

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1969 Ford Bronco Restoration Guide

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RESTORATION ESSENTIALS

1969 Ford Bronco

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

RestorationEssentials single-year guide · Model year 1969 only · Early Bronco (first generation), 92-inch wheelbase

KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- **Model year covered:** 1969 only. This guide does not cover other years except where differences from 1969 are explicitly noted.
- **Body styles (1969):** U14 Pickup, U15 Wagon — the Roadster is gone.
- **Engines (1969):** 170 cu in inline six (F) — Gross rating — see 1967 note; 302 cu in V8 (G) — 205 hp (SAE gross), 300 lb-ft.
- **Transmission (1969):** 3-speed manual, column shift. No automatic. Dana 20 transfer case.
- **Front axle / brakes (1969):** Dana 30; Drums all around, self-adjusting, dual-reservoir master cylinder.
- **Production (1969):** 20,956 total — 2,317 pickups, 18,639 wagons (Consumer Guide). Hagerty cites 19,200 sold — see the corrections file..

1. Manufacturer history: Ford

Ford Motor Company was incorporated on June 16, 1903. By the mid-1960s Ford had deep four-wheel-drive experience — it had built more than 270,000 Jeeps during World War II and designed the M151 MUTT in 1951 — but no civilian off-roader of its own. Product manager Donald Frey and Lee Iacocca saw Jeep's CJ-5 and International Harvester's Scout selling strongly and wanted a share of that market.

The Bronco, introduced in August 1965 as a 1966 model, was Ford's answer: a purpose-built short-wheelbase (92-inch) 4x4 on its own box-section frame, shared with no other Ford line, with coil-sprung Mono-Beam front suspension, radius arms, and a track bar — a more civilized machine than the CJ, with roll-up windows, a padded dash, and a fully synchronized three-speed. It ran twelve model years essentially unchanged in outline, evolving by accumulation — safety equipment, a stronger front axle, an automatic, power steering, disc brakes — before the full-size F-Series-based Bronco replaced it for 1978.

2. Model history: the early Bronco, and where 1969 sits

The first-generation Bronco ran 1966–1977 on its own chassis: U13 Roadster, U14 half-cab Pickup, and U15 Wagon at launch; the Roadster ended after 1968, the Pickup after 1972, and the Wagon carried the line alone to 1977. The changes that matter, in order: safety equipment and the Sport package (1967), federal markers and the end of the 289 and the Roadster (1968), the 302 and a strengthened body (1969), Sport as a trim level (1970), the Dana 44 front axle and the Stroppe Baja Bronco (1971), net ratings, the J-pattern shifter, and the Ranger package (1972), the 200 six, the C4 automatic, and power steering (1973), detail-only changes (1974), the V8-only range (1975), front disc brakes and quicker steering (1976), and the final-year revisions (1977). This guide covers 1969 only; the year-change register in Section 3 states exactly what 1969 changed, what it kept, and what it ended.

3. What is unique about the 1969 Bronco

- The 302 V8 replaces the 289 — the engine change that defines the year. Fender emblems reading '302 V-8' mark factory V8 trucks.
- The Roadster is discontinued — the Bronco is a two-body range (pickup and wagon) from here to 1972, and wagon-only after that.
- The body is strengthened: windshield and cowl area improved to cut road noise, beefier door frames, rocker panels, and roof structure. The fold-down windshield is discontinued (roofs remain removable).
- Electric windshield wipers replace the vacuum system as the running change completes; the wiper motor's location eliminates the fold-down windshield latches.
- Parking-light lenses change from clear to amber; red rear marker lights appear on the rear fenders.
- Arguably the most-changed Bronco of the run (Consumer Guide) — and the year a Stroppe Bronco's Baja success was building toward the overall 1969 Baja 1000 win, the result no other production 4x4 has replicated.

Year-change register — 1969 vs. the year before:

- NEW: 302 V8 (205 hp gross, 300 lb-ft) with fender emblems; strengthened body/cowl; amber parking lenses.
- DELETED: U13 Roadster; 289 V8; fold-down windshield.
- RUNNING CHANGE COMPLETED: electric wipers standardize.
- CARRIED OVER: Dana 30, drum brakes, three-speed manual only.

4. Technical restoration data — 1969 Ford Bronco

4.1 Specification table (1969)

Item	1969 specification
Body styles	U14 Pickup, U15 Wagon — the Roadster is gone
Transmission / transfer case	3-speed manual, column shift. No automatic. Dana 20 transfer case.
Front axle	Dana 30
Rear axle	Ford 9-inch
Brakes	Drums all around, self-adjusting, dual-reservoir master cylinder
Steering	Manual steering only
Production	20,956 total — 2,317 pickups, 18,639 wagons (Consumer Guide). Hagerty cites 19,200 sold — see the corrections file.
Prices	Not printed — see the corrections file.
Colors	15 colors (Hagerty).

Engines (1969):

Engine	Rating	Notes
170 cu in inline six (F)	Gross rating — see 1967 note	Standard engine.
302 cu in V8 (G)	205 hp (SAE gross), 300 lb-ft	NEW — replaces the 289. Torque rises from the 289's 282 lb-ft (Hagerty figures). '302 V-8' emblems appear on the front fenders of V8 trucks.

4.2 VIN and warranty-plate decoding

The VIN is carried on the warranty plate on the inner face of the glovebox door, and the same number is stamped on top of the right frame rail near the passenger footwell / body mount. The two must match; the frame stamp governs when they disagree. The warranty plate also carries paint, trim, axle, transmission, and DSO codes — decode the plate, then verify the axle ratio against the tag on the axle housing, because gears are the most commonly changed item on these trucks.

Code	Meaning
U13	Roadster (1966–1968 only)
U14	Half-cab Pickup (called Sports Utility in 1966)
U15	Wagon
F	170 cu in inline six
S	200 cu in inline six (1973–1974)
A	240 cu in inline six (1968, rare — Broncozone decode reference)
N	289 cu in V8 (1966–1968)