

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1951 Chevrolet Advance Design 3100 Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1951 Chevrolet Advance Design 3100 Restoration Guide

Model Years 1951

Model year	1951 - vent windows and Bendix brakes arrive
Series	3100 = 1/2-ton, 116-inch wheelbase
Serial prefix (3100)	JP
Engine	216 Stovebolt six
Brakes	Bendix drums (new on 1/2-ton)
Bed	9 boards early; 8 boards from mid-year

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 1951 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 1951 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 1951 sits in the run

- Coming in: the 1950 last-of-the-original truck - lever-shock successor but still Huck brakes, solid door glass, and the cowl vent.
- Leaving: 1952 changes the door handles to push-button, the speedometer to 90 mph, and the dash trim to color-matched paint. The 1951 door - vent window with a turn-down handle - is a one-year combination.

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	1951 (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, Bendix type (new, 1/2-ton)
Electrical	6-volt, negative ground
Transmissions	3-speed manual (column); 4-speed manual (floor)
Shocks	Telescopic tube type



The 1951 Register - What Makes a 1951 a 1951

- VENT WINDOWS arrive in the doors - and the driver's-side cowl vent is deleted with them. A 1951 door is identified at a glance: vent window present, cowl vent gone.
- The 1/2-ton brakes change from Huck to the modern BENDIX design (see the brake chapter for the backing-plate identification). The heavier series keep Huck until 1953.
- MID-YEAR: the bed floor changes from 9 boards to 8 (wider) boards. Both counts are factory-correct on a 1951 - check the build date and the original skid-strip holes before ordering a bed kit.
- Serial prefix is JP for the 1/2-ton (JR 3/4-ton, JS 1-ton).
- Last year for the 80-mph speedometer, the chrome window handle knobs, and the chrome wiper knob - all three change for 1952.
- Door handles are still the TURN-DOWN style (push-buttons arrive for 1952) - vent window plus turn-down handle is the 1951-only door.

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
1951	JP	116 in

- 1951 1/2-ton prefix is JP (3/4-ton JR, 1-ton JS). The ID plate is black with silver letters.
- Engine identity is separate from the serial plate (see Engines).

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	1951 standard	216.48 cu in; 3-1/2 in bore x 3-3/4 in stroke; four-main crankshaft

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 babbitt 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.