

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1979 Dodge D100/D150 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-1979-DODGE-D100>

RestorationEssentials — instant PDF download after checkout.



RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1979 Dodge D100/D150 Restoration Guide

Model Years 1979

Model year	1979 - D-Series year 8 of 9 (1972-1980 span)
Designation	D100/D150 and W100/W150 half-tons (by GVWR)
Engines	225 slant six, 318 LA V8, 360 LA V8, 360 police (Li'l Red), 6DR5 diesel (Mitsubishi)
Front tell	New grille and hood; quad rectangular headlights on higher trims, round on base
Identifiers	Quad rectangular lamps = higher trim; round lamps = base. Both factory for 1979 - a mismatched pair is the only wrong answer.

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.

Published by RestorationEssentials



How This Guide Works

This is a **single-year restoration** guide for the 1979 Dodge D100 and W100 - one year of the third-generation D-Series (1972-1980), covered on its own because that is how these trucks were built, badged, and optioned, and how they must be restored. Specifications were checked against the marque model history, MotorTrend's Dodge truck centennial history, and factory literature. Where sources disagree, this guide prints the disagreement instead of guessing.

Scope. Covers 1979 half-tons, including the final-year Li'l Red Express and Warlock II.

Where 1979 sits in the run

- **Coming in:** 1978 was the last big-block year and the Li'l Red's debut.
- **Leaving:** 1980 closes the D-Series: black grille openings, the NP435 as standard manual, part-time 4WD, and the D100 name merged into D150.

Platform Snapshot

Fact	Detail
Model year	1979
Designation	D100/D150 and W100/W150 half-tons (by GVWR)
Platform	Chrysler AD, body-on-frame
Wheelbases	115 / 131 in standard cab; 133 / 149 in Club Cab
Front suspension (2WD)	Double-wishbone, coil springs (independent)
Front suspension (4WD)	Leaf-sprung live axle (Dana 44)
Grille / front tell	New grille and hood; quad rectangular headlights on higher trims, round on base
Front brakes	Front discs (2WD and 4WD); rear drums
Ignition	Electronic ignition standard (gasoline)
Beds	Sweptline (full-width) or Utiline (stepside)

The 1979 Register - What Makes a 1979 a 1979

- Front end refreshed: new hood, cowl top panel, grille, and quad rectangular headlights on higher trims - base trucks keep round lamps, so both faces are correct for 1979.
- Sweptline tailgate and cowl side panels now galvanized.
- Adventurer SE interior upgraded; Club Cab gains available swing-out rear quarter windows.
- Power door locks offered for the first time; air conditioning offered on six-cylinder models.
- Discontinued: the in-cab fuel tank, the 400 and 440 V8s, and chassis-cab models below 8,600 lb GVWR.
- The 225 is dropped from W200 and all 300-series trucks (every D/W300 now runs the 360).
- Li'l Red Express final year; Warlock's final year, lettered 'Warlock II' on the tailgate.



VIN, Fender Tag, and Broadcast Sheet

The VIN is stamped on the frame and carried on the door tag; the fender tag under the hood carries the option codes, and the broadcast (build) sheet - hunt under the seats, behind the glovebox, above the fuel tank - is the truck's birth certificate. Decode all three before ordering year-specific parts: on these trucks the tag adjudicates disputes, and the tag plus the broadcast sheet ends them.

Engines: The 1979 Menu

All ratings are SAE net, as published for the year. The engine in the truck is what the fender tag and the block stampings say it is - decode both before ordering parts.

Engine	Output (net)	Notes
225 slant six	Base six	Dropped from W200/300 lines
318 LA V8	135 hp	Volume V8
360 LA V8	Top engine now	The big blocks are gone
360 police (Li'l Red)	225 hp class	Final-year Li'l Red Express
6DR5 diesel (Mitsubishi)	105 hp / 169 lb-ft	Listed for 1979; build-out unconfirmed

Engine note. 1979 is the year the menu shrinks: nothing above the 360. Any 1979 truck claimed as a factory 400 or 440 is a swap until the tag says otherwise - and the tag will not say otherwise.

Restoring the 1979 engines

- 225 slant six: the leaning tower of power - simple, durable, and cheap to rebuild correctly. Check the exhaust manifold for cracks and the carburetor for worn throttle shafts.
- 318/360 LA small blocks: the volume engines. The 360 is externally balanced - keep its balancer and converter hardware with it.
- Big blocks (where fitted): verify the radiator is the correct big-block unit; a small-block radiator doing its best is an overheating truck.
- Casting numbers and date codes: the casting date should precede the truck's build date by weeks, not follow it.

Transmissions and Transfer Cases

Unit	Type	Application
3-speed manual	Column-shift	Base, light-duty
4-speed manual (NP435)	Floor-shift, granny low	Heavy-duty / 4WD favorite
TorqueFlite 727	3-speed automatic	Optional across the line

Full-time case continues standard on W models for one more year; the part-time case replaces it for 1980. The 1978 positive-detent shifter carries over.