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The opening pages of

1957 Studebaker Hawk Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1957 Studebaker Hawk

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

Key facts at a glance

Wheelbase	120.5 in — supercharged Golden Hawk debuts
Engines	185 six (101 hp); 259 V8 (180 hp); 289 V8 (210/225 hp); 289 supercharged (275 hp)
Transmissions	3-speed manual, 3-speed overdrive, Flightomatic automatic
Production	Golden Hawk 4,356 (Silver Hawk: see Conflicts) Identifier Serial plate + firewall body tag + production order from the SNM Single-year coverage.…

About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1957 Studebaker Hawk — one model, one year, nothing else. Every specification in this guide was checked against marque references, factory literature excerpts, and enthusiast documentation before it was written.

Our operating ethic is simple: we don't lie and we don't steal, we offer value. That means three things for this guide. First, no invented specifications — every number has a source. Second, where reputable sources disagree, the disagreement is disclosed in the text and in the Sources, Conflicts & Omissions section rather than papered over. Third, where a detail could not be verified, it is omitted and the omission is recorded — an honest gap beats a confident fabrication.

How to use this guide: start with the VIN and fender-tag (or door data plate) decoding sections to establish exactly what your car was when it left the factory. Use the engine, transmission, axle, paint, and casting sections to verify that what is on the car today matches what should be there. Use the rust and restoration-sequence sections to plan the work. And keep this guide in the shop — it is a working document, not a coffee-table book.

A final note: these cars are sixty years old. Parts have been swapped, tags have been lost, and memories have faded. Trust the metal — casting numbers, date codes, and stampings — over stories. When in doubt, photograph everything and verify against the factory service manual for your year.

1. Manufacturer History: Studebaker

Studebaker began in 1852 as a blacksmith and wagon-building shop in South Bend, Indiana, and by the turn of the century it was the largest wagon maker in the world. It entered the automobile business in 1902 with electrics and 1904 with gasoline cars, and by the 1920s it was a major independent automaker. The Depression nearly killed the company; a 1933 reorganization saved it, and after the war Studebaker's Raymond Loewy-styled 1947 models — 'first by far with a postwar car' — and the breathtaking 1953 Starliner coupes gave it the most beautiful cars in America. But the Ford-General Motors price war of the early 1950s bled every independent dry, and by 1954 Studebaker was desperate.

In 1954 Studebaker merged with Packard, forming the Studebaker-Packard Corporation. The merger saved neither company: by 1956 the combined firm was nearly bankrupt, Packard's Detroit factory closed in 1956, and Packard-badged cars became Studebakers in fancier dress until the Packard name died after 1958. Out of this turmoil came the Hawk line (1956-1964) — the 'family sports car,' a personal-luxury coupe built on the 1953 C/K platform, running from the four-model 1956 lineup through the supercharged Golden Hawks to Brooks Stevens' 1962 Gran Turismo Hawk.

Studebaker's engineering signature was honest and durable: the 259/289-cubic-inch V8 family (1955-1964), Borg-Warner-sourced transmissions (the Flightomatic automatic, the T-10 four-speed), Dana rear axles with the TwinTraction limited-slip differential, and — from 1963 — Paxton supercharging (R2) and front disc brakes on the performance models. For the restorer, the Studebaker Drivers Club (SDC), Turning Wheels magazine, and the Studebaker National Museum in South Bend — which holds the 1957 Studebaker Hawk factory production orders used to authenticate individual cars — are essential resources.

South Bend automobile production ended on December 20, 1963; Canadian production, using Chevrolet-built engines, continued through 1966. The Hawk died with South Bend — no Hawks were built in Canada. Survivors are rare, reproduction support is community-driven rather than corporate, and factory-correct restoration depends on production-order documentation and marque knowledge in a way

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ree car requires.

2. Model History: Studebaker Hawk

The Hawk line began in 1956 as Studebaker-Packard's 'family sports car' — four personal-luxury coupes built on the 1953 C/K platform: the Flight Hawk (six-cylinder economy), the Power Hawk (259 V8), the Sky Hawk (289 V8 hardtop), and the Golden Hawk (Packard 352 V8, 275 horsepower). It was a desperate company's boldest move: one platform, four personalities, from economy to genuine performance. The 1956 Golden Hawk — with its Packard V8, the biggest engine in the line — was the fastest Studebaker ever built to that point.

For 1957 the range was cut to two: the Silver Hawk (six or V8) and the Golden Hawk — now with Studebaker's own 289 V8 and a McCulloch supercharger, still rated 275 horsepower. The 1957 Golden Hawk is the legendary one: supercharged, finned, and fast, the car that kept Studebaker's performance reputation alive through the company's darkest years. For 1958 the Packard Hawk joined — a Studebaker Golden Hawk in Packard dress, built for the dying Packard dealer network — making 1958 the only year with three Hawk nameplates.

The 1959-1961 Silver Hawks (covered in the companion guides) carried the line through the Lark era as the company's sole remaining coupe. Then Brooks Stevens — the industrial designer Studebaker hired on a shoestring — restyled the Hawk for 1962 as the Gran Turismo Hawk: fins deleted, roofline cleaned up, interior modernized, Thunderbird-style roof. The 1962 GT Hawk was a sensation — the best-looking Studebaker in years, and the sales showed it. For 1963-1964 the GT Hawk could be ordered with the Avanti's R1 (240 hp) and R2 (290 hp, Paxton-supercharged) engines, front disc brakes, and the four-speed — the ultimate Hawks, built as South Bend counted down its final months. Production ended December 20, 1963, when South Bend closed; the 1964 Hawks were the last.

3. What Makes the 1957 Unique

The 1957 Hawk is the legend year — the year the range was cut to two models and the Golden Hawk got its supercharger. The Silver Hawk (185 six, 259 or 289 V8) was the volume car; the Golden Hawk (Studebaker 289 with the McCulloch supercharger, 275 horsepower) was the hero. The Packard 352 was gone — Studebaker's own 289, force-fed by the McCulloch blower, matched the Packard's 275-horsepower rating with 63 fewer cubic inches.

The supercharged 289 is the 1957 Golden Hawk's mechanical signature: the McCulloch (later Paxton) supercharger with its carburetor pressure box, the hood blister to clear it, the heavy-duty internals, and the 1957 Studebaker Hawk

finned, luxurious trim that made the Golden Hawk the most glamorous Studebaker ever built. The supercharger installation is the restoration trap: the blower, the pressure box, the plumbing, and the carburetion are 1957-Golden-Hawk-specific, and the supercharger must be rebuilt by a specialist — do not improvise.

The 1957 styling — the big fins, the Mercedes-like grille, the luxurious interior — is the most flamboyant Hawk look ever offered, and every trim detail is 1957-specific. The Golden Hawk's fins, side trim, and interior appointments do not interchange with the Silver Hawk's in their specifics, and reproduction trim exists: compare against known-original cars and the SDC Authenticity Guide.

Production: Golden Hawk 4,356 cars. Silver Hawk 1957 production figures vary across the secondary sources checked — see Conflicts. For the restorer, the 1957 Hawk's verification chain is the serial plate, the firewall body tag, and the production order: order it before paying any Golden Hawk premium, because supercharged Golden Hawks are regularly cloned from Silver Hawks, and only the production order proves the blower was born with the car.

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