

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1970 Ford Bronco Restoration Guide

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RESTORATION ESSENTIALS

1970 Ford Bronco

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

RestorationEssentials single-year guide · Model year 1970 only · Early Bronco (first generation), 92-inch wheelbase

KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- **Model year covered:** 1970 only. This guide does not cover other years except where differences from 1970 are explicitly noted.
- **Body styles (1970):** U14 Pickup, U15 Wagon; Sport is now a distinct trim level / separate model on both bodies.
- **Engines (1970):** 170 cu in inline six (F) — Gross rating — see 1967 note; 302 cu in V8 (G) — 205 hp (SAE gross), 300 lb-ft.
- **Transmission (1970):** 3-speed manual, column shift. No automatic. Dana 20 transfer case.
- **Front axle / brakes (1970):** Dana 30 (final year); Drums all around, self-adjusting, dual-reservoir master cylinder.
- **Production (1970):** 18,450 total — 1,700 pickups, 16,750 wagons (Consumer Guide). Hagerty cites 18,500 sold..

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 1970 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 1970 only; the year-change register in Section 3 states exactly what 1970 changed, what it kept, and what it ended.

3. What is unique about the 1970 Bronco

- The Sport package becomes the Sport trim level — Sport Broncos are now separate models on both the pickup and the wagon, not an option bundle. Verify a claimed 1970 Sport from its build record, not its trim.
- Side marker lights and reflectors are reshaped and moved higher on the body, to about the belt line, for visibility — the quickest exterior tell separating a 1970 from a 1969.
- Fuel capacity shrinks: the main tank drops to 12.7 gallons and the auxiliary tank to 10.3 gallons (Hagerty). The 12.7-gallon main tank is also the tank used on 1970 trucks with evaporative emissions recovery (Consumer Guide).
- New options include G78×15B fiberglass-belted tires, a Traction-Lock limited-slip rear differential, and shoulder harnesses. The Bronco remains the only vehicle in its class offering limited-slip differentials front and rear (Consumer Guide).
- Final year of the Dana 30 front axle — a 1970 is the last Bronco that should have one.

Year-change register — 1970 vs. the year before:

- CHANGED: Sport option → Sport trim level / separate models. Side markers and reflectors reshaped and raised. Fuel tanks reduced (main 12.7 gal, auxiliary 10.3 gal).
- NEW OPTIONS: G78×15B fiberglass tires; Traction-Lock rear differential; shoulder harnesses.
- LAST YEAR: Dana 30 front axle.
- UNCHANGED: engines, three-speed manual only, drum brakes.

4. Technical restoration data — 1970 Ford Bronco

4.1 Specification table (1970)

Item	1970 specification
Body styles	U14 Pickup, U15 Wagon; Sport is now a distinct trim level / separate model on both bodies
Transmission / transfer case	3-speed manual, column shift. No automatic. Dana 20 transfer case.
Front axle	Dana 30 (final year)
Rear axle	Ford 9-inch
Brakes	Drums all around, self-adjusting, dual-reservoir master cylinder
Steering	Manual steering only
Production	18,450 total — 1,700 pickups, 16,750 wagons (Consumer Guide). Hagerty cites 18,500 sold.
Prices	Not printed — see the corrections file.
Colors	17 colors (Hagerty).

Engines (1970):

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	Carried over from 1969 in gross-rating form.

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)
G	302 cu in V8 (1969–1977)