

# The Cars of Columbo

The classic detective show featuring the bumbling, cigar smoking Columbo had its initial run from 1971 through 1978 and was revived from 1989 to 2003. The victims and murderers were usually from the wealthy class and drove cars that matched. It's always fun to see which fancy car these upper-class killers drive. Columbo drives a beat-up 1960 Peugeot 403 of which he is quite proud and oblivious to the fact that it is a heap. I've listed significant cars driven by killers, victims and other persons of interest. A thanks is owed to the Internet Movie Cars Database in helping identifying many of the cars. featured.

## Pilots: Prescription: Murder and Ransom for a Dead Man

No cars of note and no appearance of Columbo's Peugeot.

## S1 E1 "Murder by the Book"

Murderer Ken Franklin drives an early 1968 Mercedes 280 SE convertible complete with a "Have A Nice Day" bumper sticker. Columbo's Peugeot makes its first appearance before we know it is his. When Ken Franklin pulls into Joanna Ferris's driveway, the Peugeot is there. And again, at Ken Franklin's house we see part of the Peugeot parked next to the Mercedes. However, we don't see Columbo drive it until later when he pulls up to Lily La Sanka's store.





## S1 E2 “Death Lends a Hand”

The victim's husband travels in a chauffeured Rolls Royce. Private investigator/ murderer Arthur Brimmer drives a 1970 Cadillac Eldorado with lots of trunk space. We get our first good look at the Peugeot when Columbo is pulled over by a motorcycle cop.



**S1 E3: “Dead Weight”** No cars of note but the General does drive a yacht.



## S1 E4: “Suitable for Framing”

Art critic/ murderer Dale Kingston drives a classic 50's Mercedes-Benz 300 Adenaur. His accomplice/ girlfriend drives a VW Bug convertible.



## S1 E5 “Lady in Waiting”

Sheltered heiress Beth Chadwick “accidentally” shoots her overbearing brother and only a few days later a blue Ferrari 365 GTB Daytona is delivered. Coincidence? Columbo and Leslie Nielson have lunch in the Peugeot with the top down - the first time we see it down.



## S1 E5 “Short Fuse”

Murderer/ stylish dresser Roger Stanford drives another Ferrari GTB 365 Daytona – this one silver/blue. Coincidentally, the engine in this model is Ferrari's V12 Colombo engine – named for its designer. Stanford refers to Columbo's Peugeot as “that old heap.” It's the first joke at the Peugeot's expense. There's another scene with the Peugeot's top down.





## S1 E6 "Blueprint for Murder"

Architect Elliot Markham must have purchased Ken Franklin's Mercedes from "Murder by the Book." It even has the same license plate number! Once again, the body is transported in the trunk of the Mercedes but we don't see if it still has the "Have a Nice Day" bumper sticker. Victim Bo Williamson drives a gold mid 70's Cadillac Eldorado with an aftermarket cassette player that prompts Columbo's suspicions.



## S2 E1 "Etude in Black"

Orchestra conductor Alex Benedict drives a silver Jaguar XKE which becomes part of the plot when he leaves it overnight at his mechanic but then sneaks back to use it in the murder of his mistress. His other car is a Rolls Royce Silver Shadow. A fun exchange happens when Columbo asks the mechanic to take a look at his car.

Mechanic: "Have you every thought of getting another car?"

Columbo: "Oh I have another car. My wife drives it. But it's just for transportation...nothing special."





## S2 E2 "The Greenhouse Jungle"

A defenseless yellow Jaguar XKE is pushed into a canyon as part of a fake kidnapping plot by Tony Goodland and his Uncle Jarvis. Of course, the real plan is to kill Tony. Uncle Jarvis drives a 1960 Bentley Continental 2-door.





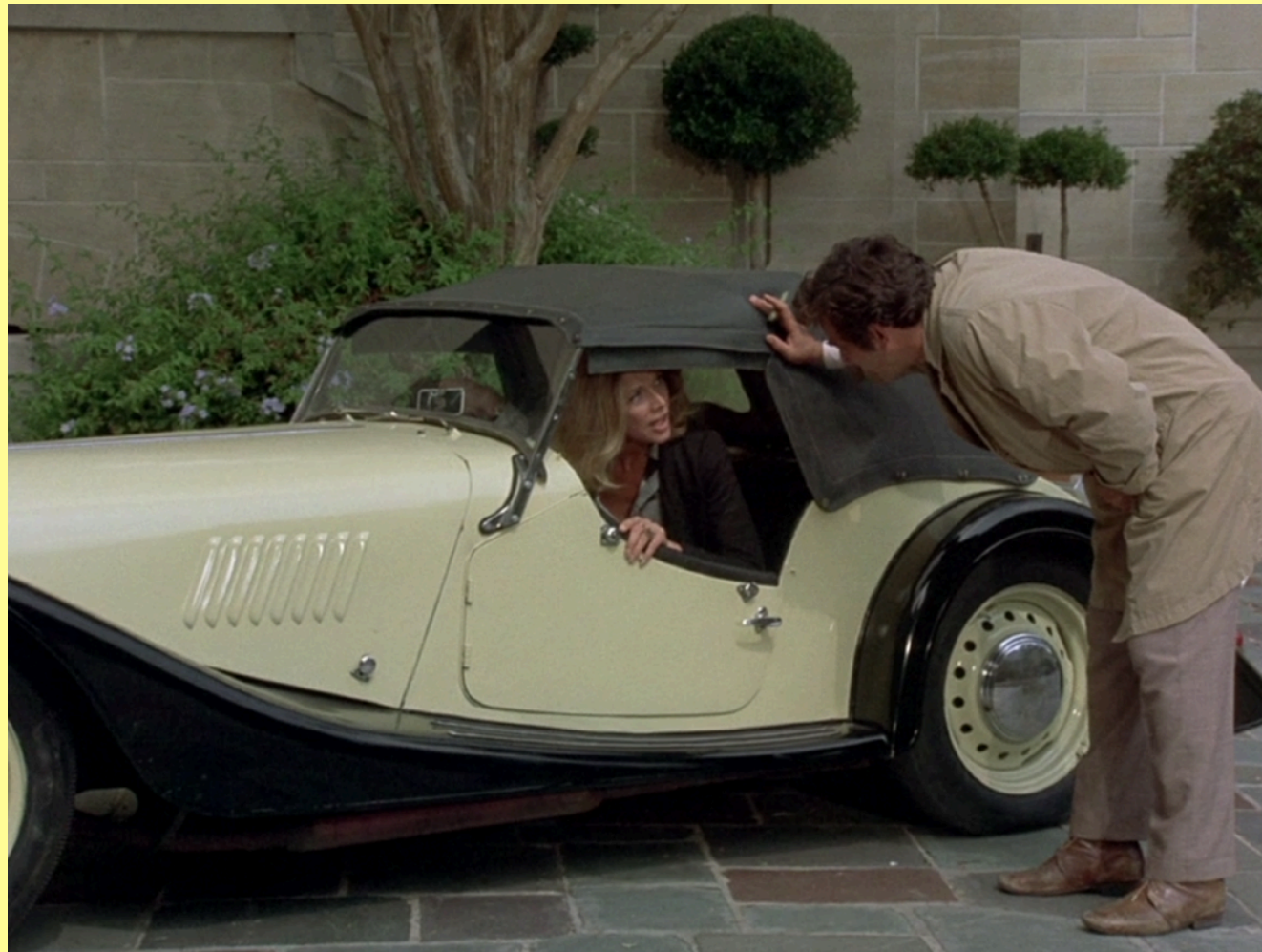
## S2 E3 “The Most Crucial Game”

Football team manager Paul Hanlon drives an ice cream truck to murder the playboy team owner. We don't see him driving any cars.



## S2 E4 “Dagger of the Mind”

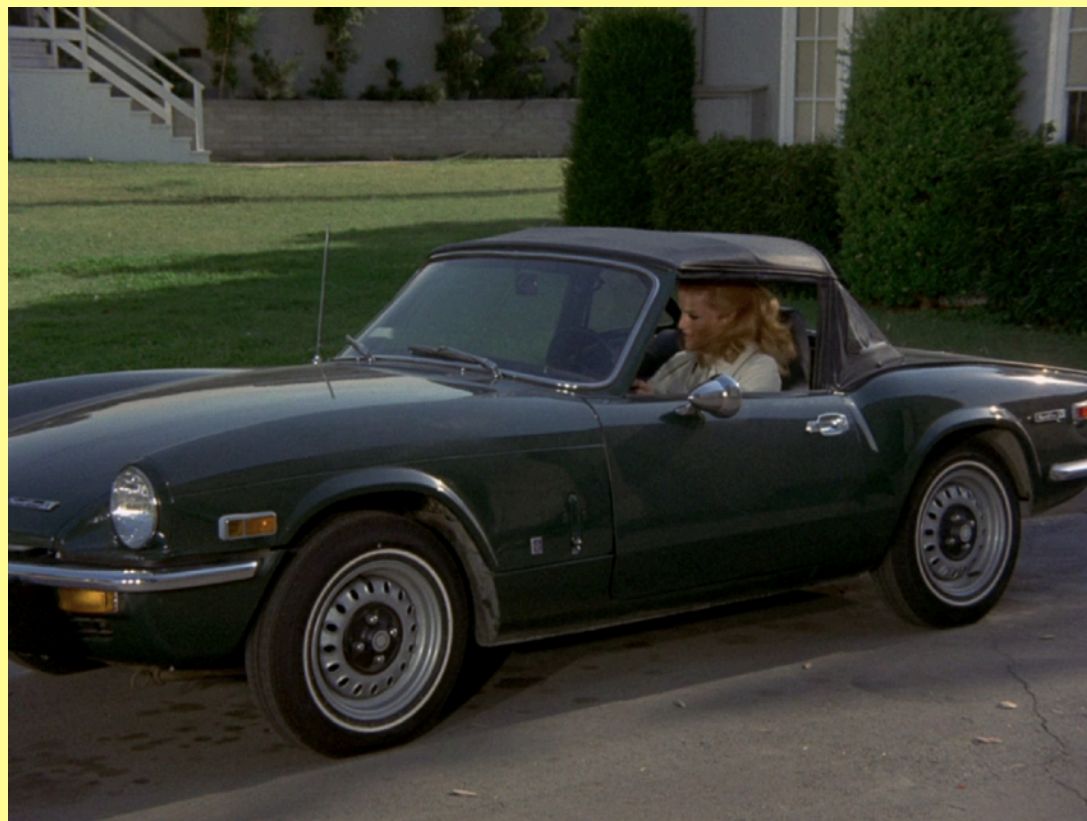
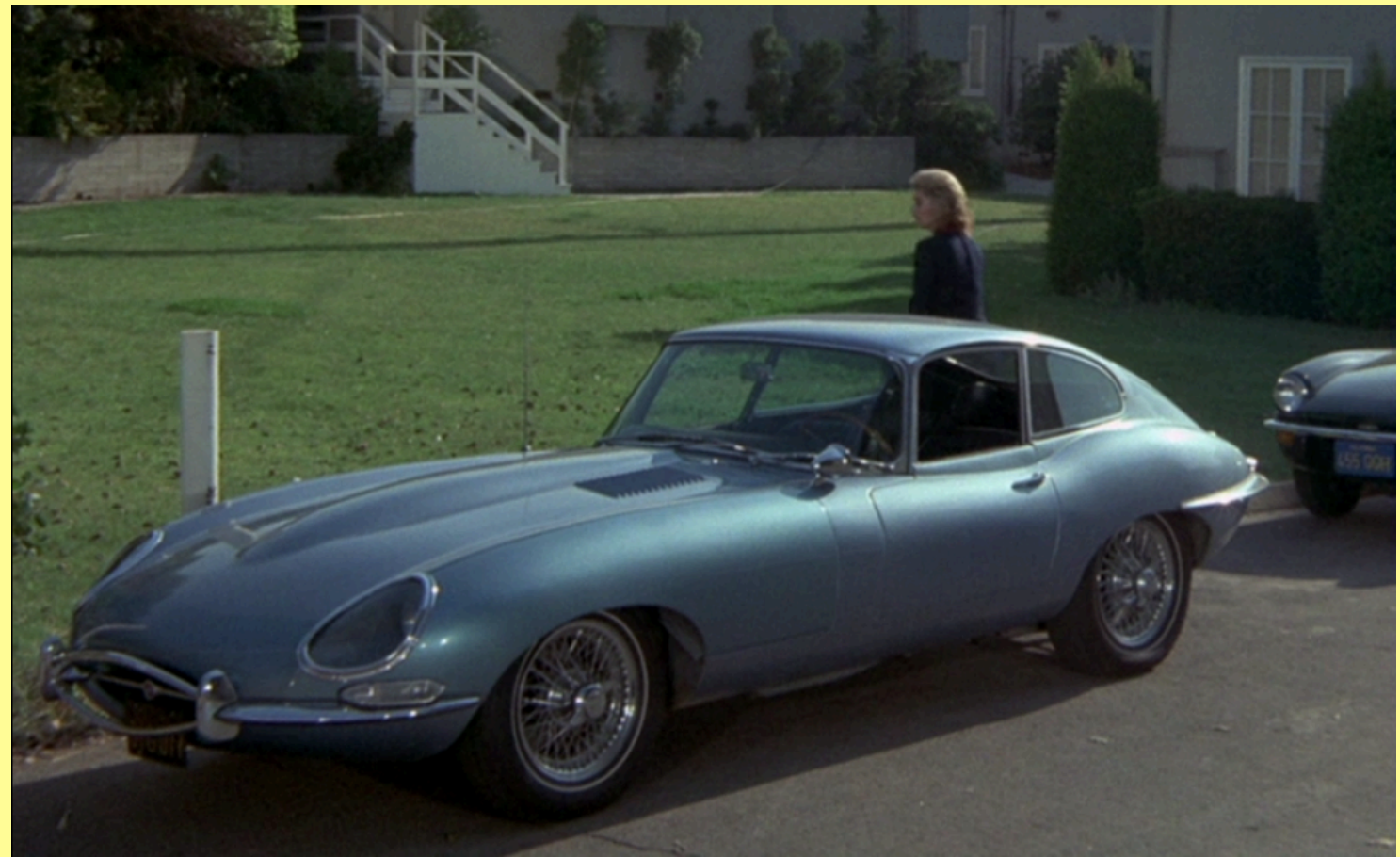
in London to observe Scotland Yard, Columbo gets wrapped up in a case. Murderer and actor Nicholas Frame drives a Morgan sports car. The victim has a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud. Of course, the Peugeot doesn't appear but Columbo is driven around in a Ford Cortina police car and Inspector Durk's 70's era Jaguar XJ.





## S2 E5 "Requiem for a Falling Star"

What does this show have against Jaguars? An aging starlet torches a blue XKE owned by a gossip columnist, but the real victim is her assistant who is having an affair with the writer. In a change of pace from the usual Cadillacs, the starlet drives a Lincoln MK IV while the assistant drives a Triumph Spitfire 4 Mark II. The same exchange about Columbo's Peugeot with the mechanic in "Etude in Black" happens again, this time with the guard at the movie studio gate who thinks the Peugeot is there for a demolition derby scene.





## S2 E6 "A Stitch in Crime"

Heart surgeon and murderer Dr. Mayfield drives a gray 1968 Mercedes-Benz sedan, probably a 200 series model.



## S2 E7 "The Most Dangerous Match"

Chess Master/ murderer Emmet Clayton doesn't drive a car but he does get a top down ride in the Peugeot.



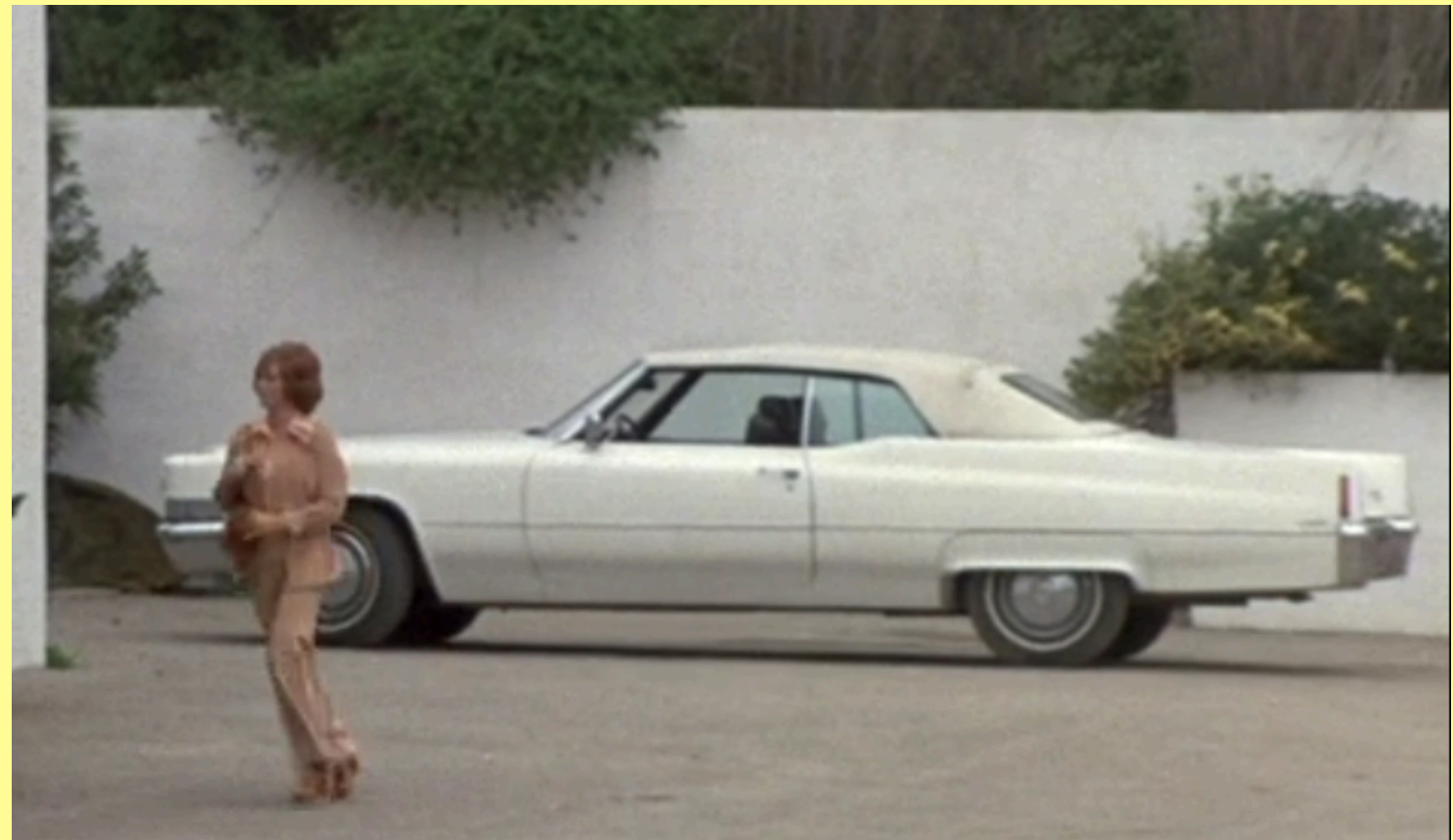


### **S2 E8 “Double Shock”**

Which twin electrocuted their rich uncle in his bathtub? Baxter drives a red 1967 Ferrari 330 GTS convertible. We never see what car Norman drives.

### **S3 E1 “Lovely But Lethal”**

Murderess/ cosmetics tycoon Viveca Scott briefly drives a white 70's Cadillac De Ville. (Image 22)





### S3 E2 "Any Old Port in a Storm"

It looks like this episode's victim was able to buy Baxter Paris's Ferrari 330 GTS – but the license plate number is different. He is murdered by his stepbrother, winemaker Adrian Carsini, when he decides to sell the family vineyard. Adrian drives an early 70's Rolls Royce Silver Shadow with personalized plates. After staging his stepbrother's death at the beach he rides off on a folding bicycle.





### S3 E3 “Candidate for Crime”

No cars of note. The “you ever consider getting a new car?” gag is repeated when Columbo accidentally drives into a vehicle inspection stop. While the Peugeot is being repaired, he uses the service station's tow truck to check drive times from the murder location.



### S3 E4 “Double Exposure

Murderer/ motivational specialist Dr. Keppel drives his Institute's Lincoln Continental Executive Limousine. Columbo drives a golf cart to track him down on the course.







### S3 E5 “Publish or Perish”

Murderous publisher Riley Greenleaf drives a 1970 2-door Cadillac De Ville convertible in which he has a “drunken” accident to establish his alibi. Hired killer Eddie Kane drives a VW Bug convertible. It could be the same one from “Suitable for Framing.”

### S3 E6 “Mind Over Mayhem”

Research scientist Dr. Marshall Cahill uses an early 70's Triumph TR6 as a murder weapon. The Triumph is part of the Cybernetic Research Institute's fleet of cars powered by natural gas.





### **S3 E7 “Swan Song”**

Country singer Tommy Brown drives a brown Cadillac Eldorado. He also flies the small plane which he jumps out of leaving his wife and her protege to die when it crashes.



### **S3 E8 “A Friend in Deed”**

Police Commissioner and wife killer Mark Halperin drives yet another Cadillac Eldorado. The Peugeot had a dead battery so Columbo is brought to the murder scene in the commissioner's limo. The car salesman boyfriend of the victim offers Columbo \$80 dollars for the Peugeot as a trade-in. We also find out the Peugeot has a police radio and the ID is “194”.



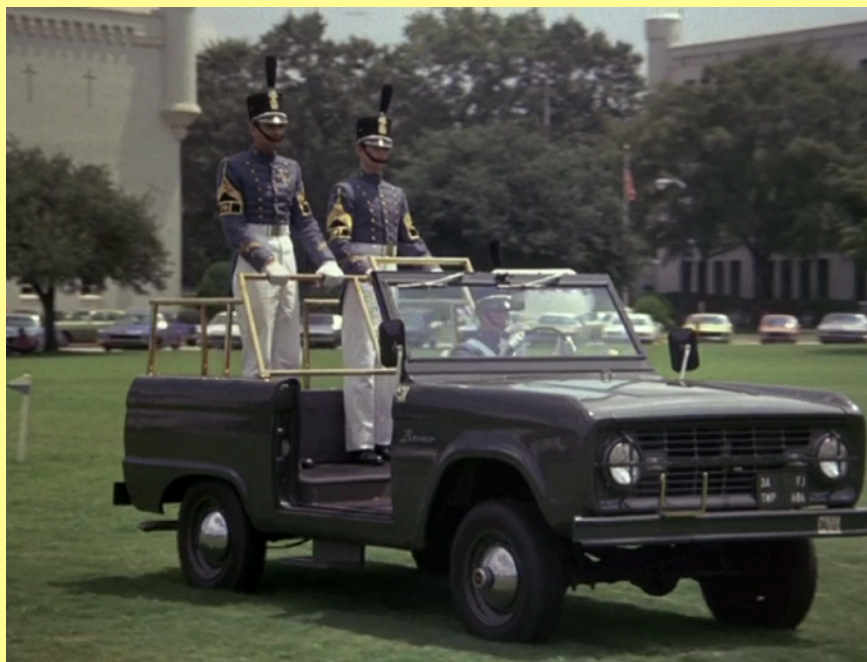
### **S4 E1 “An Exercise in Fatality”**

After a string of murderers driving Cadillacs we finally see another European luxury car! Health spa owner/ killer Milo Janus, drives a red Rolls Royce Silver Shadow.



## S4 E2 “Negative Reaction”

Photographer/ wife killer Paul Galesko drives a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud III. There's a funny scene in the Peugeot where Columbo terrifies a driving test examiner when giving him a ride.



## S4 E3 “By Dawn's Early Light”

No cars of note since the episode takes place entirely at a military academy but this nifty modified Ford Bronco shows up.



**S4 E4 “Troubled Waters”** No cars in this episode which takes place on a cruise ship.

### **S4 E5 “Playback”**

Gadget-crazy killer Harold Van Wyck drives a 1972 Mercedes 450 SL convertible.



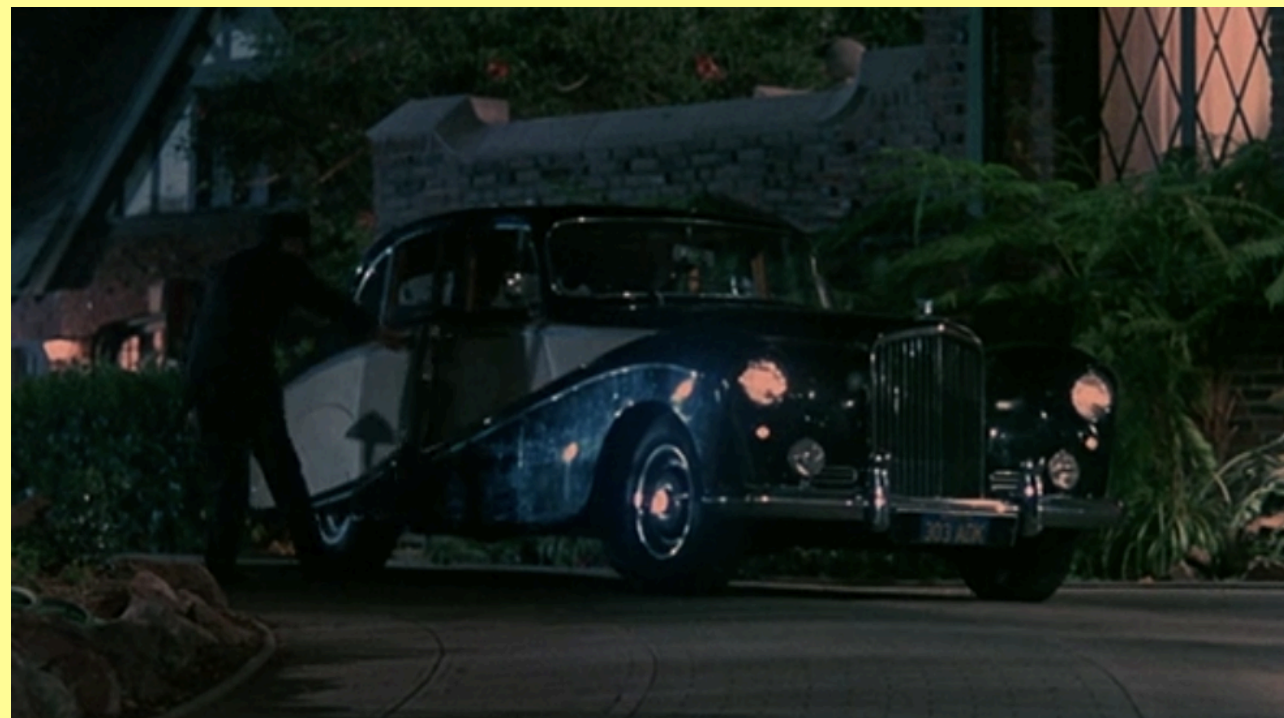
### **S4 E6 “A Deadly State of Mind”**

Well tanned psychiatrist and killer Mark Collier drives another Mercedes 450 SL. A C1 Corvette is parked in the victim's driveway but we don't know if belongs to him or his wife.



### **S5 E1 “Forgotten Lady”**

Aging movie star and husband killer Grace Wheeler is chauffeured in a Bentley S1. Her dance partner Ned Diamond drives a Stutz Blackhawk which I wish we got a better look at.





## S5 E2 “A Case of Immunity”

Suarian diplomat/ murderer Hassan Salah is driven in a Cadillac Fleetwood limousine and then drives it himself to meet and kill his co-conspirator.



## S5 E3 “Identity Crisis”

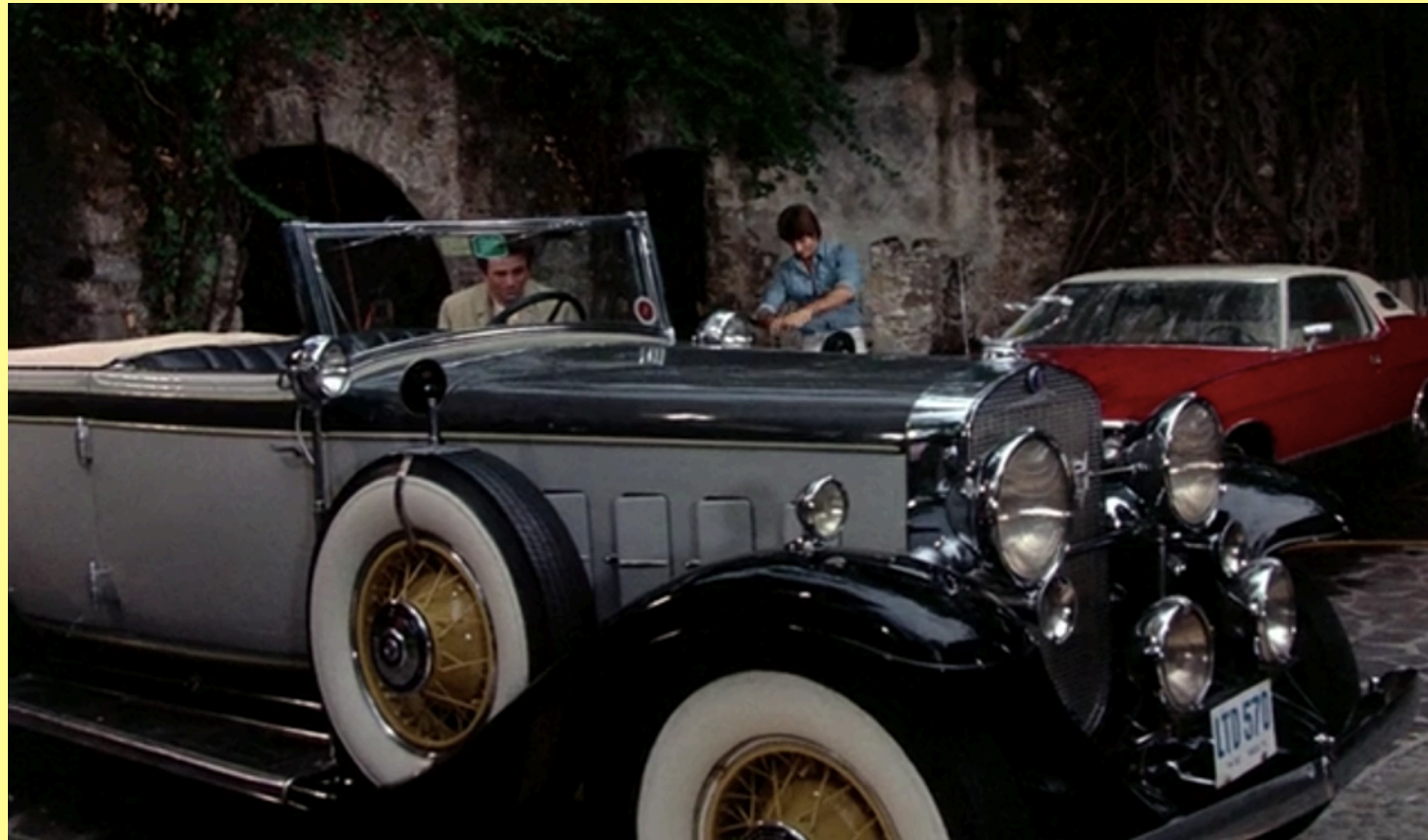
CIA agent/ killer Nelson Bremer drives a very distinctive green Citroen SM. He tries to kill his hired operative Melville by blowing up a 1955 Chevrolet Nomad and then drives Melville's 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air.





## S5 E4 "A Matter of Honor"

Retired bullfighter and murderer Luis Montoya has a classic 1931 Cadillac 355 Coupe as well as a Ford LTD neither of which we see him drive or ride in. No word if they had "rich, Corinthian leather." His daughter drives a 1954 MG TF. While in Mexico with Mrs. Columbo, the Peugeot is in an accident which keeps Columbo in Mexico to solve the crime.





## S5 E5 “Now You See Him”

Magician and former Nazi The Great Santini briefly drives a Bentley S2 which we don't get a good look at.

## S5 E6 “Last Salute to the Commodore”

Who killed the Commodore? Prime suspect Charles Clay drives yet another 1975 Mercedes 450 SL. Columbo's new protege Mac gets to drive the Peugeot.



## S6 E1 “Fade in to Murder”

TV detective Ward Fowler drives a plain vanilla Dodge Dart when committing murder. His TV character, Lieutenant Lucerne, seems to drive a 1930 Cadillac V16.





**S6 E2 “Old Fashioned Murder”** no cars of note.

**S6 E3 “The Bye Bye Sky High IQ Murder Case”**

Smart person and killer Oliver Brandt drives a Mercedes-Benz 350 SEL. When Columbo speeds away from the murder scene in the Peugeot he nearly causes an accident. (Image 51, 52)



**S7 E1 “Try and Catch Me”**

Mystery writer and nephew killer Abigail Mitchell drives a Rolls Royce Corniche which Columbo gets to drive.





### **S7 E2 "Murder Under Glass"**

Blackmailing restaurant critic and poisoner Paul Gerard drives a Stutz Blackhawk which we again don't get a very good look at.



### **S7 E3 "Make Me a Perfect Murder"**

TV Executive and carefully planning murderer Kay Freestone drives an unexceptionable Mustang II. The episode starts with Columbo getting into the middle of a police chase and the Peugeot getting rear-ended by a cop.





### **S7 E4 “How To Dial a Murder”**

Behavioral Psychologist and amateur dog trainer Dr. Eric Mason drives a golden 1962 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow III.



### **S7 E4 “The Conspirators”**

Irish partisan and killer Joe Devlin drives a 1952 Jaguar XK 120 Roadster. Odd that an Irish nationalist would drive an English car!



This episode is the end of the initial run of the show and the Peugeot has become pretty beaten up. Compare these shots to its appearance earlier in the series.



Is that duct tape on the tail light? And a missing headlight? It's amazing the car was allowed on the road!





## S8 E1 “Columbo Goes to the Guillotine” No cars of note.

In all honesty, the second run of the series did not feature as many interesting cars. It's mostly Mercedes-Benz and BMW for these 80's and 90's killers.

It's been claimed that the Peugeot used in this second run of the series was the same as the one in the first. If that's true it has been completely renovated and the license plate number is different. Compare these images with its appearance in “The Conspirators.”



## S8 E2 - “Murder, Smoke and Shadows”

Wunderkind movie director and friend killer Alex Brady drives a 1978 Rolls Royce Corniche.





### S8 E3 “Sex and the Married Detective”

Sex therapist and killer of her cheating lover Dr. Joan Allenby drives a BMW 735i which we see only briefly.



S8 E3 “Grand Deceptions” No cars of note.

### S9 E1 “Murder, A Self Portrait”

The victim of artist Max Barsini drove a 1988 BMW 325i. Columbo has him drive the car home from the murder scene.





### S9 E2 “Columbo Cries Wolf”

The woman publisher of a swinging men’s magazine goes missing and Columbo thinks its murder. A white Lincoln stretch limo gets a lot of screen time when Columbo rides in it to recreate the day the woman went missing. A red Mercedes-Benz 560 SL is used by the murderer when imitating the woman a second time.



### S9 E3 “Agenda for Murder”

Lawyer, political operator and murderer Oscar Finch drives a BMW 750iL.





### **S9 E4 “Rest in Peace, Mrs. Columbo”**

Revenge killer and realtor Vivian Dmitri attempts to make Columbo pay for jailing her husband. She drives a red Mercedes-Benz 560 SL. (Just like the one seen in “Columbo Cries Wolf”)



### **S9 E5 “Uneasy Lies the Crown”**

Losing gambler and bad dentist Wesley Corman murders his wife’s actor lover with a poisoned dental crown. He drives a Jaguar XJS. The victim drives a red ’65 Mustang which is senselessly driven off a cliff.





Columbo can't figure out how to put a police light on the Peugeot.



### S9 E6 "Murder in Malibu"

Womanizer Wayne Jennings drives a red Jaguar XKE convertible. But did he kill the romance novelist? Columbo gets a ride in a dune buggy.





### S10 E1 “Columbo Goes to College”

Entitled college frat boys kill their professor. They drive a very 80’s customized small truck which figures in their plan.



### S10 E2 “Caution: Murder Can Be Hazardous to Your Health”

Crime show host and former porn actor Wade Anders murders his blackmailer. He drives a top of the line Mercedes-Benz 560 SEC and has a fender-bender with the Peugeot.





From 1991 to 2003 Columbo aired as a series of specials.

### **“Columbo and the Murder of a Rock Star”**

High priced lawyer Hugh Creighton kills his rock star girl friend. He drives a Mercedes-Benz 500 SL, a Lexus LS 400, and he “borrows” the gardener’s truck during the crime. His victim drives a Rolls Royce Silver Spur. Columbo takes the top down on the Peugeot and claims it’s the first time he’s ever taken it down. But we know that’s not true!





### **“Death Hits the Jackpot”**

Faux lottery winner and nephew killer  
Leon Lamarr drives a Rolls Royce  
Corniche II



**“No Time to Die”** No cars of note.



### **“A Bird in the Hand...”**

Gambler Harold McCain intends to kill his rich uncle by blowing up his Rolls Royce Corniche II but ends up killing the gardener. The Rolls looks the same car from “Death Hits the Jackpot” but the interior is a different color. Harold drives a 1972 Buick Skylark. His boozy and lecherous aunt drives a Jaguar XJS.





### **“It’s All in the Game”**

Flirty killer Lauren Stanton drives another Jaguar XJS, this time a black convertible.



### **“Butterfly in Shades of Gray”**

Talk radio personality and murderer Fielding Chase drives a Mercedes-Benz 500 SL. Columbo fakes car trouble in the Benz to force their final showdown.



## “Undercover”

Since he is undercover Columbo drives a Ford LTD. When he poses as a mafioso he rides in a Lincoln Town Car stretch limo.



## “Strange Bedfellows”

Fratricidal killer and bad disguise aficionado Graham McVeigh drives a blue Ford Aerostar minivan to buy his untraceable pistol. His everyday drive is a red Ford Explorer. Columbo gets a ride in a Lincoln Town Car stretch limo - the same as he used in “Undercover” - when he is “kidnapped” by a mafioso.





## **“A Trace of Murder”**

Co-conspirator Cathleen Calvert drives a Mercedes-Benz SL. Her secret lover and gunman Patrick Kinsley drives a Honda Accord.



## **“Ashes to Ashes”**

Funeral director and killer Eric Prince drives another Jaguar XJ.





## “Murder with Too Many Notes”

Hollywood composer and protege killer Findlay Crawford drives a Bentley Turbo R. His victim drives a Volkswagen Beetle convertible. Columbo drives the Bentley (very slowly) when Crawford has had one too many.



## “Columbo Likes the Nightlife”

Nightclub owner Justin Price and his actress girlfriend Vanessa cover up the death of her ex. But then a reporter tries to blackmail them. The ex-boyfriend drove a Mercedes SL. Vanessa drives a Lexus LX 470.

