

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1994 Chevrolet GMT400 Restoration Guide

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Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1994 Chevrolet GMT400 Restoration Guide

Model Years 1994

Model year	1994 - grille refresh; CHMSL; 6.5 goes light-duty
Engines	4.3 V6; 305, 350, 454 TBI V8; 6.5 diesel (NA + turbo)
Trim ladder	Cheyenne / Silverado
Interior	1988-pattern cabin carried over (redesign is 1995)
Identifiers	Refreshed grilles; CHMSL/cargo lamp over rear window

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 1994 Chevrolet C/K on the GMT400 platform - one year of the 1988-1994 TBI-era trucks, 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 and period literature. Where sources disagree, this guide prints the disagreement instead of guessing.



Scope. Covers 1994 Chevrolet C1500/C2500/C3500 (2WD) and K1500/K2500/K3500 (4WD) pickups and chassis-cabs. GMC Sierras share the platform with their own trim names (SL/SLX/SLE), noted where they differ. The live range SKU names this line 'C1500' for its best-known model; the platform covers all three payload series.

Where 1994 sits in the run

- **Coming in:** the 1988-93 cabin and the 6.2 diesel, in their last season together.
- **Leaving:** 1995 redesigns the interior outright and adds a driver airbag - outside this series' span, and the reason 1994 trucks must not be ordered as 'new-dash' trucks.

Platform Snapshot

The GMT400 is GM's fourth-generation C/K: aero-styled, comfort-first, and built on a fully welded frame with an independent front suspension on both drives. The 1988-1994 trucks are the TBI years - throttle-body injection, basic electronics, and parts that interchange across millions of trucks. 1994 sits in the closing phase of that span.

Fact	Detail
Model year	1994
Designation	C = 2WD, K = 4WD; 1500/2500/3500 payload series
Beds	Fleetside 6.5/8 ft; Sportside 6.5 ft (fiberglass fenders)
Fuel system	Throttle-body injection (gasoline); tank between the rails
Steering/brakes	Power steering standard; front discs, rear drums, rear ABS

The 1994 Register - What Makes a 1994 a 1994

- Both grille series (low and high) are refreshed - the last front-end change of the 1988-94 span - and a combination center high-mount stop lamp and cargo lamp is added above the rear window, meeting the new federal requirement. The rest of the body is carryover.
- The interior is NOT redesigned for 1994 - the 1988-pattern dash and door panels (with the 1991 analog cluster) run through 1994, and the full interior redesign arrives with the 1995 mid-cycle revision. (The range guide this series replaces claims a 1994 dash redesign; the verified record puts it in 1995, and this guide follows the record.) Order interior parts as 1988-94 pattern, not as a one-year dash.
- The 6.5 diesel goes light-duty: offered under 8,500 lb GVWR in naturally aspirated (155 hp) and turbocharged (180 hp) forms, and it completely replaces the 6.2. The light-duty 6.5 uses the electronic DS4 injection pump - its pump-mounted driver (PMD) is the known heat-related failure item, and the documented fix is relocation off the pump on an extension harness.
- Ratings are re-certified: the light-duty 350 reads 200 hp / 310 lb-ft for 1994-95 and the 305 reads 175 hp / 265 lb-ft, while the heavy 350 stays 190 hp. The 4.3's availability narrows (dropped from extended-cab 8 ft, 2500 extended-cab, and heavy 2500 applications) and the light-duty 2500 extended-cab 8 ft is discontinued.
- The C3500HD adds a Silverado trim option alongside its Cheyenne base.



VIN and RPO Decoding

1994 GMT400 VINs use the standard 17-digit format. The 8th character is the engine key (period charts list K for the 5.7 TBI, H for the 5.0, N for the 7.4, and Z for the 4.3 - verify against your year's chart, because codes can shift), and the 10th character is the model year. The series characters name the truck: C = 2WD, K = 4WD; 1500/2500/3500 are the 1/2-, 3/4-, and 1-ton payload series.

The RPO sticker - usually in the glovebox - is the truck's option manifest in three-character codes: engine and transmission, gear ratio, the G80 locking differential, Z71 where applicable, paint and trim. Photograph it before it fades; replacements do not exist, and on any special-model claim (above all a 454 SS) the RPO sticker is the verdict.

Engines

The diesel line simplifies to the 6.5 in both forms; the gasoline ratings are re-certified for 1994.

Engine	Output (net)	Notes
4.3 V6	165 hp; 235 lb-ft	Light duty; availability narrowed for 1994
305 V8 (L03)	175 hp; 265 lb-ft	Re-certified rating (1994-95)
350 V8 (L05)	200 hp; 310 lb-ft	Light duty (1994-95); 190 hp heavy
454 V8 (Gen V)	255 hp; 405 lb-ft	SS discontinued - heavy trucks only
6.5 diesel NA (L49)	155 hp; 275 lb-ft	NEW to light duty; replaces 6.2
6.5 turbo diesel	180-190 hp; 360-385 lb-ft	Light duty (L56) / heavy (L65)

TBI service doctrine

- Verify fuel pressure with a gauge first - it is the master diagnostic on every TBI truck.
- Inspect the injector spray pattern; a dribbling injector is a drivability problem wearing an ignition costume.
- Rebuild the throttle body with fresh gaskets and cleaned passages; verify coolant-temperature, MAP, throttle-position, and oxygen sensors before condemning the ECM, which is robust.
- Renew the in-tank pump, filter, and sender together, and inspect the tank - rust inside kills pumps and injectors.

Engine numbers and date codes

- Small-block Chevrolet numbering: block casting number on the driver's-side rear flange, casting date, and the stamped application code on the front pad. The date should precede the truck's build by days to weeks.
- On a TBI truck, also record the throttle-body, injector, distributor, and ECM numbers - the injection system's identity matters as much as the block's.
- The 454 and the diesels have their own casting families - verify against the year's references, not small-block lore. Photograph everything before cleaning.