

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1972 Chevrolet C/K Truck Restoration Guide

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Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1972 Chevrolet C/K Truck Restoration Guide

Model Years 1972

Model year	1972 — final year of the Action Line
Engines	250, 292 I6; 307, 350, 402 V8 (SAE net ratings)
Headline changes	13-character VIN; molded plastic door panels; mirror glued to windshield
Trim ladder	Custom / Custom Deluxe / Cheyenne / Cheyenne Super (full year)
Brakes	Front discs standard (1971 system carried over)
Special package	Highlander (plaid interior, mid/late 1972)

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 1972 Chevrolet C/K — one year of the “Action Line” (1967–1972), covered on its own because that is how these trucks were built and how they must be restored. Specifications were checked against the LMC Truck chassis-identification references, the RubberTheRightWay VIN decoder compilation, marque references, and documented survivor trucks. Where sources disagree, this guide prints the disagreement instead of guessing.

Scope. Covers 1972 C10/C20/C30 (2WD) and K10/K20 (4WD) pickups and chassis-cabs. The K5 Blazer shares this chassis and has its own dedicated RestorationEssentials guide. GMC trucks share architecture but carry their own codes and trim.

Where 1972 sits in the run

- Coming in: the run’s finale — outside, a 1971; inside the cab and on the VIN plate, a different truck.
- Leaving: 1973 replaces the Action Line with the Rounded Line (“Squarebody”). Nothing from a 1973 belongs on a 1972 restoration.

Platform Snapshot

The final Action Line year is an exercise in reading the small print: the grille and sheet metal carry over from 1971, while the door panels, the rearview mirror, the VIN format, and the way engine power is measured all change. The Cheyenne Super, born mid-1971, is the flagship for a full year, and the Highlander plaid package gives the year a one-season special.

Fact	Detail
Model year	1972 (Action Line year 6 of 6)
Designation	C = 2WD, K = 4WD; 10/20/30 = 1/2-, 3/4-, 1-ton
Body styles	Fleetside and Stepside pickups; chassis-cab; K5 Blazer (separate RE guide)
Wheelbases	115 / 127 in; Longhorn 133 in; Blazer 104 in
Engines	250/292 I6; 307, 350, 402 V8 — rated SAE NET for 1972
Rear suspension (2WD)	Coil-spring trailing arm (leaf optional)
Brakes	Front discs standard (1971 system); power assist optional on C10

The 1972 Register — What Makes a 1972 a 1972

- Molded-plastic door panels with integral armrests — one year only in this generation, attached with push-in fasteners, not screws. The panels require LONGER window-crank and door-handle shafts, so panels and hardware swap as a set, never alone.
- Rearview mirror glued to the windshield (1971 bolts to the cab roof). Some surviving ’72s show roof-mounted mirrors — present the glued mirror as factory spec and note the variation.
- 13-character VIN: a make letter (C = Chevrolet) is added at the front. A 12-character VIN on a claimed 1972 is a red flag.
- Engines carry SAE NET ratings — the paper “drop” from 1971 (350: 250 gross → 175 net) is a measurement change over essentially unchanged hardware, not a detune to hunt for.



- Cheyenne Super is the full-year flagship; its tailgate handle wears a chrome COVER (1971 used a chrome lever/handle).
- Highlander package (mid/late 1972): Scottish plaid seat inserts in four colors keyed to the exterior, alone or in bundles adding chrome and convenience equipment, then A/C and tinted glass.
- No verified 1972-specific grille, badging, or sheet-metal change — a correct '72 looks like a '71 from the curb. The year tells are the panels, the mirror, and the VIN.

VIN and Data-Plate Decoding

GM added a make letter at the front for 1972: the serial is now 13 characters. The metal plate stays in the driver's door jamb / left B-pillar area (1972 trucks also carry the blue certification decal on the driver's door), and the SPID remains inside the glovebox door.

Position	Meaning	Codes
1st	Make	C = Chevrolet, T = GMC
2nd	Chassis	C = 2WD, K = 4WD
3rd	Engine family	S = inline-6, E = V8
4th	Series	1 = 1/2-ton, 2 = 3/4-ton, 3 = 1-ton
5th	Body	4 = pickup, 8 = Blazer/Jimmy
6th	Model year	2 = 1972
7th	Assembly plant	A Atlanta, B Baltimore, F Flint, J Janesville, N Norwood, P Pontiac, S St. Louis, T Tarrytown, Z Fremont, U Lordstown, 1 Oshawa
8th–13th	Serial	Consecutive unit number

Worked examples: **CCE242Z147452** — Chevrolet (C), 2WD (C), V8 (E), 3/4-ton (2), pickup (4), 1972 (2), Fremont (Z). **CCS242Z117908** shows S (six) in position 3. The VIN encodes engine FAMILY only — displacement comes from the SPID and the block's suffix stamp.

Engines

Same five engines, new arithmetic: 1972 ratings are SAE NET (engine dressed, with accessories and exhaust) instead of the old gross figures. Compare 1972 numbers only with other net numbers.

Engine	Carb	Rating (SAE net)	Notes
250 I6	1-bbl	110 hp	Base six
292 I6	1-bbl	125 hp	Optional six — see scope note below
307 V8	2-bbl	135 hp	Volume small-block
350 V8	4-bbl	175 hp @ 4000; 290 lb-ft @ 2400	8.5:1 compression
402 V8	4-bbl	210 hp; 320 lb-ft	Top engine, badged "400"; C-series only