

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1970 Buick Skylark GSX Stage 1 Restoration Guide

Read these pages exactly as they appear in the full guide.
Nothing here is rewritten or summarised — it is the product itself,
so you can judge the depth before you spend a dollar.

Full guide: <https://restoreessentials.com/product/RE-GD-1970-BUICK-SKYLARK-GSX-STAGE-1-RESTORATION-GUIDE>

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1970 Buick Skylark Gsx Stage 1

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

Key facts at a glance

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

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



Manufacturer History

Buick was founded in 1903 by David Dunbar Buick and became a founding pillar of General Motors in 1908, the company William C. Durant built around the Buick Motor Company. From the start Buick occupied the upper-middle of the GM ladder: above Oldsmobile and Pontiac, below Cadillac, the 'doctor's car' for buyers who wanted prestige without the Cadillac price.

Two engineering signatures defined Buick for decades. The first was the overhead-valve engine: Buick built OHV engines from the company's earliest days and never looked back. The second was the Nailhead V8 (1953-1966), so called for its small, vertical valves that made the rocker-arm studs look like nail heads. Nailheads ran hot, breathed poorly at high rpm, and made enormous low-end torque - exactly the formula Buick's customers liked.

Buick was late to the factory muscle party. Pontiac had the GTO in 1964 and Oldsmobile the 4-4-2; Buick's answer, the Skylark Gran Sport, arrived at midyear 1965 with a 401-cubic-inch Nailhead wearing a '400' badge. It sold in strong numbers, and the GS became a standalone series in 1967 with a new 400-cubic-inch V8. The 1968 redesign brought the GS 400, the Stage 1 option arrived in January 1968, and in 1970 the GS 455 replaced the 400 with Buick's biggest big-block - the torque monster that made Buick the quiet giant of the muscle era.

The Riviera Gran Sport followed a parallel path. The Riviera itself was Buick's personal luxury coupe from 1963; the Gran Sport package, introduced for 1965, added the dual-quad 425 Nailhead and handling upgrades. The 430 replaced the Nailhead in 1967, and the Riviera GS remained the gentleman's performance Buick through 1969, tracked by collectors today as one of the most documentable Buicks ever built.

Buick's muscle era ended the way everyone's did: compression dropped to 8.5:1 for 1971, net horsepower ratings arrived for 1972, and the GS faded from a headline act to an option package. But the cars never lost their following. The Buick GS Club of America and the Sloan Museum's Buick Gallery in Flint, Michigan, keep the paper trail alive - and that paper trail is what makes a real Buick worth restoring.

2 — Model History

The GSX arrived at midyear 1970 as Buick's answer to the winged warriors and stripe packages blooming across Detroit. It was not a separate model - it was an appearance and performance package on the GS 455, available with the base 455 or the Stage 1 engine. Front and rear spoilers, a hood tachometer, bold hood and side stripes, Rally Ride suspension, chrome Rally wheels with F70-15 tires, and a blacked-out grille and hood treatment made the GSX the loudest Buick ever built - in exactly two colors.

Production totaled 678 cars per the most widely published figures: 491 in Saturn Yellow and 187 in Apollo White (GM Heritage reports 178 white cars - see Conflicts). About 400 of the 678 carried the Stage 1 engine;

the balance were base-455 cars. Every GSX is a GS 455 underneath, and every GSX carries a GS 455 VIN - the package never got its own series code.

This sub-wave covers the two factory scopes separately: the base-455 GSX and the Stage 1 GSX. The Stage 1 was an option on the GSX, not standard equipment - a distinction that matters because the market has spent decades blurring it.

3 — What Is Unique About This Model Year

This guide covers the top GSX scope: the GSX package with the optional Stage 1 engine. About 400 of the 678 GSXs were built this way - the combination of Buick's loudest package with its strongest engine.

The Stage 1 added larger valves, a hotter camshaft, and recalibrated carburetor and distributor to the 455, rated at 360 horsepower and 510 lb-ft of torque at 10.5:1 compression. The engine code is SS - stamped on the block pad, and the single most important mark on a claimed Stage 1 GSX.



legacy was A/C-dependent: 3.42 gears with air conditioning, 3.64 without. The axle code on the housing must agree with the car's A/C equipment.

Everything about the base GSX package applies here - spoilers, hood tach, Rally Ride suspension, chrome Rally wheels, F70-15s, QQ/10 paint - plus the Stage 1 drivetrain. Authentication is the base-GSX checklist plus SS-code engine, correct axle code, and documentation.

Year-to-year changes

- Stage 1 engine option on the GSX: SS-code 455, 360 hp / 510 lb-ft
- A/C-dependent axle ratios: 3.42 with A/C, 3.64 without
- Same package content and two-color restriction as the base GSX
- ~400 Stage 1 GSXs of 678 total - the top factory GSX scope

4 — VIN Decoding

Example: 446370H100001. Identical VIN logic to the base GSX - 4 = Buick, 46 = GS 455 series, 37 = hardtop, 0 = 1970, H = Flint, plus sequence.

The 1970 VIN does not carry an engine code, so a Stage 1 GSX and a base-455 GSX have indistinguishable VINs. The SS engine stamping, build sheet, and Sloan documentation are what separate them.

5 — Cowl / Fender-Tag Decoding

Cowl tag: ST 70, model 44637, trim 188 (black), paint QQ or 10, late build date - same as the base GSX.

The tag does not identify the Stage 1; the engine code and paperwork do.

A claimed Stage 1 GSX whose cowl tag, paint code, and build date check out but whose engine is SR-code is a base-455 GSX (still valuable) - not a Stage 1 car.

6 — Engines

Factory engine lineup

Engine

Compression

Horsepower

Torque

455 Stage 1 (GSX Stage 1 engine)

10.5:1

360 hp @ 4600

510 lb-ft @ 2800

455 Stage 1 (GSX Stage 1 engine) 455 cu in — bore 4.312 in × stroke 3.90 in, 10.5:1 compression, 360 hp @ 4600, 510 lb-ft @ 2800, Rochester 4bbl (recalibrated). Engine code: SS. SS-code Stage 1: larger valves, hotter cam, recalibrated carburetor/distributor. Optional on the GSX - about 400 built.

7 — Transmissions

Transmission

Shifter

Notes

M20 4-speed manual

Floor shift

Optional; the enthusiast choice

TH400 3-speed automatic

Console shift

Optional; most Stage 1 GSXs

3-speed manual