

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1985 Jeep CJ-7 Restoration Guide

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RESTORATION ESSENTIALS

1985 Jeep CJ-7

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

RestorationEssentials single-year guide · Model year 1985 only · CJ-7 (AMC era),
93.4-inch wheelbase

KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- **Model year covered:** 1985 only. This guide does not cover other years except where differences from 1985 are explicitly noted.
- **Engine:** AMC 150 cu in I4 — 105 hp; one-barrel carburetor (1984–85 specification, AMC engine table)
- **Engine:** 258 cu in I6 — Two-barrel
- **Transmission:** T-4, T-176, T-5 5-speed; TF999 / TF904 automatics.
- **Transfer case:** Dana 300.
- **Axles:** Wide-track Dana 30 front; AMC 20 rear.

1. Manufacturer history: Jeep

AMC's CJ-7 arrived for 1976 as the CJ for people who used doors: a 93.4-inch wheelbase against the CJ-5's 83.5, squared door openings, an available molded hardtop and steel doors, and — a first for the CJ line — an optional automatic transmission, made possible by the extra length. The frame's rear section stepped outward so springs and dampers sat closer to the wheels — the stability fix the CJ-5 never got. AMC built 379,299 CJ-7s over eleven model years. The CJ-7 is simultaneously the most restorable CJ (parts, knowledge, and numbers) and the most modified vehicle in this guide series — which makes documentation, not scarcity, the restorer's core skill.

2. Model history: where 1985 sits

The CJ-7 ran 1976–86 in three drivetrain eras: 1976–79 (Dana 20, heavy-duty manuals, Quadra-Trac), 1980–81 (Dana 300 arrives, SR-4 era, the 304's last years), and 1982–86 (wide-track axles, five-speed, four-cylinder base). Trim ran Renegade throughout, Golden Eagle in the V8 era, Laredo from 1980, Limited for 1982–83, and the numbered 1982 Jamboree. This guide covers one year only; the year-change register in Section 3 states exactly what this year changed, what it kept, and what it ended.

3. What is unique about the 1985 Jeep CJ-7

- The penultimate CJ-7 year is a carryover year — and this guide says so plainly rather than inventing changes: the verified 1985 specification is the mature wide-track, Dana 300, AMC-four/258 line in the table above.
- A 1985 four-cylinder car is still the carbureted one-barrel AMC 150 (1984–85 specification) — the throttle-body version belongs to the engine's later applications and is not a 1985 CJ-7 specification in the sources consulted.
- Originality premium note: unmodified late CJ-7s are the run's survivors — configuration rarity (Chapter: production) matters more than year rarity for 1985.

Year-change register — 1985 vs. the year before:

- NEW: no major factory change verified for 1985 in the sources consulted — honest carryover.
- CARRIED OVER: everything in the 1984 specification — AMC 150 (carbureted) / 258; wide-track; Dana 300; T-4 / T-176 / T-5.
- CONTEXT: CJ-8 SR package replaced by Laredo in the sibling line (JP Magazine).

4. Technical restoration data — 1985 Jeep CJ-7

4.1 Specification table (1985)

Item	1985 specification
Transmission	T-4, T-176, T-5 5-speed; TF999 / TF904 automatics.
Transfer case	Dana 300.
Axles	Wide-track Dana 30 front; AMC 20 rear.
Brakes	Front discs standard (1982-on pattern).
Trim / packages	Renegade; Laredo. (In the CJ-8 line, the SR package was replaced by Laredo for 1985 — JP Magazine; CJ-8 context, not a CJ-7 change.)
Production	Per-year production not stated in the sources consulted — none printed (run total 379,299).

Engines (1985):

Engine	Rating	Notes
AMC 150 cu in I4	105 hp; one-barrel carburetor (1984–85 specification, AMC engine table)	Base engine.
258 cu in I6	Two-barrel	Volume engine.

4.2 VIN and serial decoding

From 1981 the standardized 17-character VIN applies, with the CJ-7 in the model position (87 in the AMC charts for the 93.4-inch cars) and its own engine-letter table (B = 151 four, C = 258 two-barrel, H = 304 in its last year, U = 150 four later — range-guide table). The decoder charts differ between the two serial systems — use the chart that matches the plate in front of you, and photograph the plate first.

4.3 Year-correct procedures and finishes (1985)

- Judge a 1985 by condition and documentation, not by year-change hunting: the factory story this year is continuity, so deviations from the 1984–85 specification are previous-owner work until paper proves otherwise.
- **Torque:** factory values vary by fastener and year. Confirm torques against a Jeep shop manual (TSM) for 1985 before final assembly. This program's sources do not publish a verified 1985 torque table, so none is printed — a borrowed number would be worse than none.

4.4 Rust-prone areas — where to look first

Inspect in this order. Two structures, two inspections:

1. **Frame — steering-box mount and front horns** — check for the cracking the V8-era cars made famous.
2. **Frame — rear crossmember and spring hangers.**
3. **Tub — floor pans, rocker panels, and the hat channels beneath them.**
4. **Cowl and windshield frame.**
5. **Rear floor over the fuel tank.**
6. **Tub material itself** — establish steel or fiberglass with a magnet before pricing anything; fiberglass replacement tubs are common and honest only when disclosed.