

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1957 Chrysler 300 Letter Series Restoration Guide

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Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1957 Chrysler 300 Letter Series Restoration Guide

Model Years 1957

Model year	1957
Letter designation	300C
Engine	392 cu in FirePower Hemi V8
Output	375 hp (390 hp limited edition)
Transmission	3-speed TorqueFlite automatic; 3-speed manual
Production	2,402 total (1,918 hardtops; 484 convertibles)

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.

Published by RestorationEssentials



How This Guide Works

This is a **single-year restoration** guide for the 1957 Chrysler 300 Letter Series - one model year, given its own guide because the year changes are the restoration: specifications, finishes and procedures that differ from the year before and the year after are called out in the 1957 Register below, and shared platform material is labeled as shared. Chrysler 300 Club International letter-car specification table; Chrysler factory shop manuals 1955-1961; Hagerty marque model histories; period road-test references (Motor Trend).

Scope. This guide covers the 1957 Chrysler 300 Letter Series as built. Neighboring years appear only where a change boundary must be drawn - a part or procedure belonging to another year is named as such, never silently applied to this one.

Platform Snapshot

Fact	Detail
Model year	1957
Engine (standard)	392 cu in FirePower Hemi V8
Output	375 hp (390 hp limited edition)
Transmission	3-speed TorqueFlite automatic; 3-speed manual
Chassis	Body-on-frame; new Torsion-Aire torsion-bar front suspension
Original list price	\$4,513 hardtop (club table)
Production	2,402 total (1,918 hardtops; 484 convertibles)

The 1957 Register - What Makes a 1957 a 1957

- The styling break: Virgil Exner's Forward Look arrives with a wide trapezoidal 'yawning' grille unique to the 300C, a Vista-Dome windshield, dual headlamps and fins that rise gradually from the doors.
- First convertible in the letter series - 484 built alongside 1,918 hardtops. A 300C convertible is a factory body style from this year forward; a 'convertible' C-300 or 300B is not.
- Torsion-Aire torsion-bar front suspension replaces coil springs across the Chrysler line this year - front-end parts, ride height setting and alignment procedure all change from 1956.
- Wheel diameter drops from 15 to 14 inches, and front-brake cooling ducts are fitted with intakes below the headlamps - the ducting is 300C equipment, not an owner add-on.
- Red, white and blue 300C medallions appear on the sides, hood, trunk and interior - the first year of that medallion scheme.

Engines - the 1957 Specification

Engine	Output	Notes
392 FirePower Hemi V8	375 hp	Standard; dual four-barrel carburetors, each with its own air cleaner
392 FirePower Hemi V8 (limited)	390 hp	Very limited production - 18 built per marque records



The 392 is a raised-deck development of the FirePower Hemi and was exclusive to the 300, New Yorker and Imperial lines. Verify casting and stamping numbers - a 354 or 331 dressed as a 392 is the common substitution.

Each carburetor breathes through its own air cleaner on the 300C induction system; a single shared cleaner is not the 1957 300C arrangement.

Year-Correct Procedures

Torsion-bar ride height is set by the adjuster bolts, not by springs: set the car to the manual's specified height BEFORE any alignment work, and re-check after.

Service the front-brake cooling ducts as part of a brake job - blocked or missing ducting shows up as fade complaints that new linings will not fix.

Finishes and Trim - 1957 Only

- Exterior colors: Jet Black, Parade Green metallic, Copper Brown metallic, Gauguin Red and Cloud White. Tan leather standard; New Yorker-list interiors optionally available.
- Styling stayed deliberately plain for a flagship: a single side spear and the large 300 badge on the rear fender. Pinstripes and extra chrome are not factory 300C finishes.

Restoration Sequence Notes

- Photograph and record the car's tags, casting numbers and as-found trim before teardown - on a single-year restoration the as-found evidence is what the finished car is judged against.
- Verify every year-locked item in the 1957 Register before ordering parts; the commonest defect in this model's restorations is a neighboring year's part fitted without malice and without record.
- Keep a build file: sources consulted, measurements taken, and every substitution made, however small.

Recommended for this restoration

Shop exact-fit supplies on Amazon

- Chrysler 300 letter series hemi engine rebuild gasket set
- 1955-1961 Chrysler 300 weatherstrip kit
- Chrysler cross ram intake gasket set

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Sources Consulted

Chrysler 300 Club International letter-car specification table; Chrysler factory shop manuals 1955-1961; Hagerty marque model histories; period road-test references (Motor Trend). Where sources disagreed, the disagreement is recorded in this guide's corrections file and the disputed figure is not asserted.

Thank you for restoring a 1957 Chrysler 300 Letter Series the way it was built - one year at a time. - RestorationEssentials