# FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

## 1973 Dodge Charger 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.

**The full guide: https://restoreessentials.com/product/RE-GD-1973-DODGE-CHARGER**

RestorationEssentials — instant PDF download after checkout.

RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

# 1973 Dodge Charger

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

**Key facts at a glance**

ge Charger

s Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1973 Dodge Charger — one model, one year, nothing else. Every specification in this guide was checked against marque references, factory literature excerpts, and enthusiast documentation before it was written.

Our operating ethic is simple: we don't lie and we don't steal, we offer value. That means three things for this guide. First, no invented specifications — every number has a source. Second, where reputable sources disagree, the disagreement is disclosed in the text and in the Sources, Conflicts & Omissions section rather than papered over. Third, where a detail could not be verified, it is omitted and the omission is recorded — an honest gap beats a confident fabrication.

How to use this guide: start with the VIN and fender-tag (or door data plate) decoding sections to establish exactly what your car was when it left the factory. Use the engine, transmission, axle, paint, and casting sections to verify that what is on the car today matches what should be there. Use the rust and restoration-sequence sections to plan the work. And keep this guide in the shop — it is a working document, not a coffee-table book.

A final note: these cars are sixty years old. Parts have been swapped, tags have been lost, and memories have faded. Trust

the metal — casting numbers, date codes, and stampings — over stories. When in doubt, photograph everything and verify

against the factory service manual for your year.

## 1. Manufacturer History: Dodge

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

1973 Dodge Charger

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: Dodge Charger

The Dodge Charger arrived for 1966 as Dodge's answer to the personal-luxury performance coupe: a



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

built on the Coronet's B-body platform, aimed squarely at buyers who wanted style and speed in one package. The 1966 Charger was an instant attention-getter — hidden headlamps, a full-width taillight panel, a fastback roofline, and an interior with four individual bucket seats and a full-length console. It sold 37,344 copies in its debut year, proving Dodge had found a formula.

The 1967 Charger was a mild refinement of the 1966 car — new grille, revised trim — and production fell to 15,788 as the novelty wore off and the market waited for something new. Something new arrived for 1968: a full redesign with Coke-bottle curves, flying-buttress C-pillars, and the R/T performance package (XS29) that made the Charger a genuine muscle car. The 1968 Charger is the icon — the car the Dukes of Hazzard made immortal — and it sold in huge numbers.

The 1969 Charger refined the 1968 design with a split grille and detail changes, and it became Dodge's NASCAR weapon: the Charger 500 (about 500 built) and the winged Charger Daytona (503 built) were homologation specials built to win on superspeedways. The 1969 R/T, with the 440 Magnum standard and the Hemi optional, is one of the great B-body muscle cars. Production for 1969 is commonly reported around 89,000 cars.

1970 brought a revised front end and the last year of the classic Coke-bottle Charger. Then came the fuselage restyle for 1971 — smooth, rounded body sides, a distinctive loop front bumper, and hidden headlamps on R/T and SE models. The R/T continued through 1971 (2,659 built), was replaced by the Rallye option package for 1972, and the Charger carried on through 1973 with federal bumpers and a V8-only engine lineup.

For the restorer, the Charger is pure B-body Mopar: slant-six and LA small-block engines at the bottom of the range, B/RB big-blocks and the 426 Hemi at the top, A833 four-speed or TorqueFlite, 8-3/4-inch or Dana 60 rear axle, and torsion-bar front suspension. The 1966-1967 cars are the stylish first generation; the 1968-1970 cars are the muscle-car icons; the 1971-1973 fuselage cars are the last of the breed and still undervalued. Every Charger year rewards the same discipline: decode the VIN and fender tag, verify casting numbers and date codes, and trust the metal over the story.

## 3. What Makes the 1973 Unique

The 1973 Charger is the fuselage car grown up: new federal 5-mph bumpers (with the characteristic bumper guards), fixed rear quarter windows (replacing the 1971-72 opening vent windows), revised grille and trim, and detail changes throughout. It is the last Charger of the first fuselage generation and the end of the line covered by this guide series.

1973 Dodge Charger

The big mechanical news for 1973: the Slant Six was dropped, making the Charger a V8-only car — the 318 two-barrel (150 net hp) became the base engine, with the 340 four-barrel (240 net), 400 two-barrel (185 net), 400 four-barrel (245 net), and 440 four-barrel (280 net) above it. The Rallye option package continued as the performance choice.

VIN coding for 1973: XS29, 3 = 1973, engine codes G (318), H (340), K (400 2-bbl), L (400 4-bbl), U (440). The 1973-only details — bumper guards, fixed quarter glass, grille and trim revisions — are the identifiers against 1972 cars.

The 1973 Charger occupies an interesting spot in the market: the last year before the 1974 redesign, V8-only, with the Rallye package carrying the performance torch. These are still the affordable Chargers — the market hasn't caught up to the fuselage cars the way it has to the 1968-1970 icons — which makes a documented 1973 Rallye 440 a genuine value opportunity.

Restoration notes specific to 1973: the federal bumper hardware and guards are 1973-specific — verify condition and correctness, as these parts took the brunt of parking-lot life. The fixed quarter windows changed the window regulators and seals from 1971-72. The net-rated drivetrains carry over 1972's



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