rules and Regulations**

The rules and regulations surrounding personalized plates vary from state to state. However, there are some general guidelines that apply to all personalized plates.

- Personalized plates cannot contain any offensive or obscene language.
- Personalized plates cannot be used to promote a particular business or organization.
- Personalized plates must be clearly visible and legible.

In addition, some states have specific restrictions on the types of messages or designs that are allowed on personalized plates. For example, some states do not allow personalized plates that contain political messages or religious symbols.

## **Stories Behind Iconic Plates**

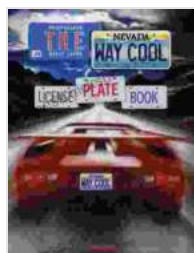
Over the years, there have been a number of iconic personalized plates that have become famous for their unique designs or messages.

- In 1978, a California man named Bruce Springsteen was issued the personalized plate "BRUCE."
- In 1984, a New York man named Donald Trump was issued the personalized plate "TRUMP."
- In 1993, a Massachusetts man named Ted Williams was issued the personalized plate "TEDDY BALLGAME."

- In 2000, a Florida man named Shaquille O'Neal was issued the personalized plate "SHAQ."

These are just a few examples of the many iconic personalized plates that have been issued over the years. These plates have become a part of popular culture and have helped to raise awareness for a variety of causes.

Personalized license plates are a fun and unique way to express yourself and support a cause or organization that you care about. They have become increasingly popular in recent years, and they are likely to continue to be a popular choice for drivers for many years to come.



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