

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1949 Chevrolet Advance Design 3100 Restoration Guide

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Guide: <https://restoreessentials.com/product/RE-GD-1949-CHEVROLET-ADVANCE-DES>

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1949 Chevrolet Advance Design 3100 Restoration Guide

Model Years 1949

Model year	1949 - the tank moves; the 3100 badge is born
Series	3100 = 1/2-ton, 116-inch wheelbase
Serial prefix (3100)	GP
Engine	216 Stovebolt six (factory rating 92 hp for 1949)
Fuel tank	Upright behind the seat (early-1949 change)
Brakes	Huck drums; lever-action shocks

Every specification in this guide was checked against factory literature, marque references, period road tests, and documented survivor vehicles. Where sources disagree or the record is silent, this guide says so rather than guessing.

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How This Guide Works

This is a **single-year restoration** guide for the 1949 Chevrolet 3100 - one year of the Advance Design (1947-1953 in this series), Chevrolet's first all-new postwar truck line. The year gets its own guide because the running changes are the restoration: fuel-tank location, shifter position, brake design, bed boards, door hardware, and the serial system itself all change inside this span, and a factory-correct truck matches its own year. Specifications were checked against the factory Chevrolet Truck Shop Manual tradition, the shop-manual compilations at 1954advance-design.com, and the Stovebolt.com serial charts. Where the record is silent or sources disagree, this guide says so instead of guessing.

Scope. Covers the 1949 3100 1/2-ton pickup on the 116-inch wheelbase, with notes where the 3600 (125.25-inch) and 3800 (137-inch) differ. GMC's New Design trucks shared the cab and chassis but ran GMC engines and trim - a GMC serial plate will not decode with Chevrolet tables. Panel, Canopy Express, and Suburban Carryall variants share the 3100 running gear covered here.

Where 1949 sits in the run

- Coming in: the 1948 truck - tank still in the bed, name-style hood emblems all year.
- Leaving: 1950 brings telescopic shocks and the last year of the driver's cowl vent. The emblem and tank changes of 1949 stay; the running gear starts to modernize next year.

Platform Snapshot

The Advance Design was a clean break from the prewar AK Series: a roomier all-steel "Unisteel" cab wide enough for three across, a wider frame, and the five-horizontal-bar grille that defines the look. Underneath it stayed deliberately simple - a solid front axle, an enclosed torque-tube driveline, and the 216 Stovebolt six Chevrolet had refined since 1937. That simplicity is why these trucks restore well.

Fact	Detail
Model year	1949 (Advance Design, within the 1947-1953 series)
Designation	3100 = 1/2-ton; 3600 = 3/4-ton; 3800 = 1-ton
Wheelbase	3100: 116 in; 3600: 125.25 in; 3800: 137 in
Body styles	Pickup; panel; Canopy Express; Suburban Carryall; chassis-cab
Engine	216 cu in Stovebolt inline-6 (3100 standard)
Driveline	Enclosed torque tube to a hypoid rear axle
Brakes	Four-wheel hydraulic drums, Huck type
Electrical	6-volt, negative ground
Transmissions	3-speed manual (column); 4-speed manual (floor)
Shocks	Lever-action type

The 1949 Register - What Makes a 1949 a 1949

- EARLY 1949: the gasoline tank moves upright BEHIND THE SEAT in the cab; the filler neck sits aft of the passenger door handle. The bed-side filler of 1947-48 is gone.



- LATE 1949: the hood side emblems stop reading “Thriftmaster” / “Loadmaster” and become NUMBERS designating capacity - 3100 on the 1/2-ton, 3600 on the 3/4-ton, 3800 on the 1-ton. The “3100” badge restorers shop by is born here, mid-year: both emblem styles are factory-correct on a 1949, depending on build date.
- Serial prefix is GP for the 1/2-ton (GR 3/4-ton, GS 1-ton), unchanged across the early/late split.
- The factory rated the late-tune 216 at 92 hp for 1949 (compression 6.6:1) - the rating this guide uses for the span's engine chapter.
- Carryover hardware: no vent windows, driver's cowl vent with maroon knob, lever-action shocks, Huck brakes, column-shift three-speed.

Serial-Plate Decoding

There is no standardized VIN on these trucks. The serial plate lives on the driver-side door hinge pillar and carries a prefix-coded serial number: the letter prefix identifies the series and model year, followed by the assembly plant code and the consecutive unit number. Chevrolet changed the prefix scheme more than once during 1947-53, so always decode with the year-specific chart - the Stovebolt.com identification pages reproduce the factory series/year/wheelbase table.

Year	3100 prefix	Wheelbase
1949	GP	116 in

- 1949 1/2-ton prefix is GP (3/4-ton GR, 1-ton GS). The ID plate is black with silver letters.
- Date the truck before choosing hood emblems: the prefix alone does not split early from late 1949 - the build date and the original emblem holes do.

Paint and trim codes. Plate paint/trim coding varies by year and plant. Read what is stamped on your truck's plate and decode it against the Chevrolet truck data book for that year; do not borrow a code table from a different year.

Engines

Engine	Years (3100)	Notes
216 Stovebolt I6	1949 standard	216.48 cu in; compression 6.6:1 in late tune; factory rating 92 hp for 1949

The 216: what you are rebuilding

- Displacement 216.48 cu in from a 3-1/2-inch bore and 3-3/4-inch stroke. Compression is 6.5:1 in early form and 6.6:1 in late Advance Design tune, which the factory rated at 92 hp for 1949.
- The 216 does NOT have a fully pressurized oiling system. The connecting rods are fed from an oil trough in the pan: spray nozzles squirt oil at the rods, and dippers on the rod caps scoop it to the bearings.
- Rod bearings are babbit cast integral with the rod - there are no modern insert shells to drop in. Clearance is set by removing copper shims stacked between rod cap and rod. If the crankshaft is ground undersize or a bearing is damaged, rod and bearing were replaced as a unit in period practice.
- That splash system is honest at truck speeds with clean oil and correct clearances; it is unforgiving of neglected oil changes and sustained high rpm. Restore it as designed.