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The opening pages of

1985 Chevrolet Squarebody Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1985 Chevrolet Squarebody Restoration Guide

Model Years 1985

Model year	1985 - final grille; 4.3 V6 becomes the base
Engines	4.3 V6 (new), 292 I6; 305, 350 (restricted), 454 V8; 6.2 diesel
Trim ladder	Custom Deluxe / Scottsdale / Silverado
Firsts	Cast-aluminum wheels on half-tons; hydraulic clutch
Identifiers	Body-color grille center on two-tones

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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How This Guide Works

This is a **single-year restoration** guide for the 1985 Chevrolet and GMC C/K - one year of the Rounded Line (1973-1987 pickups), covered on its own because that is how these trucks were built and how they must be restored. Specifications were checked against the marque model history and powertrain tables, the Raybuck restoration reference, and period sales literature. Where sources disagree, this guide prints the disagreement instead of guessing.

Scope. Covers 1985 C10/C20/C30 (2WD) and K10/K20/K30 (4WD) pickups and chassis-cabs. Blazer/Jimmy and Suburban share this architecture and have their own RestorationEssentials guides. GMC trucks share the platform but carry their own trim names and badging, noted where they differ.

Where 1985 sits in the run

- **Coming in:** the late truck with a new base engine - the V6 era of the Squarebody starts here.
- **Leaving:** 1986 is the farewell in all but name: final carbureted year, final 292, final year badged C/K.

Platform Snapshot

The Rounded Line (the public's 'Squarebody') ran as the C/K pickup from 1973 to 1987, then as the R/V in heavy and SUV roles to 1991. 1985 trucks are late, facelifted trucks: the hoodline is lowered and sloped, wipers park exposed on the cowl, and side markers are horizontal.

Fact	Detail
Model year	1985
Designation	C = 2WD, K = 4WD; 10/20/30 = 1/2-, 3/4-, 1-ton
Wheelbases	117.5 in (short bed), 131.5 in (long bed), 164.5 in (crew cab)
Fuel tanks	Outboard of the frame rails (sidesaddle layout)

The 1985 Register - What Makes a 1985 a 1985

- The grille is changed for the last time as the C/K: on two-tone Chevrolet trucks the grille center bar is painted body color instead of silver - the quickest 1985 tell.
- The 4.3L V6 (LB1, 155 hp, 4-bbl) replaces the 250 six - the standard C/K engine since 1966 - as the base engine. The 292 six continues on heavier trucks (one secondary summary claims the V6 replaced both sixes at once; the powertrain record keeps the 292 in production through 1986, and this guide follows the record).
- Cast-aluminum wheels are offered on half-ton trucks for the first time. Hydraulic clutch actuation is introduced on manual-transmission trucks.

VIN Decoding (17-Digit)

1985 trucks use the standardized 17-digit VIN. The 8th digit is the engine code - the single most important character when verifying a truck's original powertrain - and the 10th digit is the model year. The glovebox SPID label remains the final word on factory options.



8th digit	Engine
T	292 inline-6
G	305 V8, 2-bbl
F / H	305 V8, 4-bbl
P	350 V8, 2-bbl
L / M	350 V8, 4-bbl
W	454 V8, 4-bbl
C	6.2L diesel (1982+)

Engines

Five engines for 1985, with the new V6 at the base.

Engine	Output (net)	Notes
4.3 V6 (LB1)	155 hp; 230 lb-ft	NEW; 4-bbl; replaces the 250
292 I6 (L25)	120 hp; 215 lb-ft	Continues on heavier trucks
305 V8 (LG9/LF3)	130-155 hp; 240 lb-ft	Volume V8
350 V8 (LS9)	175 hp; 275 lb-ft	Not on US C10 (1981-86)
454 V8 (LE8)	230 hp; 360 lb-ft	Heavy-duty applications
6.2 diesel	135 hp; 240 lb-ft	Detroit Diesel

Reading Chevrolet casting and date codes

- Block casting number: driver's-side rear bellhousing flange. Assembly stamp: front passenger-side deck pad - month/day plus suffix code.
- Decode casting number, casting date, and suffix together; the casting date should precede the truck's build date by weeks.
- Truck suffix tables differ from passenger-car tables, and the format changed around 1970 - decode truck engines with truck references.

Transmissions and Transfer Cases

Unit	Type	Application
3-speed manual	Column shift	Base, early years
SM465	4-speed manual	Heavy-duty; granny-low first
TH350 / TH400	3-speed auto	Carried over; phasing out
700R4	4-speed overdrive auto	
NP208	Part-time, chain-driven	Light-duty 4x4
NP205	Part-time, gear-driven	1-ton K-trucks