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1969 Ford Mustang Boss 302 Restoration Guide

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1969 Ford Mustang Boss 302 Restoration Guide

MODEL YEAR 1969

The Trans-Am homologation special: factory-correct restoration reference for the launch-year Boss 302 — VIN and data-plate decoding, engine specs, casting numbers, authentication, and the full restoration sequence.

Key Specifications at a Glance

Engine	Boss 302 V8 — 302 cid, 4.00 x 3.00 in, 10.5:1 compression
Output	290 hp @ 5,800 rpm; 290 lb-ft @ 4,300 rpm; Holley 780-CFM 4V
VIN code	9F02Gxxxxxx — G = Boss 302; Dearborn-built only in 1969
Gearbox	Ford Toploader 4-speed; Ford shifter (Hurst arrived in 1970)
Axle	9-in Traction-Lok, 3.50:1 standard; 3.91 / 4.30 optional
Built	1,628 cars — the rarest Boss 302 year
Base price	About \$3,588 when new

Every specification in this guide was verified against published references before printing. Where sources disagree, the text says so. Use correct jack stands, disconnect the battery before electrical work, and never get under a car supported only by a jack. High-compression engines demand high-octane fuel and careful ignition timing.

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How to use this guide. Chapters 1 and 2 give you the history that drives collector value. Chapter 3 explains exactly what makes this variant different from every other Mustang of its year. The technical chapters are written to be used at the car: decoding tags, checking castings, and planning the restoration in the right order. Keep a notebook with this guide and verify every number against the car in front of you.

1. Ford's Total Performance Era

In the 1960s Ford Motor Company raced everywhere, and the slogan on the banners was “Total Performance.” NASCAR, Le Mans (won outright 1966–69), Indianapolis, drag strips, and SCCA road racing all received factory money and engineering talent. The Boss 302 was born directly from that program — not as a marketing exercise but as a homologation special, a street car built because the rulebook demanded it. To understand the Boss 302 you must understand the Sports Car Club of America's Trans-American Sedan Championship: production-based cars, engines limited to 305 cubic inches, racing on road courses against the Chevrolet Camaro Z/28, the AMC Javelin, and the Plymouth Barracuda.

Ford had won the Trans-Am Over-2-Liter championship in the series' first two seasons, 1966 and 1967, with Mustangs. In 1968 Chevrolet's Camaro Z/28 took the title, and Ford's answer was total: a new small-block with canted-valve cylinder heads derived from the forthcoming 351 Cleveland, a competition suspension developed under engineer Mark Donner, and styling by Larry Shinoda — hired away from General Motors in August 1968, where he had designed the 1963 Corvette Sting Ray. The project's code name became its badge: when Shinoda was asked what he was working on, he answered “the boss's car” — a nod to Ford president Semon “Bunkie” Knudsen, who had brought Shinoda to Ford. The Boss was born in secrecy and named almost by accident.

2. The Mustang Grows Up: 1969

The 1969 Mustang was the second major redesign of the car: longer (187.5 inches), wider (71.7 inches), heavier, and far more aggressive than the 1967–68 cars. The fastback was renamed SportsRoof. Ford's 1969 lineup was the most performance-dense in Mustang history: the GT gave way to the new Mach 1, the 428 Cobra Jet covered the drag-racing brief, Shelby still built GT350s and GT500s, and two Boss models anchored the homologation efforts — the Boss 302 for Trans-Am and the Boss 429 for NASCAR.

The Boss 302 reached showrooms in March 1969, mid-model-year, priced at about \$3,588 — nearly \$1,000 more than a base Mustang. The press was enthusiastic: *Car and Driver* called it “easily the best Mustang yet — the best handling Ford to ever come out of Dearborn,” and *Road & Track* later described it as “delightfully sporting when driven hard.” Ford built the 1969 Boss 302 entirely at the Dearborn, Michigan, assembly plant. Every 1969 Boss 302 VIN begins 9F02G. There are no exceptions — and that fact is the first and most important authentication check in this guide.