

CAR, Light, Utility, 5 cwt, 4X4 “Jeep”

Specifications:

Built By: Ford Motor Company

Service: 1940 – 1951

GVW: 2150 - 2390 lbs, based on variant

Payload: 800 lbs

Engine: Willys L134 “Go Devil” 4 Cyl,60 hp

Crew: As required, depending on tasking

Armament: In addition to personal weapons, e.g. rifles, pistols, etc., light and heavy machine guns could be mounted on purpose-built pedestals to increase fire power when employed in a reconnaissance role.

Employment: Command, Reconnaissance, Liaison, Traffic Control, Light haulage with trailer, Ambulance and Gun Tractor for light Anti-Tank Guns.

Background:

The Jeep was the result of a request by the Army in 1940 for a general-purpose vehicle that was small, lightweight, had four-wheel drive for cross-country travel, and capable of carrying a light machine gun.

The Canadian Army was the first foreign purchaser of the Jeep. In WWII, Canada ended up with jeeps made by Bantam, Willys-Overland, and Ford (USA)

The Jeep fulfilled many roles during the war, these ranging from conducting combat reconnaissance missions, the vehicle from which commanders led their units, hauling trailers full of vital supplies across the battlefield, carrying aircrew to their aircraft, carrying litters bearing wounded troops, transporting generals and admirals to work or pulling light artillery pieces into battle. On D-Day in France it rode into battle in gliders and landed with the assault waves in Italy and France, as well as carrying the victorious Allies into Rome, Paris and Berlin.

The White Star displayed on this vehicle was adopted as an “Allied Air Recognition Symbol” for all Allied vehicles in the June 6, 1944, Normandy invasion. The use of the White Star by United Nations forces was continued in the Korean conflict 1950 – 1953. Canadian soldiers were not keen on displaying what was viewed as a US Army star and frequently painted them on at an angle as a form of protest.

The Jeep is often credited with being one of the important factors in helping the Allies achieve victory during WWII.