**Evolution of the C5 Corvette**

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**1997**- 9800 cars built: initial introduction, coupe only-  
  
Completely new, redesigned Corvette. Base (FE1) and Z51 (FE3) suspension packages.   
 97-00 C5 LS1's produce 345 HP @ 5600 RPM and 350 Ft Lbs of torque @ 4400 RPM.

345 HP/350 lbs. torque, A4 (auto) and M6 transmissions no cost options.

"Wagon wheels", painted silver - standard. Speedline Bronze-finish magnesium wheels were $ 3000 option.

  
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 **1998-** 31,084 built-convertible introduced  
[Convertible](http://www.corvetteforum.com/forums/) becomes available   
Active Handling becomes available late in year. (SO- 1997 did NOT have active handling.)

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**1999**

33270 built- hardtop (non-Z06) introduced. [FRC](http://www.corvetteforum.com/forums/) "Fixed Roof Coupe" aka the hardtop, becomes available. All FRC's are MN6 (6-speed) cars with the Hardtop **no** removable roof, no auto transmission avail, same 345 HP as standard model.

26# injectors substituted for 28#

Fuel pump revised to reduce noise

Z51 suspension package, and are about 60lbs lighter than coupes.

HUD introduced as option   
Only one line in driver's side fuel rail cover (no fuel return line?)   
Power telescoping wheel becomes an option   
Steering hardware changed to combat wandering   
Door sill trim plates added.

"Smart" airbags that deploy with less force for lighter passengers.

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**2000-** 33682 built

"Wagon wheels" dropped 5-spoke forged wheels introduced as standard, painted, chrome optional.

 to  Opt. 

Torch Red interior added, replacing the Firethorn Red.

Active keyless entry replaced passive keyless entry (more reliable)

Passenger side door lock removed.

Targa top seals improved.

Vinyl replaced leather on side bolsters for better wear.

Leather seats were standard as of 2000.  
Millennium Yellow available   
Steel swaybar endlinks instead of plastic on Z51 equipped cars   
Z51 swaybar diameters grow (25.4/21.7 to 28.6/21.7 to 28.6/23.6 (note: new rear same as Z06)   
Passenger airbag 'off' switch added to console (light by TC/AH button)   
  
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**2001-** 35622 built- incl. Coupe, Convertible, and Z06 only hardtop offered, 5768 Z06 built.

**Extensive changes.**

Return to 28# injectors for all models.   
**Second Generation Active Handling**   
Nassau Blue discontinued   
Alternator 'clutch' pulley added on A4 cars   
New soundproofing + foam in all cars   
Smaller keyfob   
Electrochromic dimming rearview and driver's mirrors   
Lighter AGM battery replaces standard lad/acid battery  
Thickness + Material in convertible change   
Chrome exhaust tips for coupe and convertible  
LS1 changes result in new output **of 350 HP @ 5200 RPM and 375 Ft Lbs of torque**

(MN6)

LS1 cam profile changed   
 All [Corvettes](http://www.corvetteforum.com/forums/) now have the LS6 intake manifold   
 All Corvettes now have the LS6 engine block (windage passages in block), which includes a beefier oil pump.

[Hardtop](http://www.corvetteforum.com/forums/)/FRC discontinued - **Z06 Added** Introduction of the Z06, which has as differences:   
 LS6 engine- hardtop body style   
 rear brake ducting   
 screened inlets on front fascia, without foglights   
 F1 supercar tires 265-17 front, 295-18 rear, on 17x9.5 and 18x10.5 (one inch wider, respectively)  
 Red LS6 Fuel Rail Covers (FRC's)   
 FE4 Z06 suspension - uprated springs, bars (30mm/23.6mm), shocks (note front spring and rear bar same as Z51)   
 M12 transmission with shorter gearing (1-2-3 analagous to MN6 with 3.90 rear diff   
 Titanium exhaust system   
 lightweight windshield   
 New, stronger clutch with redesigned master + slave cylinder   
 Stronger rear differential (shotpeened ring gear)   
 Red brake calipers (otherwise identical)   
 Trans overtemp warning light on DIC

6500 redline gauges with special checkering + Z06 font 

Pup catalytic converters added to all models - lighter weight  
Stronger synchros in all transmissions   
Exhaust manifolds revised (5hp regained) - thin wall cast replacing SS manifolds - lighter weight  
Metal valve stem caps (late year)   
Torque Tube (drive shaft) changed from metal-matrix composite to aluminum alloy 6061, increased in dia from 55 to 63 mm. all models  
Driveshaft couplings have also been upgraded on manual-equipped models for additional strength and durability   
New LS6 top-end with new style head design (10.5:1 compression, 64cc chamber), LS6 cam (0.525/0.525, 204/211 on 116) - 385hp   
Redesigned PCV system to help combat oil burning   
New soundproofing and foam in all cars

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**2002:** 35767 built, includes 8297 Z06s

No changes to the Coupe or Convertible models- performance upgrades for the Z06.

**Z06 Changes:**

Engine upgraded to give more power- (total with changes = **405 hp**)

Z06 LS6 cam changed to: 0.551/0.547, 204/218 on 117.5   
Less restrictive intake airbox lid   
De-screened MAF for better breathing  
Removal of pup-cats  
Z06 shocks revised with less rebound for better launching   
Z06 brake pads revised for better stopping (generate more dust)   
Lighter, sodium filled valves w/ stronger valve springs   
higher tension rings installed to prevent oil burning problems   
slight piston redesign \*   
clutch strength upgraded.   
HUD available on Z06 (not avail '01 model year)

Wheel supplier changed to Speedline, moved from forged to cast. Weight nearly identical.   
Electron Blue color offered   
Steel endlinks changed to aluminum   
Aluminum automatic transmission cooler case (all models)  
AM/FM stereo with in-dash CD player now standard on Coupe and Convertible   
AM/FM/Cassette only available with 12-disc CD changer on Coupe and Convertible 

**2003:** 22657 built; convertible outsold the coupe for first time- 14022 to 12812; 8635 Z06

Early in model year- recalls were ever done to 2003- 2004 models for fuel system problems.

2003 anniversary edition with Anniversary paint and decal option.  
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**2004** 34064 sold- 5683 Z06's  
Late in model year- **new fuel system added from the C6 project**.  **This was to have eliminated the fuel transfer pump and leakage issues.**  It mainly did accomplish that. No recalls were ever done on 2003- 2004 models for fuel system problems.

Z06 shocks further refined. Accompanying upper front control arm bushing, and rear swaybar bushing changes. based on Nuremburg Ring testing- these are supposed to be the real deal- they can be retro-fitted to ANY C5.

2004 Commemorative Editions. CE Z06 comes with unidirectional carbon fibre hood and has decal package.

Black (6212) was the most popular color after the special commemorative LeMans Blue (6899)

**So- what to buy??** I would say at least a 2001. Although the fuel system changes in 2003 - the 2004 models should avoid any possible leakage, or fuel system problems and the attendant cost of $ 2000 - 3000.