

Horsepower

What is horsepower? Put simply, horsepower is a measurement of how powerful and strong something is.

Over 100 years ago, the mechanical engineer John Watts first coined this term. He wanted to show how powerful his inventions were compared to horses. At the time, in the 1800s, horses were used a lot to make machinery work and move, including buses and trams!

Read about four vehicles from our Museum Collection below. When you are ready, go onto the next page and for each vehicle, use what you have learnt to take the quiz. Run through the questions for each vehicle, and discover which has the most horsepower, and which has the least. Write in which vehicle matches each horsepower amount.

Q23-stock driving motor car No. 4248

Reference number: 1981/542 part 0



- Built in 1921 and put into service on the District line in 1923, until 1971
- Powered by electricity, when they were modernised in 1838, they even had automatic doors.
- In each carriage, there's enough seating for 44 people. Lots more people can fit in if they're standing though!

LGOC 'Garden seat' type horse bus

Reference number: 1981/526 part 0



- Built in 1881 and travelled a route between Waterloo and Baker Street
- Powered by horses. This meant there was a lot of poo left on the roads!
- It could carry 28 people and was the lightest and strongest vehicle of its type in the world at the time.

Metropolitan Railways Electric locomotive No. 5

Reference number: 1981/535



- Built in 1922 and hauled passengers between the City and Metro-land
- Powered by electricity, It was in service for 50 years until 1972
- The drivers cab is bright green
- In the 1950s it was given the name 'John Hampden'

Metropolitan Railway Steam Locomotive No. 23

Reference number: 1981/535



- Built in 1866 in Manchester by Beyer Peacock
- Powered by steam. This meant the engine was very fiery and hot, and caused a lot of pollution.
- It was in service on the Underground for 39 years until 1905.

