

Ride Sharing in the Past

The concept of hiring a driver has been around for a long time—over 400 years! Since 1605, people have paid drivers to transport them around privately, as opposed to taking mass transportation.

Hackney Carriages first appeared in London and Paris. These were hired out by innkeepers to transport merchants and visitors. By 1834, quick, two-wheeled, horse-drawn Hansom Cabs were zipping through cities. These new coaches, pulled by one horse versus a team, were able to move quickly and could easily maneuver around city traffic.

The first electric, battery-powered taxis appeared in 1897. They were called “hummingbirds” for the loud chirping sounds that they made. Two-way radios, invented in 1937, revolutionized the “ride-for-hire,” or taxi, industry. Now, customers could call a taxi dispatcher who would the radio a taxi driver to come pick you up.



A Hansom Cab

Modern-Day Ride Sharing

People are always looking for new ways to get around that are cheaper, faster, and easier than previous methods. When Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp were stuck in Paris on a snowy evening in 2008 and couldn't hail a cab, they came up with a simple idea: tap a button, get a ride.

It was this scene—being unable to hail a cab—that led to the creation of Uber. Originally, Uber was launched to help wealthy people hail a limo easier in large cities. Today, however, Uber and the ride hailing industry are changing the way people get around. Most ride hailing companies work the same way:

- ❖ Users request a ride through the company's app
- ❖ Once a driver is signaled through the app, it usually takes less than 10 minutes for a car to arrive at your location
- ❖ During the wait time and while you're in the car, you can track the car's location through the app
- ❖ The app provides a cashless payment process charging all of your rides to a credit card on file
- ❖ During peak travel times (rush hour, rainy weather, etc.), companies will enact "surge pricing," meaning your fare could double or triple (or in extreme cases, cost up to 10X the normal amount!); however, you are notified of this before you request a ride

When compared to taxis, ride hailing companies usually cost less, are easier to schedule, and are quicker and more convenient. Take a look at the in-depth comparison in the "How Do They Compare?" section.