

**The Car of the Year**  
**STATUTES AND REGULATIONS**  
**as of April 2019**

**I. Definition**

1, “Car of the Year” is an award, with a corresponding trophy, of an international character, which is awarded annually to the most outstanding new car of that year, sold in the European market, and voted by an independent jury of professional motoring journalists drawn from different countries and regulated by a “Jury Committee”. It is organized by a group of European publications known as the “Organizing Committee”. Both bodies are governed by the rules and regulations which are set out below:

**II. The Organizing Committee (O.C.)**

2. The Organizing Committee represents a group of publications from different European countries, who together undertake to co-operate and give their patronage to the organizing of the election.
3. The O.C. is composed of nine publications, namely: Auto (Italy), Autocar (Great Britain), Automobil Revue/Revue Automobile (Switzerland), Autopista (Spain), AutoTrends (Belgium), Autovisie (Holland), Firmenauto (Germany), L’Automobile Magazine (France), and Vi Bilägare (Sweden). Each publication appoints a senior staff member to represent it on the O.C.
4. The inclusion in the O.C. of a possible new member from another media organization is a matter for decision by all its members, in agreement with the J.C.
5. The O.C. President, elected annually, is the representative of the publication whose turn it is to organize the ballot and prize-giving.
6. The O.C. draws up a roster to change the publication responsible for organizing the award and its presentation every year. The O.C. can decide to alter this sequence by one year if it suits the publications involved.
7. The President of the O.C. co-ordinates his actions with the President and the Secretary General of the Jury Committee.
8. Each publication within the O.C. is represented in the Jury by one or more journalists with full voting rights, appointed by the Jury Committee. One editorial staff member of each organizing publication is also appointed to the J.C. as outlined in Articles 23 and 24. The J.C. member belonging to the organizing publication of the year is automatically appointed Executive Vice-President of the J.C. for that year.

9. The O.C. meets at least twice a year, once at the time of the prize-giving ceremony, and as often as possible on other occasions.
10. The O.C. holds all rights to the design of an artistic trophy and the Car of the Year logo with seven valves and the national flags of the publications within the O.C.
11. Every year, the President of the O.C. sets the date for publication of the results of the Car of the Year award, in consultation with the Jury Committee, represented by its President and Secretary General.
12. When deciding on this date, the O.C. tries to serve the best interests of the publications in the O.C. If no general or ideal agreement can be reached, the decision is made by a majority vote of the O.C.
13. The President of the O.C. is responsible for the organization of the prize-giving ceremony. He or she is also responsible for informing the manufacturer of the winning car of the result of the competition, on the basis of scores provided by the J.C. He or she issues the invitations for the ceremony to members of the O.C., to all members of the Jury who have cast their votes. He or she arranges the publication of the results and the statements of justification by all Jury members in time for the presentation ceremony.
14. The members of the O.C. ensure that the agreed date of publication of the results is respected by their own publications.
15. The members of the O.C. ensure that the results of the election are announced to the press, radio and TV in their countries in due time, and with the required guarantees as to release date. In view of the fact that Europe consists of more countries than those represented in the O.C., members are also responsible for publication of the results in neighbouring countries, in such a way that the whole European press is thoroughly informed of the result of the election.
16. Members of the O.C. undertake to promote the status of the Car of the Year scheme as much as possible. As part of this responsibility, they ensure that manufacturers properly use the Car of the Year logo in their advertising, and that they name the organizing publications.
17. The members of the O.C. agree not to gain any commercial advantage from their advance knowledge of the results of the election and not to make use of their status for commercial activities.
18. The O.C. each year decides the distribution of costs and duties between its members in order to achieve maximum prestige for the award-giving ceremony.
19. The O.C. takes its decisions by simple majority. The President of the O.C. has a casting vote in the event of a tied decision.

20. In order to cover the expenses of the office of the Secretary General, the members of the O.C. jointly contribute an amount which is decided upon each year.

### **III The Jury and Jury Committee (J.C.)**

21. **The Car of the Year Jury is an independent body of up to 65 professional motoring journalists**, drawn from a majority of European countries. Each major manufacturing country or area (Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, Scandinavia and Spain) is represented by an equal number of six members.
22. The J.C. appoints Jury members upon suggestions by the J.C. member representing the corresponding country or area. The J.C. member makes his suggestion(s) after consultation and in agreement with the Jury members from his country or area. **The selection of the Jury is finalized each year during the J.C. meeting at the General Assembly.**
23. Each organizing publication is represented in the Jury by at least one professional motoring journalist appointed by the J.C.
24. The J.C. is comprised of up to ten members. Seven, belonging to the seven organizing publications, are appointed as such (one per organizing publication) among Jury members. Three – the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary General – are elected by secret ballot among its members, by the General Assembly of the Jury (...). Candidacies for these three positions are formally called for by mail at least two weeks before the general assembly and received by the Secretary General, who organizes the election.
25. Each year in turn, the J.C. member representing the organizing publication of that year, is automatically named Executive Vice-President and put in charge of organizing the election, with the assistance of the President and Secretary General.
26. The J.C. takes its decisions by simple majority. In the event of a tied decision, the President of the J.C. has a casting vote.
27. Current matters pertaining to the award are handled by an Executive Committee comprising the President, the Executive Vice-President, the Vice-President and the Secretary General.
28. Jury members who reach the age of 65 in the year of any election are automatically retired before that election.
29. The J.C. can award the title of Honorary Member to any journalist who ceases to be a member of the Jury.
30. Jury members are necessarily full-time professional journalists, with no direct link with the motor industry. As testers, motoring editors or editors-in-chief supervising

an automotive section or magazine, they regularly drive and test, in the course of their normal professional duties, all the new cars produced by the industry. They are selected on the basis of personal competence, and not according to the importance of the publications for which they work. Any member of the Jury who changes his professional activity must advise the J.C. of this change without delay. The J.C. reviews the eligibility of all Jury members on an annual basis.

31. Jury members accept the following obligations:

- to make every effort to test thoroughly all eligible cars;
- not contribute to any other jury electing a “car of the year” or awarding any trophy according to similar or comparable criteria;
- exert in his or her writings and comments solidarity with, and courtesy to, the choices made by the majority of the Jury;
- behave as a good and fair colleague with other Jury members;
- respect any release date in relation to voting results, and abstain from informing third parties about the outcome of the vote, orally or in writing, before the release date;
- express an honest and fair vote, avoiding all bias;
- accept to publicize the reasons for his or her vote.

32. The J.C. is sovereign to replace any member of the Jury. It is further the J.C.’s responsibility to integrate members, belonging to the organizing publications (art. 23) and, if necessary, require an existing member to stand down to accommodate such a representative.

33. The J.C., meeting in late September or October, determines the list of eligible cars. It informs the President of the O.C.

34. Modifications in the “eligibility principles” and “voting procedure”, along with any major change in regulations, are submitted to a vote of the Jury at its annual general assembly. Any urgent case is handled by the J.C. or, between meetings, by the Executive Committee. Any major change will be finalized only after consultation with the President of the O.C.

35. The Presidents of the O.C. and J.C. consult on all important matters pertaining to the organization of the award. Each can name a substitute for this consultation. In case of need, both committees can decide to invite representatives of the other committee to their meetings, or part of their meetings. **The O.C. and J.C. formally meet at least once a year at the General Assembly or at another occasion.**

## VOTING PROCEDURE

Each year, before 1 December, the Jury Committee draws up a list of eligible cars for the Car of the Year election. Its decision is final. This list is sent to all Jury members with the first round voting form.

### Voting Procedure 1

Each Jury member nominates from the list of candidates the seven best cars in his or her opinion. No points are given at this stage.

All votes for nominees must be received by the Secretariat at least three days before the date of the announcement of the nominees, fixed by the J.C. in consultation with the O.C.

The J.C. then compiles an official list of the seven cars most proposed by the Jury members. In case of equal number of nominations for seventh place, the J.C. has the right to increase the list of nominees to eight.

The final list of nominees for the Car of the Year election is drafted in alphabetical order and all manufacturers involved are informed by the J.C.

### Voting Procedure 2

Each member of the Jury receives the official voting form together with the final list of nominees **at least one week before the closing date**.

Voting closes in accordance with the deadline for the release date, set by the Organizing Committee.

Each member of the Jury has 25 points, to be spread over at least five cars, with a maximum of 10 points for his or her first choice.

The same number of points cannot be given to the first two chosen cars on the voting form.

The four members of the Executive Committee should deposit their votes in sealed envelopes with the Executive Vice President at least one week ahead of closing date. These votes should be opened only when all other votes have been counted.

The Car of the Year is that which receives the highest total points. In case of a dead heat, the car voted first by the greatest number of members of the Jury, is declared the winner. In case the dead heat persists, the tie is decided by the greatest number of second places and so on.

The main criteria on which a car should be judged are the following: general design, comfort, safety, economy, handling and general roadworthiness, performance, functionality, general environmental requirements, driver satisfaction and price. Technical innovation and value for money are major factors.

Each member of the Jury must give a summary of the reasons for his or her judgement on the voting form.

#### **IV. Rights and obligations of the nominees and winner**

36. Any publicity regarding the Car of the Year must mention the exact wording of the award, i.e. incorporate the year of the award (“Car of the Year 20..”). This shall be the year following the one in which the voting list was drawn up.
37. Nominees are allowed to communicate their nomination for the second round in publicity (observing art. 36), from the time that the nominations are declared by the Jury Committee until the official announcement of the final winner of the Car of the Year election.
38. The winner can use the “Car of the Year 20..” title, always in combination with the Car of the Year logo, in his publicity from the time of the official announcement until the nominees for the following year are designated.
39. Any printed and visual publicity must include the Car of the Year logo (seven national flags of the seven organizing publications) and the names of those publications in legible print.
40. No reference shall be made in the publicity to the placing of other cars included in the eligibility list. The wording of the publicity shall in no way be misleading.
41. In its publicity relating to the Car of the Year, the winning manufacturer must not make reference to awards its cars might have received in other competitions, local or international.
42. The comments made by members of the Jury in their voting form may be reproduced in their full context, mentioning their author’s name.
43. It is the responsibility of the O.C. to enforce the rules pertaining to “rights and obligations of the winners” (art. 36 to 42).

## ELIGIBILITY PRINCIPLES

To be eligible for the Car of the Year award, a car should fulfil the following basic requirements:

1. Be in series production.
2. Be a model that has been available to the majority of members of the Jury for a test drive sufficient to form a founded opinion **during the current calendar year**.
3. It shall not have been included in a previous eligibility list. However, if a car is delayed in terms of SOP (start of production) and/or dynamic press launch, that was not foreseeable by the Jury Committee by the time of the car's nomination for the long list of the current year, it can be deleted from the list and postponed to the next year's long list.
4. Have been commercially available in at least five European markets whereof two major markets before 31 December of the current year. By "commercially available", it is understood that a price list has been published and that orders are accepted by distributors and dealers at the published prices.

In addition, the cars must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- a) Have an entirely or essentially new structure and entirely or essentially new mechanical units.
- b) Have a structure and/or mechanical units sufficiently modified to seriously alter the car's appeal, its destination and market position. A new body or powerplant on an existing underpan does not necessarily rank as a "new structure", unless the car's character and its market destination are altered.

Note: An estate car derived from an existing passenger car or vice versa does not rank as a new model.

The engine, drive train and suspension are considered to be the "mechanical units". Adding (or dropping) a gear or fitting an automatic transmission is not considered to be a profound modification.

Eligibility criteria are applicable even in the case of a change in the car's make.