

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1969 AMC AMX Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1969 AMC Amx

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

Key facts at a glance

Wheelbase	97 in — Hurst shifter from January 1969
Engines	290 (215 hp), 343 (280 hp), 390 (315 hp); SS/AMX 390 twin-4V (340 hp)
Transmissions	Borg-Warner T-10 4-speed standard; 3-speed automatic optional
Production	8,293 total (highest AMX model year) Identifier VIN A9M397_ — the 397 model code is the AMX marker Single-year coverage. Factory-correct...

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Single-year coverage. Factory-correct specifications. No guesswork.

SAMPLE EXCERPT — full guide available at the link on the cover sheet



About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1969 AMC AMX — 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: American Motors

American Motors was formed in 1954 by the merger of Nash and Hudson — the last independent American automaker of consequence, a company that survived by being cleverer than the Big Three rather than bigger. Under George Romney, AMC found its identity: the Rambler, an honest compact that sold on value while Detroit sold on size.

AMC's performance era arrived in the late 1960s. The 1968 Javelin and AMX gave AMC a genuine pony car and a two-seat sports car, both powered by the new AMC V8 family (290/343/390). The 1969 SC/Rambler — built with Hurst — was AMC's drag-racing statement: a 315-horsepower 390 in the compact Rogue body with red-white-and-blue paint, built to dominate NHRA's F/Stock class. It did. AMC's engineering was genuinely innovative: the unit-body construction, the 1966 V8 family with its thin-wall casting, and — from 1970 — the purchase of Jeep, which would eventually be AMC's salvation and legacy. For the restorer, AMC's small production volumes mean thinner reproduction support than the Big Three, but a passionate marque community and the American Motors Owners Association.

AMC survived as an independent until 1987, when Chrysler bought the company — mostly to get Jeep. The 1968-1974 performance cars (Javelin, AMX, SC/Rambler, Rebel Machine) are the heart of AMC collecting: low production, high character, and still attainable. Factory-correct restoration rewards patience and marque-community connections.

1969 American Motors AMX

2. Model History: American Motors AMX

The AMX grew out of American Motors' 1965-1966 show-car program: the AMX (American Motors Experimental) prototypes, built under design chief Dick Teague, were two-seat sports-car studies that stole the show circuit and convinced management that AMC could build a genuine performance car. The production AMX was approved as a fast, low-cost way into the pony-car market: take the new Javelin, cut 12 inches out of the wheelbase ahead of the rear axle, delete the back seat, and you had a two-seat



coupe for thousands less than a Corvette.

The AMX went on sale in February 1968 as a mid-year introduction — the only American-built steel-bodied two-seater in production. Standard equipment included the four-speed manual (Borg-Warner T-10), front disc brakes, and heavy-duty suspension; the base engine was the 290 V8, with the 343 and the 390 optional. The formula worked: the AMX won the Society of Automotive Engineers' Best Engineered Car award in both 1969 and 1970, and Craig Breedlove's AMX speed-record runs at Goodyear's Texas track in early 1968 — 106 records — gave the little car giant-killer credibility. The racing program cemented the legend. In 1969 Hurst Performance built 52 SS/AMX Super Stock drag cars — 390s with dual four-barrels rated at 340 horsepower, the most ferocious AMXs ever built. On the road-racing side, the Javelin Trans-Am program (1968-1970) shared the AMX's engineering. For 1970 the AMX got the new 360 V8 and a stronger 390 with dogleg-port heads and Ram Air; then the name moved onto the Javelin as a trim level in 1971, and the stand-alone two-seat AMX was gone after just 19,134 cars — one of the great what-ifs of the muscle era.

3. What Makes the 1969 Unique

The 1969 AMX is the volume year — 8,293 cars, the most of any AMX model year — and the year the AMX grew teeth. The headline change is under the shifter: from January 1969, every four-speed AMX got the Hurst shifter, replacing the earlier linkage. The 1969 car also got a revised grille, new striping, new interior patterns, and the Big Bad colors (Big Bad Blue, Big Bad Green, Big Bad Orange) shared with the Javelin — the wildest factory colors AMC ever offered.

The engine lineup carried over with one significant change: the 290's rating dropped 10 horsepower to 215, while the 343 (280 hp) and 390 (315 hp) continued. But 1969's real engine story is the SS/AMX: Hurst Performance built 52 Super Stock drag cars — 390s with dual four-barrel carburetors rated at 340 horsepower, acid-dipped bodies, and everything unnecessary deleted. The SS/AMX is the most valuable AMX ever built, and it is also the most cloned: verify the Hurst build records, the VIN sequence, and the acid-dip and equipment details before paying SS money, because a stripe kit and a dual-quad intake do not make an SS/AMX.

Standard equipment continued the 1968 formula: T-10 four-speed, front disc brakes, heavy-duty suspension, twin exhausts, and the 97-inch wheelbase two-seat body. The Shift-Command automatic remained the only transmission option. Production by engine and transmission (planethoustonamx): 290 — 619 four-speed, 299 automatic; 343 — 843 four-speed, 729 automatic; 390 — 3,620 four-speed, 2,183 automatic, for the 8,293 total. The 390 four-speed is the heart of the 1969 lineup — 3,620 built, the single most numerous AMX configuration ever.

For the restorer, the 1969 AMX's year-specific details are the trap: the grille, striping, interior patterns, and color palette are 1969-only in their specifics, and the January 1969 Hurst-shifter changeover means early 1969 four-speed cars carry the old linkage. Date-code every shifter, interior, and trim component against the build date. Verify the VIN's engine code (N/T/X), the 397 model code, and the data plate before paying any premium — 343 cars wear 390 badges with depressing regularity.

Year-to-year changes at a glance.

- Hurst shifter standard on four-speed cars from January 1969.
- 290 rating drops 10 hp to 215; 343 and 390 continue.
- 52 Hurst-built SS/AMX Super Stock cars (390 twin-4V, 340 hp).
- Big Bad colors introduced; revised grille, striping, and interior.
- Highest AMX production year: 8,293 cars.