

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1973 Ford Maverick Grabber Restoration Guide

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Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1973 Ford Maverick Grabber Restoration Guide

Model Years 1973

Model	Ford Maverick Grabber (two-door)
Construction	Falcon-family unibody; 103-in wheelbase (coupe)
Engines	170 / 200 / 250 sixes; 302 V8 (135 hp net — see note)
Transmissions	3-speed manual; SelectShift automatic — no factory 4-speed
Identity	Scoops deleted; the impact bumper arrives; last year of this span

Every specification in this guide was checked against factory literature, marque references, period road tests, and documented survivor vehicles. Where sources disagree or the record is silent, this guide says so rather than guessing.

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1. What this guide is — and is not

This is a single-year guide. It covers model year 1973 only. Where a neighbouring year differs, the difference is stated as a difference — the other year's parts, ratings and trim are never silently borrowed. Shared platform engineering is shared honestly; the specification table, the year-change register and the finishes in this guide are this year's own.

2. The year in brief

The 1973 Grabber is the Maverick growing up under regulation. The dual-dome hood and its scoops were dropped — the Grabber kept its stripes, spoiler and mirrors on a plain bonnet — and a larger, energy-absorbing front bumper announced the federal impact era a year before the truly heavy bumpers arrived at both ends for 1974. The 302's compression slid once more, to 8.0:1, and its rating sits at the centre of this span's one open conflict: the range documentation this program builds on and Hagerty's history both print 135 hp net, while Hemmings' Grabber research prints 140 hp net. Both figures are recorded in this guide; the rebuild instruction does not change either way — build to the 8.0:1 1973 specification.

Scope discipline closes the span: this guide ends at 1973 because the range it splits ends at 1973. The Grabber continued beyond it (the package ran to 1975), with heavier bumpers and catalytic-era engines that are different restoration subjects. Within 1971–73, the 1973 car is the most modern-feeling and the most often 'improved' backward toward 1971 — hood swaps above all. A correct 1973 Grabber has no scoops, and its plain bonnet is its authenticity.

3. Year-change register

Read this register before ordering anything. It is the difference between a 1973 car and a car that merely looks like one from across the street.

Item	1972	This year (1973)
Hood	Dual-dome with scoops	Plain hood — scoops and dual-dome deleted
Front bumper	Slim bumper	Larger energy-absorbing bumper (full heavy bumpers follow in 1974)
302 compression	8.5:1	8.0:1
302 rating	143 hp net	135 hp net (range doc. and Hagerty); 140 hp net in Hemmings — conflict recorded
Grabber dress	Stripes, spoiler, mirrors, lamps	Stripes, spoiler and mirrors continue on the plain hood

4. Specification table — 1973

Item	Specification
Wheelbase	103 in (two-door)
Engines	170 six; 200 six; 250 six; 302 V8 (net; see rating note)
302 specification	2-bbl; 8.0:1 compression; VIN engine code F
Transmissions	3-speed manual; SelectShift automatic
Brakes	Drums standard; front discs optional (from 1972)



5. Numbers, tags and identity

- The plain hood is an identity feature: a scooped hood on a 1973 Grabber is 1971–72 hardware, and its presence should start the full conversion audit (engine specification included).
- VIN and Marti discipline as before — F for the engine, the Report for the package.
- Bumper identity dates the car at a glance; a slim-bumper '1973' deserves the same audit as a scooped one.

6. Engines and transmissions

- **302 V8.** 8.0:1 compression; rated 135 hp net per the range documentation and Hagerty, 140 per Hemmings — the conflict is printed in Chapter 3 and carried in the car's file, and the engine is rebuilt to the year's compression and specification regardless.
- **Sixes.** 170/200/250 continue as the volume Grabber power — a six-cylinder 1973 Grabber remains a factory-authentic car.
- Running gear carries over (8-in axle behind the V8; drums standard, discs optional). The changes for 1973 are compression, bonnet and bumper — a short list, exactly enforced.

7. Paint, trim and finishes

Stripes and spoiler continue; the grille-lamp and hood story ends. Restore the 1973 face as designed — capped, plain and bumpered — and source the year's larger bumper brightwork early, as one-year bumper hardware is never the cheap line in a quote.

8. Rust and inspection map

One rust item leaves the map with the scoops (no more scoop piercings to rot), and the standard Falcon-family inspection governs. The bigger bumper's mounts and absorbers join the inspection list: bent or corroded impact hardware is a repair, not a detail.

- Front torque boxes and frame-rail ends — the Falcon-family unibody's structural core.
- Floor pans, especially the front pans under a leaking cowl vent — the Maverick's classic wet-carpet rot.
- Cowl vent and plenum: leaves and water sit here and rust the structure that feeds the floors.
- Rear quarter lowers, wheel-arch lips and the trunk drop-offs.
- Battery tray and the apron beneath it; shock-tower seams on V8 cars, which carry real torque.
- Grabber-specific: the decklid spoiler mounts and hood scoop openings (1971–72) — dress-up hardware that drills holes in panels and invites rust around every one.

9. Restoration priorities for this year

- Resist the backward build: no scoops, no slim bumper, no 9.0:1 engine in a correct 1973 car.
- Record the 135/140 hp conflict in the car's documentation; future owners deserve the honest file.
- Impact-bumper hardware: inspect mounts and absorbers during teardown and budget their restoration.
- Close the span cleanly — parts and trim from 1974-on Grabbers are a different program and do not belong here.