

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1968 Buick Wildcat Restoration Guide

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so you can judge the depth before you spend a dollar.

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1968 Buick Wildcat Restoration Guide

Model Years 1968

Model	Buick Wildcat — full-size performance series
Body / frame	126-in wheelbase — the last year at this length
Engine	430 V8, 360 hp / 475 lb-ft
Transmission	Super Turbine 400 automatic
Production	73,561 — the span's peak year
Identity	Detail facelift; convertible moves to Custom; side markers arrive

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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1. What this guide is — and is not

This is a single-year guide. It covers model year 1968 only. Where a neighbouring year differs, the difference is stated as a difference — the other year's parts, ratings and trim are never silently borrowed. Shared platform engineering is shared honestly; the specification table, the year-change register and the finishes in this guide are this year's own.

2. The year in brief

The 1968 Wildcat looks like the 1967 car — and that is exactly the trap this guide exists to disarm. The changes are in the grille, the side trim and the series coverage: the convertible moved up into the Custom line, federally mandated side-marker lamps appeared, and the safety-equipment programme deepened. Underneath, the 430 and the 126-inch chassis carried over for one final year before the 1969 reskin shortened the wheelbase.

Volume peaked at 73,561, the best year of the 1965–70 run — which means 1968 parts donors are comparatively plentiful and comparatively picked-over. The correct 1968 details (grille texture, trim, marker lamps) are what separate a 1968 car from a 1967 car wearing a new title.

3. Year-change register

Read this register before ordering anything. It is the difference between a 1968 car and a car that merely looks like one from across the street.

Item	1967	This year (1968)
Convertible series	Base series	Custom series
Side markers	Not fitted	Federally mandated side-marker lamps fitted
Grille / side trim	1967 pattern	Revised grille and side-trim details
Wheelbase	126 in	126 in (final year before the 1969 change to 124 in)
Engine	430, 360 hp	430, 360 hp (unchanged)
Production	68,095 (1967)	73,561 — span peak

4. Specification table — 1968

Item	Specification
Wheelbase	126 in
Engine	430 cu in V8, 360 hp, 475 lb-ft (gross)
Transmission	Super Turbine 400 automatic
Convertible	Custom series only
Lighting	Side-marker lamps standard (federal mandate)
Production	73,561



5. Numbers, tags and identity

- Convertible provenance changed series this year: a 1968 convertible is a Custom by definition. Check the body plate series against any 'base convertible' claim.
- Marker lamps and their bezels are 1968-onward hardware; their absence on a claimed 1968 car means filler, a panel swap, or a wrong-year car.
- Engine and body-plate decoding follow the 1967 pattern; keep the two years' trim codes separate when ordering interior parts.

6. Engines and transmissions

- **430 V8.** Unchanged: 360 hp, 475 lb-ft, four-barrel, 10.25:1 compression. The middle year of the 430's three-year run and the easiest to support.
- Super Turbine 400 automatic; no manual offering.
- Positraction and heavy-duty cooling remain the options that matter on a big car that will be driven; verify them on the car, not on the seller's list.

7. Paint, trim and finishes

Grille and side-trim revisions are the 1968 signature. Because panels interchange across 1967–68 more readily than trim does, a car can wear the wrong year's face on the right year's body — decode the plate, then audit the trim against documented 1968 cars before paint.

8. Rust and inspection map

Peak production means peak survivor count — and the rust map is unchanged. Judge the individual car, not the year's reputation.

- Lower front fenders behind the wheel openings, and the fender 'gill' trim area on cars that carry it — trim traps moisture against the panel.
- Rocker panels, inner and outer, and the rear quarter panels ahead of and behind the rear wheels.
- Trunk floor, spare-tyre well and the trunk drop-offs at the quarter-panel seams.
- Floor pans at the seat-belt anchors and under the rear seat; check with the carpets lifted, not by tapping from below.
- Frame rails at the body mounts and the rear kick-up; full-size Buicks hide scale inside the rails long after the outside looks clean.
- Convertible top wells and header bows on open cars; a leaking well rots the trunk floor from above.

9. Restoration priorities for this year

- Audit the face: grille, trim and marker lamps against 1968 references before any bodywork; correct-year trim is this restoration's identity.
- Convertibles are Customs: restore to Custom interior specification from the trim code.
- Last-year 126-inch chassis parts (this year only, in this body) deserve first claim on the parts budget.
- 430 rebuild discipline as 1967 — verify stampings and dates before machining.