

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1971 Dodge Dart Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1971 Dodge Dart

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

Dodge began in 1900 as the Dodge Brothers Machine Shop, supplying parts — and then complete cars — with a reputation for overbuilt durability. The first Dodge Brothers automobile appeared in 1914, and the brothers' obsession with quality made 'Dependability' the brand's watchword. After both brothers died in 1920, the company was sold to Chrysler in 1928, becoming the corporation's mainstream, slightly sportier division.

Dodge found its performance voice in the 1950s with the Red Ram Hemi V8 and Exner's Forward Look styling, then doubled down in the 1960s: the 1966 Charger invented the fastback muscle car, the Coronet put big-block power in a mid-size package, and the 1968 Super Bee answered Plymouth's Road Runner with Dodge's own budget brawler. The 1969 Charger Daytona and its Plymouth Superbird sibling took the aero wars to NASCAR's fastest tracks.

Like Plymouth, Dodge benefited from Chrysler's deep engineering bench: the LA small-block, B/RB big-block, and 426 Hemi engines; the A833 four-speed and TorqueFlite automatics; the 8-3/4-inch and Dana 60 rear axles; and torsion-bar front suspension that made Mopars handle. Dodge's muscle cars were typically a half-step more upscale than their Plymouth twins, which is why survivors in factory-correct condition are so prized today.

The muscle era ended with the 1971 model year for high compression, and Dodge pivoted to personal luxury (Charger), compacts (Dart, Colt), and eventually the minivan. But the 1967-1971 B-body performance cars — Coronet R/T, Super Bee, and Charger R/T — are cornerstone collector cars, and their restoration is supported by factory documentation, Galen Govier's decoding references, and a mature reproduction market.

2 — Model History

The 1967 A-body redesign gave the Dart wider frame rails and room for big engines, and Dodge used it. The GTS arrived late in 1967 with the 383; for 1968 the GTS standardized on the new 340 small-block (275 hp) with the 383 as the option - the Dart's entry into the factory muscle wars, complete with Scat Pack bumblebee stripes.

1969 was the peak: the GTS 383 went to 330 hp, the Swinger 340 gave buyers a \$2,836 performance hardtop (16,637 built), and the M-code 440 stuffed the 375-hp big-block into about 640 Darts for the ultimate street sleeper. 1970 brought a facelift, the 198 Slant Six replacing the 170, and the end of the 383 and the convertible in the Dart line.

For 1971 Dodge replaced the Swinger with the fastback Demon - a Duster sibling on a 108-inch wheelbase - and the Demon 340 (10,098 built at \$2,721) became the performance Dart. The Demon continued through 1972 (240 net hp, electronic ignition on the 340), then became the Dart Sport for 1973 when the devil imagery drew complaints. The 340 Sport carried the torch at 240 net horsepower - and the 360 never appeared in a Dart until 1974.

Terminology enforced in this guide: the 1971-1972 Demon is a Dart-line fastback sharing A-body/Duster architecture - not an ordinary Dart model without qualification. And there was no factory 1970 Dart 360 and no 1973 Dart 360; any such claim is builder-grade fiction this guide does not repeat.

3 — What Is Unique About This Model Year

The Demon is the 1971 headline: a fastback coupe on a 108-inch wheelbase, sharing the Duster's architecture, sold in the Dart line. It is a Dart-line car but not an ordinary Dart model - the wheelbase, body, and positioning are distinct, and this guide keeps that qualification explicit.

The Demon 340 (10,098 built at \$2,721) carried the 275-horsepower 340 - not a 360, which never appeared in a 1971 Demon. The VIN H-code plus the LM29 body code is the authentication.

Lesser Demons (198/225/318) sold around 70,000 - the volume play that made the Demon a success. The



name retired; the Dart Custom hardtop continued the 2-door line.

Electronic ignition began phasing in on manual-transmission 340s via a May 1971 technical service bulletin - a running-change detail for correct restoration. Post-April-1971 production engines moved toward corporate-blue engine paint.

Year-to-year changes

- Demon fastback new on 108-inch wheelbase (Duster sibling)
- Demon 340: 10,098 built at \$2,721, 275 hp
- Swinger name retired; electronic ignition phased in (May TSB)
- Post-April engines move toward corporate-blue paint

4 — VIN Decoding

1971 Demon VIN example: LM29H1B100001. L = Dodge, M = Demon series, 29 = 2-door fastback sports hardtop, H = 340, 1 = 1971, B = Hamtramck, plus sequence.

Sedan/coupe Darts carry their own series/body codes with year digit 1. The engine code in position 5 is the authentication across the line.

A Demon 340 claim requires the H-code - a 360 was never installed, so any 'Demon 360' story fails at the

VIN.

5 — Cowl / Fender-Tag Decoding

1971 IBM-card fender tags. Demon 340 equipment (H-code, hood scoops, stripes, heavy-duty suspension/axle) must agree across VIN, tag, and broadcast sheet.

The devil-with-pitchfork Demon decals are 1971-only details - deleted for 1972. Correct decals are a judging point.

6 — Engines

Factory engine lineup

Engine

Compression

Horsepower

Torque

198 Slant Six

8.2:1

125 hp (commonly
published)

175 lb-ft (commonly
published)

225 Slant Six

8.2:1

145 hp

215 lb-ft

318 2-barrel (LA)

9.2:1

230 hp

320 lb-ft

340 4-barrel (Demon 340)

10.5:1

275 hp @ 5000

340 lb-ft @ 3200